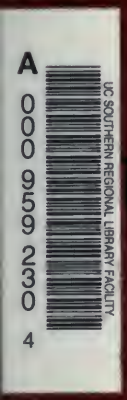

REMINISCENCES OF THREE SCORE AND TEN

BOOTH

THREE SCORE AND TEN

IN RETROSPECT

I. Boyhood Days; II. Reminiscences of school experiences from twenty to seventy-two

BY

J. W. HOOPER

SYRACUSE, N. Y.
C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER
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NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER

I have known Mr. Hooper for more than twenty-five years. During this time his work has been in the immediate vicinity of Syracuse, and I have seen him frequently, in school and out. He is not only a man of scrupulous veracity, who would cut off his right hand sooner than make an intentional mistatement, but he is also characteristically methodical and accurate,—as likely as any man I ever knew to be exact in his memory of incidents that happened even fifty years ago.

This narrative therefore seems to me of decided historical value. Many of the incidents here given he had told me from time to time, and it was at my suggestion that he gathered here these reminiscences of a long, an honorable, and a useful career. There are few living men able to give us truthful pictures of the school and home life of half a century ago, and the community should be grateful to Mr. Hooper for thus putting on record much that otherwise would have been forgotten and lost.

C. W. BARDEEN

Syracuse, April 21, 1900

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Three Score and Ten Years in Retrospect

CHAPTER I

Early Years, 1827–1837

I was born in Livingston County, N. Y., July 5, 1827.

My parents both died before I was eight years old. I found a home with a cousin in St. Lawrence county. I think my cousin was a good man; but, unfortunately for me, I soon fell into disfavor with his wife, who seemed to improve every opportunity to make my life unpleasant. Two incidents will be sufficient to indicate something of the means to which she resorted.

My cousin was in the habit of making from one to two thousand pounds of maple sugar every spring, and on account my faithful work he had promised me the last run of sap for my own. I should gather it, boil it down to syrup, take it to the house, his wife would convert it into sugar, the sugar should be sold and all the money should be mine.

I think I never experienced more pleasure than during the two weeks that followed, in building

air castles and contemplating what I would buy with the money that would come from the sale of that sugar. I gathered the sap, boiled it down, and found myself in possession of two buckets full of nice maple syrup. I put my neck-yoke on and carried the syrup carefully half a mile to the house. It was put into an iron kettle, the kettle was hung on the crane and swung into its place over the kitchen fire. Through neglect of my cousin's wife it was boiled too long. It was burned and worthless; and my air castles fell to the ground.

The family had received an invitation to a pig party to be given at a neighbor's house that evening. Pig parties were quite common in St. Lawrence county in those days. Whenever a pig was killed the neighbors were invited in to eat fresh pork. It was thought best for me to remain at home and look after the fire. The sugar had been turned from the kettle, but quite a little was left on its sides, and I thought I would scrape the kettle and eat a little burned sugar. Getting an iron spoon I scraped off a good spoonful and put it into my mouth. Judge of my surprise and indignation when I realized that the woman who had just burned up my sugar had sprinkled fine-cut tobacco over the sides and bottom of the kettle. I survived, but for an hour I was very sick.

It was a part of my regular work to bring water for washing from a brook nearly half a mile away. So on a Monday morning I donned my neck-yoke and went for water. Filling the pails and staggering under the heavy weight, it was only after frequent resting that I reached the house. As I passed through the gate I noticed my cousin's wife at the wash-tub in the yard. Before I reached where she was, I stumbled under the heavy load, and as I fell much of the water dashed over me. Before I had time to rise to my feet a heavy blow on the side of my head knocked me back on the ground, and after having my ears well boxed, the neck-yoke was put (not very gently) upon my shoulders and I was ordered back after water. I went back to the brook, sat the pails carefully down on the bank, laid the neck-yoke across them, and skipped across the lots, crying; and I have ever since imagined those pails still standing by the brook, and my cousin's wife turned into a pillar of salt, standing by her wash-tub in the yard, waiting for the water.

I was now ten years old, and I wish right here to ask the young boys and girls who may read this story a few questions. Do you appreciate your home? Do you know what it is to have kind friends who are interested in your education and your success in life? Do you have, down

deep in your heart, a pure, lasting, devoted, tender love for the precious mother, who is spending her life in trying to build you up in character and make of you true, loyal girls and boys, who shall reflect honor upon your parents and friends? I knew none of these privileges, but I had endured enough from my cousin's wife; and while she was waiting on that Monday morning for me to come with the water, I was getting several miles away, seeking for another place to live.

CHAPTER II

An Interrupted Journey, 1838

I succeeded in finding a place where I could work for my board and go to school. This was a good home, and I think I received as good treatment as I deserved, for I imagine I was becoming a tough boy.

About a year later, while in my eleventh year, a change seemed to come over me. I began to have some desire to obtain an education, I became uneasy, I wanted something, and could not tell what. About this time, at a protracted meeting, I experienced religion and united with the Baptist church at Sprague's Corners, on the line of Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties.

Although I tried to live a religious life, I was not satisfied. This feeling of discontent grew upon me until on the 10th day of November, 1838, at about 8 o'clock in the evening, I put a few articles of clothing into a handkerchief, tied it up and went out into the darkness. I have never forgotten that long, dark, dreary night. I was naturally timid, and frightened at everything I saw. The country was then comparatively new and the forests contained many wild

animals; yet I was impelled to go on by some irresistible will-power. I was thinly clad, but that same Hand that helped me amid greater dangers in the near future sustained and kept me alive on that cold November night.

I had no thought of turning back. When I came to the deep forests, I would start on a run and never lessen the speed until I had reached the open country.

On the morning of the 11th of November I hired out to a farmer somewhere near Carthage in Jefferson county. I was to husk corn a month, for which I was to receive five dollars and my board. I fulfilled my contract, took my five dollars, went to Sacketts Harbor, and, after buying me a pair of shoes and some mittens, I paid the rest of my money for a passage on a steam boat to Rochester, intending to go to my uncle's home at Bergen Corners, Genesee county.

Soon after leaving port, December 12, we were struck by a storm of wind and snow that seemed for a time to threaten the destruction of the boat. All day the captain tried to reach port at Oswego, which he succeeded in doing at about nine o'clock in the evening. I was told that the boat would go no farther for several days, as it needed to be repaired.

I soon noticed that the fires were burning down, and the lights were being extinguished.

I started up street in the city, hoping that I might find some place to keep warm.

At about ten o'clock that night I stood upon the platform of a public house in Oswego. And my young friends, that was the grandest platform that I ever stood upon! My feet never stood in a place more sacred! I believe the spirit of my christian mother was right beside her boy! I believe an angel was hovering over me!

The lights in the public house had been extinguished. It was intensely cold. My clothes were frozen from the water that had swashed upon me while on board the boat in the terrible wind. The snow was blowing around me. I had eaten no dinner, no supper. I had no money, and not a friend to go to. I had reached a crisis in my life! I was afraid I should freeze.

As I stood there in the darkness, these words came to me with great power. I do not know whether I spoke in an audible voice or not, but I said, "*I will earn an honest living, and I will perish before I will beg.*"

I started at once for the boat. I tried door after door and found them locked. I finally opened a door leading down a dark gang-way. Feeling for a door at the foot of the stairs I opened into the sailor's cabin. They had a warm room, had their table spread, and were playing cards. They noticed that I was nearly frozen,

and recognizing me as a passenger on board the boat, they gave me a warm berth.

In the morning, I went to the captain, told him my circumstances, reminding him that I had a ticket from Sacketts Harbor to Rochester, and as the boat was to be laid up for repairs I thought he should pay me back a part of my money. The only satisfaction that I received was the privilege of riding to Rochester if I waited until the boat went.

It had now been twenty-four hours since I had tasted food, but I had no more thought of asking for a meal than I had of cutting one of my fingers off.

CHAPTER III

A Long and Hungry Tramp, 1838

I said to myself, "I cannot wait for the boat, for I shall famish here, and I can but perish if I go afoot." Not expecting anything to eat until I should reach my uncle's house, ninety miles away, yet believing that I should in some way get through, I pushed out into the wind and snow.

I was now suffering intensely for want of food. In passing an orchard a little out of the city, I saw a cluster of apples hanging from the limb of a tree. I soon found that, although frozen like rocks, they were not decayed. I filled my pockets and went on my way. I think I will not say what my experience was in eating those frozen apples, but I will say that I had not one morsel of food from about thirty hours before I left the city of Oswego until I reached my uncle's house at Bergen, excepting frozen apples that I found in the orchards as I travelled along the roads.

A little after dark that night as I was passing a country tavern I noticed a ladder reaching to a hay-loft over the shed. I climbed the ladder,

and burying myself as deep as I could in the hay I slept soundly until morning. Watching my opportunity to get on the street without being seen, I commenced my second day's tramp.

The strongest temptation that I had during my journey to break my pledge and ask for something to eat, was at the noon hour that day. The weather had cleared up and a farmer's family were eating their dinner. The sun was shining a little warm, and the kitchen door was open. It seemed to me that I would be willing to take off the only coat I had and give it for a meal. I was famished for something to eat. It seemed to me that I must have food or I should perish. I said, "I will go to the open door and ask for a drink of water; perhaps they will ask me to eat." I received my glass of water but no further invitation; and I went on my way.

I will say right here that during the forty years that I sat at my own table no person ever came to my door hungry but he was fed. It made no difference whether he was drunk or sober, filthy or otherwise. If I believed he was hungry, he had something to eat; and I have never seen the time when I would not be willing to go without my own dinner to feed even a hungry dog.

My second day's experience was much like the first. After it had become dark, so no one would see me, I crept into a straw stack in a farmer's

barn-yard, and, covering myself as best I could, I knew no more until morning. I was on the street before day-light, as I was sure if I was found in the man's barn-yard I should be arrested and sent to jail.

I have never been able to tell much of my third day's journey. I have no recollection of having any desire for food. I passed through Rochester, went to the depot, and was directed to the rail-road track leading through Churchville and near to Bergen Corners. I imagine that I travelled that seventeen miles in less time than any other seventeen miles in my three days journey.

I received a warm welcome at my uncle's, where, I was afterward told, I arrived about nine o'clock. They soon discovered that I was sick. A doctor was called and I was forced to tell them that I had been four days without food.

Under the kindest of care I speedily recovered, and as soon as proper clothes could be procured I was sent to school. I spent the winter pleasantly and was happy in my school work. The school closed in April and I told my uncle that I was going to find work. He said: "Why not stay here, there is plenty of work here." I replied: "No, I started out to earn my living among strangers and I am going."

CHAPTER IV

As a Brickmaker, 1839–1847

I was now twelve years old, and started out the third time to face the world alone,—seeking for a home. But I was comfortably clad and had money in my pocket.

Just at night on that day I engaged to a man to make brick at nine dollars a month. I was located a little north of Albion, Orleans county. This was destined to be my home for a number of years. I boarded with my employer and went to school in the winter; and as the brick making season lasted but about six months of the year, I had a long time to go to school. I rapidly came to the front as a brick burner, and in a few years was receiving seventy-five dollars a month and my board.

I remained with this man five years, when I was offered such inducements to take charge of a large manufactory in Geneva that I was obliged to accept. I remained in Geneva two seasons, going back to my old school in the fall.

I was now in my twentieth year and I had a great desire to go back and visit the scenes of my early boyhood,—to go into the old log house from which I went out into the darkness on that November night eight years before. I will say

that I kept clear of that other place, where I got my ears boxed, for fear I should see that woman standing by her wash-tub, and she would want to know where those pails of water were.

I had been at my old home but a day or two when I received application from a board of trustees to teach their winter school. I said, yes; if I can get a certificate. As they wanted the school to begin the next Monday they told me to go on with the school and they would see the town superintendent about the license. A few days later I received my license and the school went on all right.

Before speaking of my experience as a teacher, I would like to review that part of my life from fourteen to twenty years. I want the young men and the young ladies who may read this book to realize that I am drawing a truthful portrait of my life from the age of nine years, when I commenced to paddle my own canoe, until I was twenty. I would not try to leave an impression that I was all goodness, as I grew up to young manhood, that I was very meek, that I never did anything wrong, that I was down in the corner by the fireplace every evening studying my lessons.

Oh! no! no! Such a nature as mine could not remain quiet. If there was mischief going on in the neighborhood I knew it and was in it,

and I never fetched up in the rear. If a couple were married they must have a serenade. If a young man went to visit his lady-love he usually realized when he started to go home that the boys had been around. Remember that this was more than fifty years ago, and many things that were thought little of then would be all wrong now.

As I remember it now, we were somewhat wild, yet I believe there was a gentlemanly principle manifested in our lives. We knew when it was time for fun and when it was time to be quiet and gentlemanly in our deportment.

As to our habits, the society in which I mingled used to play cards, and I soon become so fascinated with the game that I would rather play cards all night than to sleep. One night I retired at an early morning hour, and before sleeping I thought the matter over and came to the conclusion that I was a fool to spend my nights in card playing, and become so excited over the game that I could not sleep even after I retired. I finally said to myself "*I will never play another game of cards in my life.*" And I never have.

Again I was carried away with what we call now "yellow covered literature", or cheap novels. I do not condemn novel reading. It is the low, trashy, simple, love-sick stories that are flooding the most of our news-rooms and flying all over the land, that I condemn. This is

the kind of reading that will be selected by most of our young people if unrestrained by their parents; a kind of reading that weakens the intellect and destroys a taste for histories or other solid reading. This is the kind of reading that I enjoyed; and on a certain night after reading until near the morning hour, before sleeping I came to my senses, and said to myself, "I will never read another love-sick novel in my life." *And I never have.*

Many years ago I saw advertised and heard much said of "Roderick Hume", a novel written and published by C. W. Bardeen of Syracuse. I said, it is a novel and I do not care to read it; and it was only a few years ago that I was induced to read it. I will say that my prejudice against the reading of a certain kind of novels vanished. I think I was made a better man and a better teacher by the reading of that book, first by its clearness and freshness; second by the simplicity and purity of the language; and third by the plot itself, so entertaining, so natural, so true to life. Just what one would expect would happen comes to pass all the way through.

Parents, see that each of your girls and boys has a library case, and let it be gradually filled with the latest and best standard books. Your children will grow not only into a habit of reading but into a habit of reading good literature.

CHAPTER V

My First School, 1847

Now, my friends, let me take you back fifty-two years to a little log school-house a few miles from Antwerp, in Jefferson county, near the line of St. Lawrence county, where I was engaged in teaching my first school. My wages were fourteen dollars a month, and I was to board around.

This boarding around was jolly fun if one enjoyed it; but I confess I did not enjoy it as well as perhaps some others would. For instance, the schoolmaster was a very distinguished individual; he must have the best the house afforded, and at bed time he was ushered into the *spare* room off the parlor, with a zero atmosphere. We had good board and a plenty, consisting largely of rye-and-indian bread, good butter, potatoes, pork or mutton, boiled cider apple sauce, and delicious mince pies.

The school-house was comfortable. Wherever the chinking between the logs had become loose mud-mortar had been used to plaster it up, and every crevice had been closed. A large open fireplace graced one side of the room. Pegs had

been driven into the logs; and slabs reversed, reaching around three sides of the room, served as desks. Slabs with pegs driven in for legs made pretty good seats and, of course, the pupils sat facing the wall, an advantage to the teacher that the modern school-room does not afford.

We had plenty of good hard wood and lots of back-logs. The wood was cut four feet long, and in preparing it from the tree a length would often be found so knotty that it would not split easily and it was saved for a back-log. A log four feet long and from ten to fifteen inches in diameter was something of an affair to handle. But the teacher with the help of the boys could usually manage it, and the log was placed at the back of the fire-place, where it would last in cold weather about a week. The fire was built in front of the log, and the wood was held in place by large andirons.

Now for the school. I found myself surrounded on Monday morning by forty or forty-five as bright, as intelligent-looking a class of boys and girls as I have I have ever met in school.

I thought those young women, some of them as old as their master, dressed in their home-made plaids, were perfectly beautiful, and I have never had reason to change my mind.

I am unable to find a full list of the books in use. I find the Old English reader, Daboll's

arithmetic, Webster's speller, and Kirkham's grammar. I do not remember to have used any geography. Our writing books were composed of several sheets of fools-cap paper folded and sewn together by the mother or sister, and the *master* was expected to set the copies and mend the goose-quill pens. I think there was no chart or map of any description in the school-room. All from seven years old up were expected to read, write, spell, and cipher from the same text-book.

The school was organized and ready for work. I think I never felt more proud than when standing at my little home-made table in about the centre of the room, surrounded by that class of boys and girls. And, think of it, they called me master! And I was their teacher.

CHAPTER VI

A Case of Discipline, 1847

I never felt more confidence in my ability to teach a school. I never felt less concern regarding the discipline. I knew I could manage the school, for I could see intelligence in nearly every countenance and knew the children were subject to discipline at home, and must know what gentlemanly and lady-like deportment was.

But there are exceptions in nearly all schools. The trustee had told me that there was one boy who would give me trouble, and that they would probably have to turn him out, as they did not think I could manage him. They said he was very quarrelsome, and was fighting the other boys every few days.

Of course I knew who the boy was. We had a few days of quiet, which gave me an opportunity to study his character, and also to study the character of one or two others.

I noticed that this "bully", as he was called, was a large, somewhat green, good-natured boy, disposed to mind his own business if let alone. I also noticed that he was the butt of the jokes of two or three others, who lost no opportunity to annoy him. One in particular seemed to be the leader in making game of him.

I allowed the matter to go on, knowing it would come to a focus. This happened one day during the noon hour, when human endurance could stand it no longer. Thomas went at those three boys, and the result was they got so thoroughly whipped that they begged to be let up; and they came into the school room with what I supposed had been their usual complaint, that Tom had been pounding them.

At the usual time I called the school to order and told Thomas to rise. He stood up. Now I believe nearly every one in that room had sympathy for him, and they believed he was going to be punished, as he had been before on similar occasions. While Thomas stood at his seat I told the other three boys to step out on the floor, and I went at that ring-leader of the three with a good hickory ruler. When I was through with him, he had promised to obey every rule of the school. I then said to Thomas: "If this boy annoys you any more, if he insults you until you cannot endure it any longer, you go at him again and give him a good whipping, and when he comes in I will give him another. Between you and me I think we can teach him to mind his own business and let you alone. You are all excused."

Discipline was established and there was no more occasion for punishing during the four months that I taught that school.

CHAPTER VII

New York Country Life in 1847

As to social enjoyment, I have never been with a class of school boys and girls who loved fun better than they, and I have never known a class who could get more enjoyment out of a twenty-minute recess or the noon hour intermission. The character of the games was sometimes a little questionable, but as they never trespassed upon morality I seldom interfered.

The snow lay for many weeks from three to four feet deep on a level. Many a morning when the snow was drifting on arriving at the school-house I was obliged to shovel the snow away from the windows to let in light. I have never seen such perseverance manifested in getting to school under difficulties. Many times when it was impossible for teams to get through the drifts, I have seen twelve or fifteen boys and girls coming from different directions, wallowing in Indian file through the snow. Of course they were all dressed for the occasion and I do not know that one of them ever took cold.

I will now give you a sample of a noon-time exercise. There was a series of meetings being held a few miles away, and great interest was

manifested. Many of the older pupils attended. It became quite common for them to advertise a meeting of their own to be held at a certain stump some distance from the school-room, at the noon hour. Nearly or quite all of the older pupils would hasten to eat their dinner, and away they would go to attend the meeting. The minister would mount the stump and conduct as regular a prayer meeting as one ever attended. At the end came the speaking, and usually some one had experienced religion and must be baptized. The whole congregation then moved out a little into the deeper snow and the candidate was as formally immersed in snow as ever one was in water. Everything was conducted in an orderly way, and to some I think it was real.

About once a week, when the weather and going were suitable, we must have a spelling school, or we must visit some other spelling school held in one of the surrounding districts.

I remember on one occasion we had received an invitation to a spelling school over the hills, about three miles away. Two of the young men put their teams together, a four-horse rig waited at the school-house, and we were soon climbing that immense hill.

We had just had our January thaw. In the midst of the thaw the weather suddenly became very cold; and as a result a thick, strong, slippery

crust was formed on the snow. Just over the brow of the long steep hill we found the sleigh tracks led into the field, as the drifts in the road had not been shovelled out. Our team was a little fractious, and as we turned into the field the sleigh, with its load of forty girls and boys went over upon the crust, on the lower side. As I said, the crust was very steep and slippery and we were helpless. There was nothing for us to do but to go to the foot of that hill as gracefully as we could. A few lodged against the stumps, two or three reached the street fence, but nearly all fetched up in the valley below.

Reader, did you ever ride down hill with the girls without a handsled? It is jolly fun to ride with them on a handsled, but I tell you it's a hundred times jollier to ride without one. The girls won't generally ride with you if you have no handsled, but on this occasion they were rather obliged to, by force of circumstances. It might be a point to be settled in such condition whether it would be proper for you to sit in the girl's lap or for her to sit in yours, but in our case there was not much time to discuss that matter, so we each chose our own position; some went feet first, some went head first, and some took it sidewise. The main thing was to keep going, which I assure you we did.

I won't trouble you with a detailed account of

our tribulations in climbing that hill to where our sleigh was waiting. We climbed mostly in couples. Occasionally a couple would drop out of sight, we would see a descending streak in the darkness, and presently they would land at the bottom. But finally we succeeded in reaching the sleigh, but the time was reported as quarter past nine and it was voted that we go home.

One more incident, a result of boarding round, will close the history of my first winter of teaching school.

We usually spent a week in a place and I spent a week with a family where I found six young children. The family seemed quite poor. The little log house had three rooms on the first floor, kitchen, parlor, and bedroom and of course, I occupied the bedroom. The second floor was composed of loose boards laid down but not fastened. They had warped so that some of them seemed to rest almost on their edges. In fact there was little to prevent one in the lower room from seeing into the upper or from the upper room into the lower. It seemed to me that all of those six children occupied the room directly over mine.

But presently we all settled down, and the snoring indicated that the household were asleep. I rested well, but tribulation came in the morn-

ing. I had placed my boots in a convenient place on the floor, and laid my socks carefully on the boots. I was somewhat surprised, as I was about to draw on my socks, to find they were wet; and also that water had leaked into my boots. I said, "Surely it must have rained in the night," and the roof leaking, the water has dripped clear down through onto my boots. "Queer! Queer! Queer!" I said to myself, and stepping to the window I could see no appearance of its having rained.

I drew on my socks, but very soon learned that, as the boots fitted a little tight, I could not draw them on over wet socks; so I put the socks into my pocket, drew on the boots, went out to breakfast, went to the school-house, readjusted my socks and boots, and was ready for the day's work. I will say that the weather was dry all the rest of the week and as I took the precaution to put my boots under the bed every night, they were always dry in the morning.

Oh my friends! It is fun to board round if you enjoy it.

CHAPTER VIII

In Business again

In the spring of 1847 I entered into partnership with Mr. E. B. Hinsdell, to make brick. We were located about three miles north of Salina on the Brewerton plank road, at what was then called the Old Log Cabin place. It was at this time that I made the mistake of my life. I should have chosen teaching as my profession and fitted myself for it, but I could not see that teaching was my work; or rather, I would not see it, for I think it was clearly made known to me that I ought to finish my education, thus fitting myself for teaching. I could earn high wages during a part of the year, and put the rest of my time into college work, and in a few years come out a college graduate. I knew this, but my ambition to get money overcame my desire for a higher education.

For a few years I made money, but there came a time when I realized my mistake. I had contracted for the delivery of large quantities of building brick in Syracuse, and, with ten laboring men in my employ, not one of whom knew anything of burning brick, I was taken sick from

overwork, and did not recover until near the end of the brickmaking season. On looking about after my recovery I found the few thousand dollars that I had saved had been swept away, and I was broken in health and poor.

But I was not standing alone. My noble wife, who had come to me two years before, stood right at my side; and her words of encouragement, her comforting influence, her christian confidence and trust in Him who doeth all things well, became an inspiration to me. I realized that He in whom I thought I trusted knew better than I what I ought to have done when I refused to follow my impressions of duty.

I will say before closing this chapter, that we were content to start again at the foot of the ladder, and by prudence, industry, and continuous climbing, in a few years we found ourselves in comfortable circumstances again.

CHAPTER IX

The Waterbury District, 1847–9

It is the design of this narrative to deal more particularly with matters relating to my school experience. So I will ask you to go back with me to the fall of 1847, when I contracted to teach my first school in Onondaga county. This school is situated about one mile north of Liverpool in the town of Clay. We called it the Waterbury district.

The next thing after securing a school was to get a license to teach it. I thought if the trustees would only be so kind as to get a license for me, as they did over in Jefferson county, it would be very convenient; but teachers cannot always rely upon trustees to procure their certificates for them, so it was evident to me that I would have to face the fire alone.

I learned that the town superintendent for the town of Clay was Dr. J. F. Johnson, and that he lived at Clay Corners, six miles away. I knew by the name that he was a very learned man, and a doctor too! I wondered how many medical questions he would ask me, and how much I would have to know of physiology and hygiene.

Then I knew there was another word connected with physiology but could not remember it. I knew it referred to the cutting up of the body after a person is dead. I hoped he would not ask me about that word.

I started very early in the morning after putting a lunch in my pocket, as I supposed the examination would last all day, and perhaps two or three days. I could walk six miles in those days in about as short a time as a horse would travel that distance, so I went on foot.

I found the doctor at the store and made known my errand. After we had talked fifteen or twenty minutes he said we would go over to his office. On arrival there he told me to be seated and he would return in a few minutes, and I soon saw him in his gig driving down the street. I waited nearly an hour for his return.

To say I was angry would hardly express it. I had come six miles almost on a run to begin my examination early, so that I might finish and get home before dark. Nearly two hours had already passed and the examination had not commenced.

But the doctor soon came into the office, filled and lighted his pipe, asked me if I would smoke, and began a conversation on matters and things in general which lasted about thirty minutes.

He was then called to some other part of the

house, and I was left to wonder for another half hour why the examination did not commence. At length he returned, and after refilling and lighting his pipe he sat down to his desk and commenced to write. Again I said to myself, why don't the old fool begin the examination? At the expiration of about five minutes he handed me a paper, saying he was satisfied that I could teach that school. That was my certificate. The examination was ended while I was waiting for it to begin.

I started to go, when the doctor said, "Oh, no, our dinner is just now ready, and we must have some dinner before you go."

I think if I had lived where it was practicable, I would have employed Doctor Johnson as my family physician all the rest of my life!

I was living at the old log cabin on the Brewester plank road, and on Monday morning I started, armed with my certificate according to law, for my school. I had never seen the schoolhouse, and you may imagine my disappointment when I found a little dingy building, so old that it had settled into the ground and the clapboards were dropping off. The squeaky old door was not locked, and I opened it and entered in.

A better state of things existed inside. I found a good stove, and plenty of good wood in the woodshed. The desks were fastened to the

wall and there were pretty good benches for seats. Some pictures, maps, and charts hung on the walls and altogether the old house looked better inside—much more encouraging.

In referring to the registry of that year I find that seventy-four pupils were crowded into that little school-room. I have never taught a school that was easier to manage. The Dunham, Price, Weller, Vickery, Fullerton, Waterbury, Moshell, and Green families were represented by pupils who gave character to the school, and the discipline took care of itself.

No marked event occurred to interfere with the school until eight days before the end of the term. A number of district meetings had been held to make arrangements for a new school-house, but had failed to get a favorable vote. An adjourned meeting was to be held on a Friday evening. On the afternoon of that same day a little girl jumped up and cried: "Oh! the school house is on fire!" Not a boy in that room would bring a pail of water. The school was called to order, the pupils were admonished to gather all their books, and by the tap of the bell they marched out in perfect order. Thus ended my first winter school in Onondaga county.

During the summer the trustees came over and purchased brick for a new school-house. The present building was built, and I had the

pleasure of teaching my second winter in the new house.

Perhaps the reader would like to know more of my experience in boarding round. I will say I came to enjoy it pretty well. I had little difficulty in finding boarding places. I was in the habit of sending word about the middle of the week that I would like to board with a certain family next week. Usually it was all right. Sometimes, however, I would be requested to wait a couple of weeks until they had killed their hogs; or "until the beef critter was killed", but usually if they were out of meat they would kill a sheep, and buck-wheat cakes with plenty of mutton and mutton gravy made pretty good living.

CHAPTER X

A Case of Discipline, 1849

One instance of discipline in my third year's experience is perhaps worth telling. My school was at Podunk. A large, fine class of girls and boys greeted me on Monday morning but I soon learned that it would require strong discipline to hold those girls and boys to such order as I wanted and would have in my school.

It must be remembered that in those days teachers were expected to fight their way in maintaining order, more than they are now. The first questions that came into the minds of the boys as they came into the room on the first day of school, and looked upon the teacher the first time, were, How tall is he? How much does he weigh? Can we handle him? They made no allowance for moral force. It was only physical strength that they feared. I labored under great disadvantage, through being small of stature and low in the scale of avoirdupois.

Now I would not be understood to say that all the boys in that school were ready to thrash the teacher if he did not behave according to their ideas of propriety. There were young

men there who came to school to learn, and whose influence and sympathy were with the teacher. It is the few,—three or four or five, who clique together in opposition to the teacher —that sometimes give trouble.

School had been organized, lessons were assigned and I began to call the classes, when a tall boy on the back seat rose and said, "May I go out?" I said "No; we shall have our recess in ten minutes; please wait until recess." He sat down but in about a minute rose and said, "I'm goin' out," and started for the door.

I was in the back part of the room but about three jumps carried me to the door, and with my back against it, I faced him as he stood about six feet in front of me. I stood a moment trying to get his eye, but you never can get the eye of a coward. I finally said, "My friend, you never will go out of this school-room alive until I let you go. You go to your seat."

Do you think he went to his seat? He knew very well that he could push me aside, open the door and go out. Do you think I feared him? I had no more fear of him than I would have of a ten-year-old boy. I was as sure that he would go to his seat as I was that I was standing at that door. With no hesitation whatever he turned about and went to his seat and the school went on. Surely moral force is stronger than

physical, but in cases of emergency, I have found it necessary to have on hand a supply of both of these virtues.

The school had been going on quietly for some days when at the boys' recess in the forenoon an old fashioned tin dinner-horn was tooted out in the yard. I stepped to the window and saw it in the hands of my friend William. I opened the window and said, "William, come into the school-room." With a terrible oath he refused to come in for me or anybody else. I will here say that this is the only instance in all of my experience in teaching, that a pupil refused to mind me, or to do what I told him to do in connection with the order of school.

As we all occupied the same yard, it was necessary to have separate recesses. So I rapped on the window for the boys to come in, that the girls might have their recess. All came in but William, who remained standing in the yard near the front gate, evidently not inclined to come in, or to leave the school ground.

Now here was a dilemma! A pupil standing in the yard, and refusing to leave it, and time for the girls to have their recess. Fellow teachers, what would you have done under those circumstances? The young man was nearly six feet tall, heavier and stonger than I, and I knew he could handle me if he should get hold of me,

and yet I was as sure that boy would come in as I was that I was teaching that school. He was a large, strong boy, yet I knew I could make six motions to his one. I stepped out at the rear door and said, "William, you must go into the school-room." I received for reply a number of strong oaths with a flat refusal.

I was not as well acquainted with school-law then as I am now, and did not know as I had a right to go into the street for the boy, for I believed he would run. But the law was of small account to me then; that boy was going into the school-room. I started for him and he did run, but his running was of small account for I could run two rods to his one and soon came up to him. Before he had time to think what I was after, my two hands had a good grip in his hair, he was doubled over with his head about two feet from the ground and was trotting toward the school-house. He did not get his head higher until we were inside, and I went at him with a good ruler. When I let him up, it was after he had promised to obey every rule of my school, never to be saucy to me, and never to use another profane word on that play-ground. He went to his seat peaceably and at noon came to me and very civilly asked if he might go home. Knowing he was in no condition to study I said, "Yes." I have not given this boy's full name

but will say, his father kept the Old Red Tavern about one and a half miles south of Podunk.

Three of the most noted places on that street were Podunk, Owl's Head, and the Old Red Tavern. I was obliged to pass the Old Red Tavern in going home. In the middle of the street I was met by the father of the boy and, leaving out the profanity and the threats, I listened to a very eloquent lecture, in which he assured me that he would have me in the penitentiary before the next night. I listened attentively, and without making reply passed on. I imagine that I did not have much appetite for supper that night, for I did not know but he could put me in the lockup.

After tea I went up to the corners and called the trustees together. The board was composed of three representative men: John F. Hicks and J. Kincaid, both acting justices of the peace at that time, and James Chesbro. On the assembling of the board, I stated the circumstances, and the president said: "Mr. Hooper we have hired you to teach our school. If that boy comes back and does not obey your rules, you go at him again, only be a little more severe the next time, and we will stand between you and all harm. It shall not cost you a cent."

I wonder how many of the trustees of the schools realize how much good an encouraging

word does a teacher. I went back to my school the next morning feeling as strong as a lion. I had not only my own strength but also the strength of the three strong men just back of me. The question of discipline was settled. I think those boys believed that I would climb a boy six feet tall and wring his neck if he did not mind me. There was no more trouble on that line during the three years that I taught the Podunk school.

I will say before closing this chapter, that William came to school after a week's absence, and never gave me more trouble. Some years afterward I met him at Amboy, where he had married and settled. While teaching at Amboy I raised several acres of tobacco and used to hire William to help me hoe it. While working together in the tobacco we used to talk and laugh over our little scrap at the Podunk school, and I think the man respected me much more than if the incident had not occurred.

Podunk was a place much better known fifty years ago than it is now. That is, it had a far reaching reputation. It was said that one travelling in western States, if he chanced to speak of Syracuse would find that little was known of it; but if he mentioned Podunk he would find that it was well-known. I remember at one time when eight or ten railroad conductors came out

there on what they called a lark. Soon after they arrived they cut the flagpole down and stretching it across the street made a tollgate of it, and every man who came along must pay toll. If he had a woman with him, however, the pole was carried back and all stood with uncovered heads while she was passing. The constable was notified and came in haste. They listened respectfully while he explained the law and told them that they would be arrested if they did not desist at once. They gathered around, took him in their arms, and carrying him to the bar, told the landlord to fill the glasses. The constable being a strong temperance man, some friends interfered in his behalf, and he was told that if he would go right home and be a good boy they would let him go.

But Podunk is no more. Under the march of civilization, Centerville with Plank Road P. O. has taken its place; and with another stride onward in the scale of knowledge, it is now honored with the name of North Syracuse. Owl's Head has long since been forgotten. The old Red Tavern has been swept away, and the places that knew them will know them no more.

CHAPTER XI

Tobacco in School, 1852

As we are writing under the head of incidents of school experience, and that my young readers may compare the old with the new, permit me to say farther of this same school that after three years of happy experience I went into what we called the Brown district school, and a man of long experience was engaged in the Podunk school. Some three or four weeks after the school had commenced I met one of the trustees who asked me to visit the school and see how the teacher, whom I had recommended to them, was getting along, as they understood he was teaching all of the boys, and he did not know but the girls, to smoke. Being then a resident of the Podunk district, I embraced the first opportunity to visit the school. I found a fine class of pupils present, many of them young men and women. I noticed a general confusion in the room, yet all were busy and the work went on until recess. (The progress of civilization had made it apparent that it was better to have seperate yards for girls and boys, so the recess came at the same time.)

Immediately after recess was announced, the

teacher filled and lighted his pipe, several of the boys lighted cigars, and they all had a visit and a smoke together. I spoke to the teacher of the impropriety of smoking in the school-room. He replied that he could not get along from morning until noon without smoking and as he was obliged to smoke he could not deprive the boys of the same privilege. As the school went on after recess I noticed that the boys were free to cross the room and sitting beside the girls to talk over their lessons, and I suppose, their parties. They all seemed very free to change about while the teacher kept hard at work.

At noon I had an opportunity to ask the young folks how it went: "Oh! grandly," they said. They never had so much fun in school in their lives. I asked the teacher about the whispering and general confusion, and he said he did not believe in still schools. By allowing the pupils to change their seats, they could help each other, and it saved a great deal of time. And then he loved to hear that buzzing sound in the room. It sounded like the mill grinding corn. It seemed as if there was business going on.

I will add that there were sensible pupils in that school. They had become a little intoxicated with the fun, but as soon as they sobered up, they realized that they were not learning, and one day they had a quarrel with their teacher, and the school was closed.

CHAPTER XII

In Various Schools, 1853–1872

My two years' or two winters' experience in the Brown school was marked by no interruptions. I had some boys who were regarded as a little rough, but we got along very pleasantly. I have heard my friend Mr. Fred Smiley of North Syracuse relate an incident of that school which I will repeat. He said that in the spring, just before the close of my first year, one of the trustees in conversation with a young man who had formerly given some trouble in the school, said to him: "You used a year ago to call that little teacher that we had from Syracuse, Kinky! Kinky! Kinky! Why don't you call this one Kinky?" The reply was: "He is nothing but a kinky, but darn him we dare not tell him so. They knew they could handle him, but for some mysterious reason they dared not undertake it."

My next two winters were spent at Pine Grove, about one mile north of Podunk, where teachers and pupils enjoyed the work and were happy. This school was represented by such families as those of Rev. Earl P. Salisbury, Merritt Belden, Merriam, Lilly, and other representative men, and the school was intelligent.

After nine years of teaching in the northern towns, I settled in the school at Amboy in the town of Camillus. I spent four years very pleasantly at Amboy. The only incident that I care to relate is a little advice given me by the trustee about three weeks after the school had begun. As I went into his grocery store one evening he made this remark: "Mr. Hooper, there are three boys in your school who do not intend to mind you. Now you may do as you have a mind to, but I will tell you what I would do. The first time one of those boys refused to mind me, I would knock him down with a stick of wood or anything I could get hold of." Rather radical advice for a trustee to give his teacher. I said: "I am abundantly able to manage my school. I shall not call on my trustee to help me."

The school was pleasant and I think as a rule we were all happy.

I then spent two years at the upper or western Fairmount school. I have never taught a school that gave me more satisfaction than this one. There are two departments, and we were obliged to use the second room for a study room, as there were many more than one room would accommodate. This school was represented by such families as the Driscoll, Plumb, Murphy, Whedon, Gaylord, Canally, Hubbard, Wadsworth, and Leddy families.

I think could James Driscoll have lived he might have reached the Nation's capital sooner than his brother Michael. He was a tall, fine-looking young man, full of fun and full of work. He died at the age of twenty-nine.

Some of my older readers will remember *Jeemes* of the Baldwinsville Gazette, or rather James Clark. If I am not mistaken Mr. Clark filled out a term as school commissioner made vacant by the resignation of Alonzo H. Clapp. I can hardly forbear to say just here of Alonzo H. Clapp that it was a costly war that required the lives of such men. He was young, thoroughly educated, true to the principles of right. Could he have lived he would have reflected honor upon his chosen profession.

An incident of this school occurs to me which I will relate. On a certain morning, when the seats in the senior room were all filled and the arithmetic recitations were going on, a tall, dark-complexioned, black-haired gentleman entered the room and announced himself the school commissioner. We gave him a seat and the work went on until half-past eleven, when at the ringing of the table-bell the folding doors were thrown open, and fifteen girls and boys, as intelligent a class as I have ever had in any school, passed out to the recitation. The commissioner leaned back in his chair and expressed

himself in about the following language: "Well, Mr. Hooper, I have found an oasis! I have been travelling in the desert all the week and truly this is an oasis!"

In the fall of 1863 I had a call to the Geddes village school, then consisting of two hundred ten pupils, with four teachers. During my principalship it grew in numbers (including the Magnolia branch) to nine hundred sixty pupils with seventeen teachers. I do not care to say much of my experience as principal of the Geddes school. They told us we had a good school, but I have to confess that as I look back upon the methods of doing school work then and compare them with the present, and see how much more is being accomplished, and how much less time is required in which to accomplish it, I hardly feel to admit that my school was even then a good school.

Perhaps before closing this chapter I should say for the satisfaction of the more than nine hundred contibutors to the beautiful tribute of their kindness and generosity, that after almost thirty years have passed it is ticking off the time in my pocket by day and by night as correctly as ever.

CHAPTER XIII

A School Commissioner, 1873–1878

In the fall of 1872 I was elected to the office of school commissioner of the second district of Onondaga county, and re-elected in 1875, holding the office six years.

The school commissioner has always been considered, like the schoolmaster of olden time, a distinguished individual. It is an honorable office, and any man may consider himself honored who has been elected to it by a fair majority of the voters of his district. But when a man has to buy influence and pay for it in money, in whisky, in beer, and cigars, in order to be elected, there is not much honor in it.

I was at this time suffering for want of out-of-door exercise. Through the kindness of my friends in giving me the office, I got all that I wanted, and from January to April I thought a little more than I needed; for I came near freezing to death.

I found the larger schools doing well, and some of the more rural schools were doing their work well, and producing good results. But they were like fertile spots in the desert, few and far between.

The most of the rural schools were in a sad

condition. For instance I stayed at a farmer's house over night. In the evening a little boy about seven years old who was playing with his toys was requested by his mother to get his school reader and read for the commissioner. The little boy read some stories that I selected for him in as pleasant, natural, story-like way as one could wish. I visited the school the next morning, and when the class of which this little boy was a member was called, I turned to one of the pieces that had been read so nicely the evening before and requested the teacher to allow the children to read it. To say that I was surprised would hardly express it. The boy at the end of the class pitched the key—struck the tune and read the first verse. No. 2 with the same pitch and in the same tune read the second verse. The boy who had read this piece so nicely in the evening at home was No. 3, and taking the same class pitch and tune read his verse in that same strange, unnatural voice. He dared not read naturally, the class would laugh at him, the whole school would laugh at him, and I do not know but the teacher would. The intelligent mother was teaching her boy to read correctly. The teacher was undoing every day what the mother was trying to accomplish.

Now this is a fair sample of the silly work that was done in many of the schools of the

county in the teaching of reading less than thirty years ago.

What was very strange to me, and for which I have never been able to account, was the fact that wherever this strange pitch and tune was found in a class, it was in all classes, not only in the reading but in the other recitations. And it was precisely the same in schools twenty miles apart.

I learned the tune so perfectly that I can take the pitch and sing a verse in that tune now as well as I could then. It is the second tune that I ever learned. My wife used to tell me that I knew but one tune, and that was "From Greenlands Icy mountains". But I learned this tune as perfectly as the other, and can sing both of them very nicely now.

CHAPTER XIV

Teachers Associations

I think that ever since commissioner district teachers meetings were first organized, it has been conceded by the better class of teachers that much good came from them. We had in those days usually four meetings a year, and they were well attended.

The most good that I ever realized from teachers meetings was in town gatherings. I would visit the schools of a town and at the same time see the trustee of each school, and ask him to allow the teacher to close her school at noon on Friday without deducting from her salary, as I wanted her at the teacher's meeting. Not in a single instance did a trustee refuse to allow the teacher to go, and almost always, if necessary, he would provide means for her to get there. Many a Friday afternoon have I spent pleasantly with ten or twelve teachers, discussing our successes and our failures, and advising each other how to overcome difficulties such as we must meet in the school-room.

I am sorry to note that teachers associations are becoming less frequent in Onondaga county, and I know of no reason other than that school

commissioners are receiving a higher salary now than they got thirty years ago.

The first teachers institute that I attended was held in Syracuse, and was conducted by John H. French. The second was held in the old White school house in Baldwinsville, and was conducted by James Johonnot. These two men were types of the noble men sent out by the State department, to build up teachers institutes in New York State, and well did they do their work. One of the strongest evidences of the growing efficiency of the teachers institutes from those days to the present, is found in the greater efficiency of our teachers and the improved methods of doing school work.

The department has sometimes made mistakes, and men have been sent to conduct our institutes who were good for nothing as teachers. But I will say of the present administration, if a single mistake has been made on this line, Onondaga county has not found it.

It is but a few years since the law requiring attendance at the institute was in force, and there were more liberties taken in the old days than now.

I remember an incident at an institute held at Skaneateles, while I was principal of the school at Geddes.

One morning, while the bell was being rung

for the morning session, as I was sitting by the window fronting the lake, I saw my whole corps of teachers, to the number of seventeen, headed up the lake under full sail, waving their handkerchiefs. After an hour's sail they came in looking as fresh, as innocent, and as good-natured as one could wish. I will say that I never whipped a girl in my school in my life. But if I could have taken one of those gads spoken of in another part of this book, and laid it onto those seventeen young women's shoulders about six times apiece, I think it would have been perfect bliss—for me.

CHAPTER XV

Solvay, 1879–1884

At the termination of my term of office I engaged as principal of school No. 2, Geddes, now Solvay, where I remained six years.

I enjoyed my school at No. 2 very much, and I think the boys and girls of that time, now grown to men and women, are glad to meet and shake hands with their old teacher.

I can hardly forbear to relate a little incident of this school which occurred while I was in the school commissioner work. A young man with a good education, so far as book knowledge was concerned, was engaged to teach the school. It soon became evident to the commissioner that he lacked one of the principal requisites of a successful teacher,—that is common sense. The school amounted to nothing for want of discipline. The school had two departments, and there was a large class of older pupils who had evidently been in the habit of running the school about to suit their own notion. The young man was obliged to quit, and Peter B. McLennan, then reading law in one of the law offices of Syracuse, was engaged to finish the term. I was told by the pupils, that the school passed along quietly for some days, when, as the teacher was hearing a class of young boys and girls re-

cite their lesson and talking with them about their geography work, a couple of young men sitting a little back took it upon them to cut up. The teacher, with a book in one hand and continuing the conversation with the class, quietly walked back and taking one of the young men by the collar lifted him up over the desks and carried him to the front. Not breaking his conversation, he lifted the other with one hand and, carrying him to the front, passed on as if nothing had happened. Discipline was established and there was no more trouble on that line.

I will add another anecdote of this teacher, now a distinguished justice of the supreme court. At our teachers institute one of the conductors had made himself disagreeable by putting on airs and talking down to the teachers. He gave a lesson on local geography, in the course of which he asked how long Onondaga lake was. Some thought it was five miles, some five and a half, some six, some six and a half. He burst into a tirade against their ignorance, saying these lakes of central New York were world famous; a teacher in Louisana or in Liverpool or in Vienna ought to know their dimensions. How disgraceful for Onondaga teachers not to know, and know for certain, that Onondaga lake was six miles long. When he was through young McLennan quietly asked him how wide it was. The conductor could not tell; he had not looked that up.

CHAPTER XVI

Final Experiences as a Teacher, 1884–1899

In the spring of 1884 I engaged to teach in Baldwinsville, on the south side of the river. I had a very pleasant school experience in Baldwinsville for three years, when I engaged to go to Cayuga, in Cayuga county. My nervous system at this time was nearly prostrated, and after trying two months to overcome my nervousness and settle down to school work I was obliged to give it up.

I rested the remainder of the school year, and the next year I went into the West Fairmount school, where I taught the children of those who were my pupils thirty-one and thirty-two years before. To say I enjoyed this school is unnecessary, for I have never taught a school that I did not enjoy; and I suppose that the fact that I have always been happy in my school work has had something to do with prolonging my school-life.

After six years of school work at Fairmount, I went into the Euclid school, in the town of Clay, where I remained five years. Forty-five years before, I had taught my first school in the county in the town of Clay, and I had some desire to

finish my work in the same town. After five years of happy experience in Euclid I found I had described a fifty year circle, and on advising with my doctor as to the probability of my being able to describe another such a circle I followed his advice and retired.

I shall never forget my last year of school. I had some misgivings at the beginning of the year about being able to go through. The first half year of school passed, and I felt that I could not finish my year. "But," I said, "it is my fiftieth year of school in Onondaga county"; and I prayed earnestly that I might have strength to finish the year. That same will-power that had so many times come to the rescue seemed to impel me on, and I finished the work of teaching on the seventeenth day of June, 1899. On that, to me, memorable afternoon, as the last pupil bade me a pleasant good-by, I settled back in my chair and said to myself, "It is done!"

And now my dear readers, my school life is ended. The story of my young boyhood, the struggles that I experienced, the pledges that I made, the power that was given me to keep my pledges sacred, the Divine help and protecting care that were given me amid dangers, have all been recorded. I have narrated my experience from the age of twenty, when fortune seemed to smile upon me and I was enabled to earn my

living, and also to get an education; my return to St. Lawrence county and my first school experience; my boarding around; coasting down hill on the crust on our way to the spelling school; the commencement of fifty year's experience as a teacher in Onondaga county.

CHAPTER XVII

Attendance and Tardiness

I have often been asked by teachers, especially of the rural schools, one or more of the following questions:

(1) How do you secure regular attendance?

(2) How do you prevent tardiness?

(3) How do you prevent whispering?

(4) Do you advise teachers to play with their pupils out of school hours?

(5) Do you believe in corporal punishment?

I have been accustomed to reply as follows:

(1) To secure regular attendance, be attractive yourself, full of enthusiasm and interest in your work. Never let time drag with yourself or your pupils. Make your school-room attractive. Engage the interest of your pupils to help you to make your school-room and play-ground just as beautiful as possible, and secure the coöperation of the trustee; visit the parents of the habitually absent, stay to tea, and talk the matter over. If absent again, go down that same night and talk it over again. Be sure to stay to tea every time you go, and it won't be long before Johnny will be in school regularly.

(2) To prevent tardiness, never be tardy your

self. A teacher should be a pattern of punctuality. He should be on time in meeting all of his engagements, both social and business. He should be on time at school, on time at church, on time everywhere. Teach the parents that there is no excuse for tardiness; and if necessary send a printed circular to all the parents setting forth the importance of children's learning lessons of promptness. Just such a circular as you can write and as will cost but a few cents to have seventy-five or a hundred printed, will prove of great help.

But, you say, suppose after all some do come in tardy, what will you do? Always let them come in, and never whip them. But you may talk to them, and you can soon make it unpopular for pupils to come into school-room after the school has begun.

On a certain Saturday a number of years since I started from a little west of Syracuse to go to Auburn. I walked up the turnpike to Camillus, and as I reached a point on the east hill near the station I saw the train moving out. The conductor was standing on the rear platform. I called loudly to him to stop the train. I told him our clock was too slow, and I did not mean to be tardy. I told him my mother was sick and I had to go for the doctor. I told him I had to mind the baby while my mother washed the dishes, and I had to

chop some wood for my mother to get dinner. He just stood looking at me and laughed. I finally told him that my little brother had just died; I thought surely that would break his heart, but he kept going right on all the time, laughing at me.

Now do you not think that conductor was a hard-hearted man? I wanted to go to Auburn and he was going right that way. To be sure I was about one minute late, but I had brought the very best of excuses, just such as nine-tenths of the teachers would accept, and this man would not accept one of them.

Now let us look a moment at the position held by this man and see if we can find a reason for his treating me so shabbily. This train was loaded with men, women, and children; and the conductor was legally and morally responsible not only for their safety, but also for their reaching their destination on time, and he had no time to stop for a laggard. Again the train in that one minute time had reached a velocity that hah carried it beyond the power of the conductor. He could not stop it if he would. Its own momentum would carry it on.

Now my school carries as precious a load as any railroad train, and I am legally and morally responsible for the safety of the pupils, and also for their moral and intellectual development into

good business men and women. If I find a fault growing in the character of one of these pupils, it is my business to try and remove it, and a laggard will never make much of a business man.

I love to look upon my school, although it may be far away, hid among the hills in the country, and contain but ten little children, as a part of the great educational system of my country, and feel that I am one of the great army of teachers, working faithfully to develop the girls and boys in my charge into true manhood and womanhood.

Would I send a tardy pupil home? Yes if I had a right to. But as I have not, I will make it so unpleasant for him that he will rather go home than come into my school-room tardy.

Oh! but you say, he will lose all of his lessons of that session. Yes, he will, but what will he gain? Perhaps I can answer the question by telling you what I gained by the conductor's refusing to wait just one minute for me at the station. It was this: when I wanted to take the train at Camillus again to go to Auburn I was on time.

CHAPTER XVIII

Whispering

(3) To prevent whispering, the best way I have ever found is to crowd it out with hard work. Another good way is to vote it out. Ask your pupils to sign a pledge that they will not whisper in study hours. And after you have crowded it out and voted it out and pledged it out you will find some from whom you would like to thrash it out. I have sometimes worked the reporting system successfully. It will work well in some schools; in others it should never be used. If you find that even one pupil is not reporting truthfully, either silence that one, or discontinue the plan.

A case in hand will show to what means pupils will sometimes resort to avoid telling a falsehood, and yet have their own way.

In my own experience in one of the larger schools a class graduated from the junior to the senior room. Among the graduates were three girls who were close companions, and more than usually bright. It soon became evident to me that those three girls were whispering every day and reporting perfect. In my conversation with them after school, they admitted that they whis-

pered in study hours, and that they reported prefect. But they indignantly denied that they told falsehoods.

I told them that I had confidence in their integrity. I said, "It would break your mothers' hearts if they knew that you were telling a falsehood here every day, and you will have to explain."

They much preferred to settle the matter with me rather than to have it go to their mothers, and they explained that all the while they were in the junior room the rule was that they must not whisper to each other in study hours. So whenever they whispered they always said "Miss White" first, and then said what they wanted to. They had done the same since they had been in my room, so they had never whispered to each other, but to Miss White in the junior, and to Mr. Hooper, in the senior room.

So I say be cautious in the use of the reporting system, but if you use it make it thorough.

(4) As to whether teachers should play with their pupils out of school hours, I will say that any game that is suitable for pupils is suitable for teachers, and I am sorry for a teacher who cannot enter heartily into the sports of the children.

CHAPTER XIX

Corporal Punishment

(5) As to corporal punishment, I will say that the more experience I have in dealing with children, the less I believe in punishing; and I have come to believe that the enactment of a law making it a misdemeanor for a teacher to punish a pupil by inflicting pain upon his body as a means of preserving order in school, would be a wise law.

We are expected to use such means to preserve order in our schools as a judicious parent would use in governing his children in the family. There are injudicious parents; and we have injudicious teachers who never ought to be allowed to punish a child.

Under this head let me state a few facts that have come under my own observation. The first implements of torture in use in the schools that I remember to have seen, were ironwood ox-gads, four or five feet long, and steamed in the fire to make them still more tough. Sixty years ago, five or six such gads laid up overhead in the school-room were considered a part of the winter teacher's kit, and he was not considered much of a teacher if he was not able to use them.

Other punishments were the dunce-card, the red cap, and the printed card. I do not know but these are still in use. Another was the wheel-platform; this consisted of a board about one foot square with a small wheel, like a castor, under each corner. I never saw this worked, but have been told that the pupil was required to stand on the platform with his book, when the teacher, watching his opportunity, would kick the platform from behind, letting him down on the back of his head.

Next, the sweat-chain. This was a small trace chain prepared with a slipping noose at one end to attach to the stove-pipe or crane of the fire-place, and a lock at the other end. It was worked by passing the chain around the pupil's body, drawing him up, and locking him to the pipe. Then a good fire in the stove soon sweated all the evil out. This convenient apparatus was in use in some of the schools of Onondaga county less than forty-five years ago.

Another quite popular method of punishment, and one that I have seen worked, was for the teacher to draw a chalk line on the floor, which the pupil must toe and bending over put the end of his fingers on another line drawn some distance in front; then, holding up one foot, he was in a position of agony during the pleasure of the teacher. This mode of punishment was

somewhat common in the more rural schools of the 2d district of the county in 1872 and 1873. In the winter of 1873 I found it in use as I stepped into a school-room I immediately informed the teacher that I was there to inspect his methods of teaching and not of punishing, and would like that boy to be released. There were intelligent young women in that room who blushed with shame and indignation at that spectacle.

CHAPTER XV

Responsibility of the Teacher

I think it would be well for our department of public instruction to appoint a committee whose duty it shall be to prepare specimens of the bull-gad, the dunce-block, cap, and motto, the platform-car, the sweat-chain, the paddle as used in the Elmira Reformatory, and the hickory ruler, and deposit them in our State capitol at Albany as relics of the means used to preserve order in our schools during the barbarous ages.

I would like just here to speak of a subject that is not connected with discipline.

I have visited institutes and other teacher's gatherings outside of our county, and I believe the conductors will bear me out in making the statement that there is no class of people more neatly and reasonably dressed than a class of Onondaga county teachers at their institute.

I have said that teachers should be patterns of promptness. I want to say just here, that teachers should be patterns of neatness. I have seen men teachers in their schools with their trowser-legs inside their rubber-boot tops, while a ridge around the ankle indicated just how deep they had got into the mud in coming to school.

Good nature is one of the graces that a teacher should possess. A kind heart, indicated by a radiant face and pleasant voice, will cover many faults. I know there come times and circumstances in the school-room when it seems hard, but we do not want to forget that it pays to be good-natured. Cultivate a kind heart and let kindness mark every step of your school life. Every teacher of experience can recall times when a kind word to a pupil gave him courage and ambition such as he had never felt before, and perhaps changed the whole course of his life.

A boy came into my school at Geddes one morning, ragged, untidy, and altogether in a sad condition for the school-room. After a little time I asked him about books, and found he had none. I picked up some books for him for the day, and at the close of school I had him remain. Some way I had been drawn toward the boy from my first conversation with him. When we were alone I sat down close to him, and putting my hand on his shoulder, said, "Johnny, do you want to learn?"

Tears ran down his cheeks as he said: "Mr. Hooper, I do want to learn; you don't know how much I want to learn. Will you let me come to your school?" By this time tears were running down my cheeks, and Johnny and his teacher had a good crying spell together. He

then told me that he had just come from driving on the canal, and as navigation was about closing, he was discharged in Syracuse, the captain telling him that he had no money to pay him at present. Johnny was soon properly clothed and happy in school.

I will add that two years and a half afterward I went into our coal office to order some coal, and this same young man took my order. He was a trusted clerk and earning a good salary.

A few years ago I visited the State prison at Auburn. As the party were led into a large empty room with windows and doors barred, I saw, leaning against the door on the opposite side of the room, a young man dressed in the prison suit. His face was so familiar to me that for a moment I forgot where I was, and was going to shake hands with him and say, "How do you do, Frank?" when he shook his head for me not to come. I saw him as I had seen him sitting before me at the recitation, month after month for more than two years. As I turned and went up the stairs, I said to myself, "To what extent am I responsible for the condition of that young man?"

There graduated from the junior to the senior room with his class, a young boy whom we called Eugene. He was a favorite with both teachers and pupils. He was small for his age, then ten.

He was just that kind of boy that everybody loves. He was bright, of a nervous temperament, perfectly reliable, easy to learn, and full of mischief. Fellow teacher, did you ever know a temperament such as I have described that was not mischievous?

In a few days I found he was writing and passing notes to his classmates in study hours. What was to be done? Shall we punish him? I think I would not have struck that boy a blow to save my right hand from destruction. I did as you would have done, kept him and talked with him alone. Please remember I asked him to make no promises, for I believed if he did he would break them. Again and again the same thing was repeated, and again and again we had a talk alone. I had asked for no pledge that he would discontinue writing notes in study hours and he had not volunteered to give me one.

Fellow teachers, I come to you for advice. I am in trouble. This little boy is troubling me and I do not know how to overcome the trouble. My patience is gone. I worried about it all last night. Is it time to whip him now? No. I have studied this little boy. I know what his nature is, and I would not whip him for all the gold in the mines. But what shall we do? We are driven to the wall. My wisdom is not equal to the task, but, fellow teacher, as I can-

not direct you, I will cite you to three words, each commencing with P, that will always help you out in every school emergency: *patience*, *prayer*, and *perseverance*.

It was late in the fall, and on a dark, gloomy day about three o'clock in the afternoon, I took the little boy by the hand and went down to the primary room. The children had all gone home. It was dark, gloomy, and silent as we went into that large room. I sat down on a desk and drawing him to me and putting my arm around him said, "Eugene, do you not think I ought to whip you?" Impulsively he put his arm around my neck, and said "Mr. Hooper, I will be a good boy! I will be a good boy! I won't do so any more." Tears were running down his cheeks and they were running down mine as well, and Eugene and his teacher had a cry together. Please notice he had given me a voluntary pledge, and I knew he would keep it. I said, it is too lonesome here. Let us go back to the school-room. During the few weeks that followed I believe that pledge was kept sacred.

We noticed one morning that Eugene's chair was vacant and we heard that he was very sick. Each morning as we inquired after him, the report was that he was not as well, and every evening I called to see him. During his spells of delirium his school was in his mind. His exam-

inations seemed to trouble him, and his mother told me he would frequently say he would not trouble Mr. Hooper any more. Some two weeks after the little boy's chair was vacant, word came about two o'clock in the afternoon that Eugene was dying and wanted to see his teacher.

I hastened down to the sick room, and as I sat on that bedside and looked into that beautiful face, his eyes seemed to be lighted up with heavenly light. I had never seen them so bright before. Some one said, he is penetrating the veil; he is looking into the beautiful kingdom. I said to myself, my dear boy, I never struck you a blow. I never spoke an ill-natured word to you. I shall meet you before the Great White Throne!

As I sat at my table in the school-room at Baldwinsville at the beginning of the noon hour, a young girl in passing out to go to her dinner said to me, "Mr. Hooper, I am afraid I shall not be at school this afternoon, as I am not feeling well." I said, "Louise, I have noticed that you do not feel well. Is you school work troubling you?" She said, "No, I think I will be back to-morrow." In three days Louise died and we laid her beautiful form in the flower-lined grave in the cemetery beside the Seneca.

Fellow teacher, have you ever missed a dearly loved pupil from your school-room? Did you think as you went back and saw the vacant seat,

that but yesterday you, with your remaining pupils, followed that loved one to the grave and saw them cover him down deep in the ground with the cold damp earth? Did it make you a better man? A better woman? A better teacher?

And now, kind readers, my task is done. I have tried so to write up my little history as that you would be entertained and benefited. With my seventy-two years experience in life, I find I am inclined gradually to let go of life here, and take a firmer hold of the life beyond. I am contemplating with all the power of my imagination, the beauty, the loveliness, the grandeur, the glory of that life,—of that home. And I say to myself sometimes, Eugene will be there, Louise will be there, hundreds of my pupils as precious as they will be there. She whom many of my readers knew, and who was as precious to me as my own life, will be there. All of those teachers who have been so kindly associated with me in the school-room, will be there. And I desire that my mansion be so large, so broad in its dimensions, that I may invite all of these, and all of the noble men and women who have so earnestly worked with me in the schools of Onondaga county, and all my host of friends everywhere, to come over and make us a visit in our new and beautiful mansion in Our Father's House.

OTHER STORIES OF SCHOOL LIFE

Bardeen's Roderick Hume.

The Story of a New York Teacher. Pp. 319. Cloth, $1.25; manilla, 50 cts. This is one of the 22 best books for teachers recommended by Chancellor W. H. Payne in the *New England Journal of Education* for Nov., 1893. It is also one of the books described by W. M. Griswold in his "A Descriptive List of Novels and Tales dealing with American Country Life."

Roderick Hume took possession of me, and the book was finished in one sitting that lasted beyond the smallest hour. I have joined the crowd in your triumphal procession. The characters are as truly painted as any in Dickens, and the moral is something that cannot be dodged.—Professor *Edward North*, Hamilton College.

My confinement at home gave me an opportunity to read it carefully, which I have done with great delight. I can certify that it is true to life. I have had experience in country and village schools as well as in the schools of the cities. The picture is true for all of them. I know too well how self-interest, jealousy, prejudice, and the whole host of meaner motives are likely to prevail in the management of school affairs anywhere. That the people should know this and yet entrust the management of their schools to men who are most likely to be influenced by personal considerations is strange indeed.—My memory brings to mind an original for every portrait you have drawn.—*Andrew J. Rickoff*, former Sup't of Schools, Cleveland, O.

Teachers cannot fail to be greatly benefited by the reading of the book. Roderick's address to his pupils is a compendium of the best points in the highest kind of school management. Miss Duzenberrie's victory and Vic Blarston's closing remarks ought to teach lessons of warning to many teachers who are even the most in earnest about their work. Mary Lowe is a beautiful model of a teacher, and no one will be surprised that Roderick should make her his helpmate instead of his assistant. It is a capital story, and we recommend it strongly to every Canadian teacher. Each one should get a copy for himself, as he will wish to read it more than once. —Inspector *James L. Hughes*, in *Canadian School Journal*.

In the columns of *The Bulletin*, in 1878, appeared a serial story which attracted the attention of educators in all parts of the country. It was entitled *Roderick Hume*, and was professedly "the story of a New York teacher." It was written with the specific view of portraying certain phases of the modern graded school. The narrative was not designed as a satire, though a vein of humor ran through it all; nor was it to be taken as an autobiography, though the author's own experiences were more or less interwoven with it. The interest of the story increased from month to month, and widely extended the reputation of *The School Bulletin* and its editor. Letters received from all parts of the country revealed, in fact, a phenomenal interest in its outcome. * * * Subsequently it appeared in book form, and it has since held a unique place in American literature.—*The Schoolmaster in Comedy and Satire*, p. 453.

C. W. BARDEEN, Publisher, Syracuse, N. Y.

"I got Roderick Hume yesterday. I began it in the afternoon, and finished it at my office last night at 10 o'clock. It is just like you, full of your usual candor, fearlessness, and hnmor. I haven't laughed so heartily in a good while as I did over your book-fight: and its other characters are all drawn *ad unguem*. Send me 100 copies, and the bill with them. I want my teachers, and directors too, to read the most enjoyable book on education I have ever read."—Sup't *H. C. Missimer*, Erie, Pa.

"We have just finished Roderick Hume a story of a New York Teacher. We began after ten o'clock at night expecting to read an hour. But the story was so life-like, so full of that interest which comes from truth well portrayed, as to chain us to the end. This book should be in every library in Arkansas and school children trained to read it."—*Southern School Journal.*

"I did not want to eat or sleep till I had read it all. One of my school directors picked it up from the table and read a page or two, and although he is a man who reads but little he begged the loan of it to read it all. He said it was so applicable to the average school-board. I shall circulate it through my county, and hope to have all my school directors read it and apply its teaching."—Sup't *C. W. Foreman*, Meeker, Colo.

"I took the book up with a cynical smile, expecting to glance through it to satisfy my conscience and the friend who gave it, and then to lay it aside, mentally requesting a waiting world to be patient until I should write *the book* of our business. But, alas! and alack! I don't think I will write it. I was surprised, pleased, entertained, and ashamed that I had not read it before. You certainly know teachers, and have given a sensible man excellent food for reflection. Those of us who know enough already, of course to us, it can make little difference. I acknowledge that I stick in Vanity Fair and read Sentimental Tommy without a smile or a tear, present or remotely prospective, but I revelled in Roderick Hume and shall read it again."—*S. B. Gilhuly*, Principal Reading Academy, Flemington, N. J.

"This is a novel, as the name might indicate, and it possesses the novelty of having school people, teachers, pupils, and members of boards for its leading characters. Even the much-maligned school-book agent is not left out. The action and interest of the story centre in and around the schools of a New York town, whose superintendent and lady principal are hero and heroine, and who, like all other sensible heroes and heroines, fall in love with each other and finally succeed after great difficulty in getting married, or at least impressing the reader that they will get married. It is a mighty good story, but its chief merit lies in the fact that under the guise of a novel the author shows up many of the weaknesses of our public school system, the foibles of teachers, the schemes of text-book agents, how politics and religion are used to hamper and hinder the progress of the schools, etc., etc. It is fiction with a purpose, and a good purpose too. The writer of this article picked up the book one evening and became so interested that he could not lay it aside until finished. Every teacher ought to get it, and read and re-read it."—*School Record.*

Commissioner Hume

"Mr. Bardeen is a born story-teller, and his Commissioner Hume, a story of New York schools, abounds in pathos, humor, and fidelity to human nature. As a type this story ought to be widely read, and if every school trustee in the land could read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest its moral, public education in the United States would receive a mighty uplift. Despite the fact that it is a story with a moral, it is intensely interesting from the first page to the last. Gottlieb Krottenthaler is a character that ought to live."—*Educational Review.*"

"This timely little book is a decided addition to our historical literature. The author portrays the inner workings of early New York schools in a book as readable as any novel. Special stress seems to be laid upon the power of political intriguers to dispense school patronage among the highest bidders. Even the press is attacked as not always being that champion of higher education one would expect it to be. Self-interest, jealousy, prejudice, and the whole host of meaner motives that prevailed in the management of school affairs were gradually rendered of small consequence as a result of the determined stand taken against them by that marvellous man, Commisioner Hume. Truly no book shows better the good that one man can do, when all his heart and soul are in his work. There are teachers living to-day who are the counterpart of the original characters portrayed in this work, who would do well to read and profit by this delightful story. The moral of the book cannot be dodged."—*Philadelphia Teacher.*

"It is a story of New York country and village schools and county school administration in 1875. Since, however, human nature and school nature in New York does not differ much from those of her Southern sisters, and since the ways of the wily politician of 1899 are pretty much the same as those of 1875, there is scarcely an incident in the story that might not have been taken almost literally from the history of school affairs in Florida last year, and it is a safe assertion to make that there is not a teacher of any considerable experience in the State but is more or less intimately acquainted with every character in the book from 'Mute Herring' and 'Silas Jones' to 'Prof. Slack' and 'Mrs. Arabella ——.' As a piece of fiction, simply, it is a work of art and absorbingly interesting to the general reader; but it is as a satire, keen and relentless, on the prevalent evils affecting school management and administration that it finds its highest value. It is a strong and wholesome book and should have a prominent place in every teacher's library and on every school official's desk. It contains more practical suggestions and hints of value to the ordinary teacher than any half dozen works on 'methods' with which we are acquainted. There's laughter, tears, instruction and warning in abundance in it, and few will take it up but like the writer hereof will hurry on to finish it at a single sitting, but not so fast, however, that he will not leave on almost every page some passages pencil-marked for future study and use."—*Florida School Exponent.*

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OPINIONS OF COMMISSIONER HUME

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As Roderick Hume is a picture of the New York school principal of 1870, so Nicholas Comenius is a picture of the Pennsylvania schoolmaster of 1860, when new ideas of educational methods began to come into conflict with the old. It is a vivid portrayal of the schools, the teachers and school-officers, the institutes, the book-agents, and all the educational features of that period, and deserves a place in every collection of books on education.

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From the School Gazette, Harrisburg, Pa.

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OPINIONS OF NICHOLAS COMENIUS

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"The book is unique, and without a parallel in educational literature. One begins to read it with surprise and a feeling of wonder to know the exact purpose of the author; but after reading a chapter or two he catches the drift of the work and begins to enjoy it. Beneath the stream of grave and dignified humor, there will be found many interesting historic facts and much suggestive thought in respect to educational doctrine and practice. The work is a valuable contribution to educational literature, and no educational library may be regarded as complete without a copy of it. I have placed Nicholas Comenius in the Pedagogical Library belonging to the Department of Superintendence."

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Anecdotes and Humors of School Life

No department of human employment or effort, perhaps, is more rich in anecdote and incident than the school-room, and in none certainly can judiciously chosen illustrations be more effectively used. The present volume by a well-known Peunsylvania superintendent, Aaron Sheely, is therefore offered to teachers and students in the hope that its many illustrative examples may be useful in helping to enforce and impress the daily lessons of the school-room, and as a respite from severe school work.

Many teachers have found it an admirable exercise to read a short story, like many of those here given, and ask for comments on the part of the school. To give a single illustration, a teacher read to a grammar grade the story of "Diluted Milk", on page 90.

"Now, children," she said, as a smile passed around, "what is the point of this story?"

"Please Miss ——," said a little girl eagerly, "I think it is that if you cheat you are sure to get caught."

"*I* think the point lies in the 'sagacious'," suggested one of the boys.

"How is that?"

"Why, he asked about whether it was warm water or cold, as if there wasn't any doubt that it was water of some kind, and so the carrier-boy answered before he thought."

Thus the conversation went on for ten minutes, branching off on whether college-boys would like to live that way now, whether the hard life some of them used to live made them better scholars, whether education was worth so much sacrifice, whether "devour" was a wholly proper word to use of eating bread and milk, and so on. Perhaps no class-exercise of the day was more thoroughly profitable.

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