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Vol. 1.

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No. 80.

IN SEARCH OF ELDORADO.

Two Lincoln County Boys, Bill Blunt And Jim Swinks, Leave Home And Cross The Mountains To Seek Their Fortunes.—A True Story.

(CONTINUED FROM TUESDAY.)

CHAPTER V.

Time drug slowly on till a little nigger with his blacking outfit came by and looking at Jim said "shine," Jim reached down and picked up a piece of cinder threateningly, saying, "I'll give you shine! I'll make them eyes shine for sumphin, you little feather-legged nigger." I laughed heartily for his eyes sure did shine.

I began to think there was going to be another stampede, but the little negro didn't run, I guess he had been up against hard luck and had a sour temper too for he walked away looking back, every few steps, with his little monkey face twisted into cussword expressions. Jim looked after him with his brows knit into hard knots and when he was gone Jim turned to me and said, "Bill, you'd better lock your hen houses and unchain your dogs if you lived in Asheville, a nigger's here are as thick as freckles on the nose of a South Carolina horsewapper."

Soon the train rolled in and we left Asheville in a whiz as the train went thundering on toward Bryson City.

We had not gone far when the flagman came through and said: Hominy next stop; "I guess hog will be a little further on" said Jim.

Then as the train rumbled on Jim and I talked about our future prospects. There was no doubt of us getting a job, we thought, as the man we had slept with at the hotel had told us all about the work.

Jim says "We are leavin Asheville sky hootin aint we Bill! Seventy-five miles to Bryson City, diat my times, that much nearer the jumpin-off place aint it?" he continued slow! "We wouldn't stay in a little place like Asheville for the water to get hot. We are goin to the city now. And \$10 a month is good money. You know that man said we'd get it." He kept on "why Bill, our pocket books will get so heavy that we can't get over a fence, we'll have to crawl through like a little pug dog."

Now we were beginning to be in better spirits and with hope of success at Bryson City we were enjoying the ride immensely till three fellows got on the train at a little station called Clyde. These three boys were not sailors though some one said they had about three sheets to the wind. Neither were they capitalists (I suspect they are beggars now) but they seemed to have monopolized all the enjoyment there was on the train. Whether it increased their stock or not they spoiled that of others. I guess they had on too much "conversational water" — they talked all the time, anyway. They wanted to make all the fun they could but were not willing to divide any with you. One of them seemed to be the leader. He was a red-eyed, long-nosed fellow and "so tall that if he got his feet wet in the winter it wouldn't be much danger of him taking cold in his head before the next summer," it seemed. Before they had been in there long they began to sing, "There's a hole in the bottom of the sea," and "How Dry I Am." Then they had the porter to send them some ham sandwiches and ate and sang and drank water, you never saw the like. They drank water till it looked like they had camel in them but I guess it was something else. Directly the tall fellow passed us and said "Hello boys, my name's not Jack what's

yours?" "Your name ought to be Jack, you look awful like a jack—" growled Jim, but I just smiled as I thought it the best way to keep out of a difficulty. But the burly brute turned on Jim with a string of oaths not fit to go in this story. And then he threw back his coat and showed us his pistol in his hip pocket, saying "I'm an armed man, just look here." I looked for Jim to get us into big trouble but he just sat there and eyed the fellow and "gritted" his teeth till the fellow walked away.

It was not because Jim wouldn't fight but the bold manner of his assailant kind of cowed him for a little while. Jim always did like to mouth around and shoot off his lip when the other fellow hadn't much to say, anyway, but sang small when he saw the odds were against him. And I believe we are all somewhat that way. I guess those fellows were too much of an unknown quantity for Jim, he got up and went out on the platform. When I went out I found Jim sitting on the platform with his feet down on the steps. Jim had assumed the bedside manner of a frozen turnip and the sociability of a rattlesnake and there was no sunshine in his countenance when he looked up, I can assure you. And I felt about the same way too. "Bill, it's no use for us to be run over by them sapheaded plugglies!" he commenced. I told him that was right and that I would stand right by him. That encouraged him. "You got any rocks in your pockets?" he asked. I told him I hadn't and he says "I've not neither, but just let 'um come out one at a time now I'll try 'um; I'll give 'um an exemplification of strength that'll hang fresh beef over his eyes for the better part of two weeks." I told him to just wait and see if they said anything more to us, then I went back into the car and listened at them. I heard one of them tell a man that they had just opened a keg of nails, got out a cup of coffee and sweetened it with clabber till it was as thick as his head. Well sirs, at every station those fellows would poke their heads out a window and ask somebody if they wanted to sell that town and then tell them if they did just to wrap it up. But they didn't say anything about us. I guess they had forgotten us, or either they didn't care to rub up too hard against us. But just after we passed Dillsboro those fellows began to raise a racket right, and the tall fellow began firing his pistol out the window. Then in came the conductor and I saw the game would have to change. He didn't come in with any milk and water statements. He asked them what in the H— they meant. One of them cussed him, another said, "We're so combandicated we can't coabdihoot." He didn't ask them to take a knife and cut that word down so he could understand it either. He simply reached up and pulled the cord and when the train stopped he opened the door in such an authoritative manner that those fellows asked no questions, but just marched out carrying their bottles and jugs with them. It was strange to me that they became as gentle as a lamb all at once but I understood as soon as they got outside, for they began to bow and scrape and raise their hats. "Thank you, thank you very much for stopping at our station," said the tall fellow. "We live right up there on the hill" and I knew it was true by the expression on their faces. But this was one time the conductor didn't smile when people thanked him.

The Ancient Art Of Helping Yourself.

Ever go to a Sunday school picnic when you were a boy? Course you did.

Remember how all the women folks used to spread the tablecloths end to end on the grass, then dump 'em thick with the best eatables you ever ate? My! Fried chicken 'bout every two foot, with roll jelly cake in between. Well, yes!

Recollect how the Superintendent would stick his handkerchief under his collar and say cheerfully: "Now all help yourself!"

Then everybody fell to and helped himself. If you were a timid boy and held back till all the chicken was gobbled up, you regretted it—you regret it still. You didn't help yourself, and nobody else helped you.

Remember that picnic when the gang of fellows from the city happened along and lit into the fried fowl? City chaps are always hungry. They helped themselves, and there wasn't anything left for the town boys but the bones.

Life is a picnic. Not a Sunday school picnic—not exactly. But it's a picnic dinner all the same. The feast is spread for you. Everybody help himself now!

SUPPOSE YOU'RE A MERCHANT IN THIS TOWN. THERE'S FRIED CHICKEN AND ROLL JELLY CAKE ALL AROUND YOU, BUT YOU LET THE CITY CROWD COME IN AND SNATCH IT RIGHT FROM UNDER YOUR NOSE. ALL YOU GET IS THE BONES AND SCRAPS.

The city fellows are helping themselves. They reach out long fingers—the mail order monthly and the price catalogue—and pick up the choice bits. Why don't you try a few fingers of advertising in your local paper, dive in ahead of the gang from outside, get there first and help yourself to the chicken? "Now all help yourself!"

MORAL: OUR ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED ON APPLICATION.

When the train started again I saw Jim coming in at the other end of the car looking as bold as a lion. It seems that he did not know what the train stopped for. He had been sitting there on the steps and when those men were getting out Jim was out on the other side getting him some rocks. That why he was walking so boldly. "Where are they Bill?" he asked. "I'm armed too, now," as he took his hand out of his coat pocket and let the corner of his coat hang down to show me what he had.

I told him about them being gone. "Well, its a mighty good thing cause I'd aimed to make um smell trouble a right smart," said Jim. But I'll just keep them in case we get into anymore trouble, I'll be ready. But he did not find any use for them. Weapons on that train then were as useless as a hay rake at the North pole. When liquor was put off peace and tranquility returned and happiness reigned the same as it would all over North Carolina today if "hells populator" were eliminated from her boundaries.

On and on the train sped across those mountains, taking us to that city where we could get work and make money and grow great. When the train stopped and we got off at Bryson City, we were surprised indeed to find it only a village instead of the great city we were expecting to see. But we were searching for work and got for a city, so this did not cut much ice with us. We started out looking for a job at once. I was out long till we had canvassed the town

thoroughly, but without success. Then we were told to go upon Johnophan's Creek. This we did inquiring for work everywhere. (Continued next Tuesday.)

The Editor.

An editor is a millionaire without money, a congressman out of a job, a king without a throne. He constructs without a hammer or saw, builds a railroad without rails or spikes, and farms without a plow. He runs a butcher shop in the journalistic world and deals out brains for cash or credit. He loves those who advertise with him like a brother. The editor is a teacher, a lawyer, a preacher; he sends forth truth to save souls and gets lost himself. He heals the wounded, cares for the dying, rescues the perishing, and then starves himself when a ham sandwich of kindness would jerk him from the jaws of death.—Exchange.

A Smile.

Who can tell the value of a smile? It costs the giver nothing, but it is beyond price to the erring and relenting, the sad and cheerless, the lost and forsaken. It dispels malice, soothes temper, turns hatred into love, revenge into kindness, and paves the darkest paths with gems of sunlight. A smile on the brow betrays a kind heart, a pleasant friend, an affectionate brother, a dutiful son, a happy husband. It adds a charm to beauty, it decorates the face of the deformed, and makes a lovely woman resemble an angel in Paradise.—Ex.

Alpha's Letter.

Your correspondent is suffering from a carbuncle.

Mrs. Dellinger, who was so severely hurt by falling last week, is in a critical condition.

One of our young men rented a farm from a landlord in our section some weeks ago, telling the gentleman he rented it from that he expected to take to himself a half-mate before he moved, but to keep the matter a profound secret, some how or other the matter has leaked out, and now the joke is on the young man.

Mr. Sam Keever is smiling from ear to ear, his wife having presented him with a 12 1-2 lb boy. Sam says it is the finest boy ever born in America, and that he has not yet decided whether he will be president or contest Mr. Overman's seat for the senate, but that nothing short of the Presidency, or the U. S. senate will satisfy his ambition.

There is strong talk of a cotton mill at Denver, Mr. Tompkins, of Charlotte, we learn will visit Denver in the near future with a view to locating a mill there, and the citizens of Denver seem to be willing to give him all the encouragement in their power. We hope the factory will be built for it will not only help Denver and surrounding country but will be a stepping stone toward getting a railroad.

We believe the people of the county will be glad to learn that Lincolnton is to have a cotton buyer this year. We have sold cotton to Mr. Bagley, and have always found him a fair dealer. Most of the cotton raised in the eastern end of the county goes to Cornelius, because the cotton buyers at that place, for some reason, always manage to give a little above the Charlotte market, now if Mr. Bagley will raise his figures to correspond with the price at that market he would, no doubt get most of the cotton raised in the eastern part of the county, for sellers could avoid crossing the river.

"Does the moon influence plant growth?" We answer: So far as the Little Mountain section is concerned emphatically, yes. It effects things animate and inanimate. We don't know how long the theory has thrived here, it may have had its origin here, for ought we know. It was here when we came, and is in a thriving condition to-day and bids fair to live on, and on. Why, Mr. editor, many of our farmers will wait a week or longer if necessary in order for the moon to get right before planting. One of our farmers always planted his bottom corn just after the full moon in May, and a few years ago he waited for the full moon and just before the full, it commenced raining and kept the ground wet until the middle of June; of course it put him to great inconvenience, but his faith remains unshaken. Why sir, our farmers plant their corn when the Little Moon is turned down. Their cotton seed when the Little Moon is turned up. They put out their manure and guano when the Little Moon is on the upward turn, why Mr. editor, if you were farming in our section and were to spend your manure when the Little Moon was on the downward turn some of our farmers would say you didn't know any more about farming than "Horace Greely." You see the strength of the manure would all sink into the earth. Yes sir the moon not only affects the vegetable kingdom but invades the animal kingdom as well.

Some of our farmers will wait a week, or two weeks for the moon to get right, before penning their fattening hogs, then they will wait just as long for the "increase of the moon" for killing their pork. You see, to kill at any other time your meat would make only gravy, then, if they wish to move, they will wait just any length of time for the "increase of the moon." To move on the "decrease" would be sure to work some dire calamity. Not only the moon, but the stars, come in for their share of influence with some, especially as regards the weather. Some years ago one of our old widowers, who was our most famous weather prophet, concluded that he would take unto himself a help mate. The lady of his choice lived some 20 miles distant. All arrangements were made for the marriage, and our weather prophet told his affianced that they would have the knot tied on Wednesday before Christmas, that the "planet Herchel" would be the ruling star during Christmas week and that we always had balmy weather during his reign. Well, the time rolled around and all preparations were made ready for the journey, when lo, it began to snow and snowed until it was 12 inches deep on the ground. The thermometer fell almost to zero, all vehicles had to be abandoned and the trip had to be made on horseback, and the result was the weather prophet's nose, which was of the Roman variety, was almost frozen off, and his wife never did tire of telling the joke on him. Did this break him from prophesying? No sir; though now about 90 years old he is still a weather prophet. But some one will say: "Alpha do you believe in all this bosh?" We answer no, but perhaps it is impossible to live among people 54 years who do believe in these extraordinary influences of the moon without being tainted a little. Environment may be the cause of our belief, but we not only believe but know by actual experiment that timber cut on what we call the light of the moon will dry out quicker than that cut on the old moon, that corn planted just after the moon news will grow taller than corn planted at any other time. We don't know any reason for it, and cannot give any, but we know it is so all the same. And if any one wishes to stand us a law suit on this proposition we are ready. Our good friend, Mr. C. W. Ward, of Iron Station, was a visitor to our community this week, on business, he says, but we are of the opinion that it is some kind of a magnetic influence that brought him over here, and of course it was not the moon. No, brother Jumbo, of Kidsville, we will say that we consider that we tied our own hands from organizing baptism some time ago, through the News when we advised christians not to argue the mode of water baptism. However as we are always willing to give a reason for the faith that is in us, if some one else, more competent to answer his argument, does not reply, we will untie our own hands. In the meantime we would advise all those who think that there is not two sides to this question to the serious perusal of a sentence in Webster's old blue back speller which reads something like this: "A bigot is one who is too strongly attached to some religion or opinion." ALPHA.

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