

doesn't? It must not? Who says that? Did you address that remark to me, sir? By the way, how do you think you got along? Did you make a fool of yourself, or did you make a fool of somebody? Honors are easy. Let Robert Belcher alone! Is Toll making money a little too fast? What do you think? Perhaps you will settle that question by and by. You will keep him while you can use him. Then Toll, my boy, you can drift. In the meantime, splendor! and in the meantime let Sevenoaks howl, and learn to let Robert Belcher alone."

From these dizzy heights of elation Mr. Belcher descended to his bed and his heavy dreams, and the next morning found him whirling away at the rate of thirty miles an hour, but not northward. Whither was he going?

CHAPTER X.

WHICH TELLS HOW A LAWYER SPENT HIS VACATION IN CAMP, AND TOOK HOME A SPECIMEN OF GAME THAT HE HAD NEVER BEFORE FOUND IN THE WOODS.

IT was a bright moonlight night when Mike Conlin and Jim started off from Sevenoaks for home, leaving Mr. Balfour and his boy to follow. The old horse had a heavy load, and it was not until an hour past midnight that Mike's house was reached. There Jim made the new clothes, comprising a complete outfit for his boarders at Number Ten, into a convenient package, and swinging it over his shoulders, started for his distant cabin on foot. Mike, after resting himself and his horse, was to follow in the morning with the tools and stores, so as to arrive at the river at as early an hour as Mr. Balfour

could complete the journey from Sevenoaks, with his lighter load and swifter horses.

Jim Fenton, who had lain still for several days, and was full of his schemes for Mr. Balfour and his *protégés* in camp, and warm with his memories of Miss Butterworth, simply gloried in his moonlight tramp. The accumulated vitality of his days of idleness was quite enough to make all the fatigues before him light and pleasant. At nine o'clock the next morning he stood by the side of his boat again. The great stillness of the woods, responding in vivid color to the first kisses of the frost, half intoxicated him. No world-wide wanderer, returning after many years to the home of his childhood, could have felt more exulting gladness than he, as he shoved his boat from the bank and pushed up the shining stream in the face of the sun.

Benedict and Harry had not been idle during his absence. A deer had been shot and dressed; trout had been caught and saved alive; a cave had been dug for the preservation of vegetables; and when Jim shouted, far down the stream, to announce his approach, there were three happy persons on shore, waiting to welcome him—Turk being the third, and apparently oblivious of the fact that he was not as much a human being as any of the party. Turk added the "tiger" to Harry's three cheers, and Jim was as glad as a boy when his boat touched the shore, and he received the affectionate greetings of the party.

A choice meal was nearly in readiness for him, but not a mouthful would he taste until he had unfolded his treasures, and displayed to the astonished eyes of Mr. Benedict and the lad the comfortable clothing he had brought for them.

"Take 'em to Number Ten and put 'em on," said Jim. "I'm a goin' to eat with big folks to-day, if clo'es can make 'em. Them's yer stockin's and them's

yer boots, and them's yer indigoes and them's yet clo'es."

Jim's idea of the word "indigoes" was, that it drew its meaning partly from the color of the articles designated, and partly from their office. They were blue undergoes—in other words, blue flannel shirts.

Jim sat down and waited. He saw that, while Harry was hilarious over his good fortune, Mr. Benedict was very silent and humble. It was twenty minutes before Harry reappeared; and when he came bounding toward Jim, even Turk did not know him. Jim embraced him, and could not help feeling that he had acquired a certain amount of property in the lad.

When Mr. Benedict came forth from the little cabin, and found Jim chaffing and petting his boy, he was much embarrassed. He could not speak, but walked directly past the pair, and went out upon the bank of the river, with his eyes averted.

Jim comprehended it all. Leaving Harry, he went up to his guest, and placed his hand upon his shoulder. "Will ye furgive me, Mr. Benedict? I didn't go fur to make it hard fur ye."

"Jim," said Mr. Benedict, struggling to retain his composure, "I can never repay your overwhelming kindness, and the fact oppresses me."

"Well," said Jim, "I s'pose I don't make 'lowance enough fur the difference in folks. Ye think ye oughter pay fur this sort o' thing, an' I don't want no pay. I git comfort enough outen it, any way."

Benedict turned, took and warmly pressed Jim's hand, and then they went back to their dinner. After they had eaten, and Jim had sat down to his pipe, he told his guests that they were to have visitors that night—a man from the city and his little boy—and that they would spend a fortnight with them. The news alarmed Mr. Benedict, for his nerves were still weak, and it was a

long time before he could be reconciled to the thought of intrusion upon his solitude; but Jim reassured him by his enthusiastic accounts of Mr. Balfour, and Harry was overjoyed with the thought of having a companion in the strange lad.

"I thought I'd come home an' git ye ready," said Jim; "fur I knowed ye'd feel bad to meet a gentleman in yer old poor-house fixin's. Burn 'em or bury 'em as soon as I'm gone. I don't never want to see them things agin."

Jim went off again down the river, and Mr. Benedict and Harry busied themselves in cleaning the camp, and preparing Number Ten for the reception of Mr. Balfour and his boy, having previously determined to take up their abode with Jim for the winter. The latter had a hard afternoon. He was tired with his night's tramp, and languid with loss of sleep. When he arrived at the landing he found Mr. Balfour waiting. He had passed Mike Conlin on the way, and even while they were talking the Irishman came in sight. After half-an-hour of busy labor, the goods and passengers were bestowed, Mike was paid for the transportation, and the closing journeys of the day were begun.

When Jim had made half of the weary row up the river, he ran into a little cove to rest and wipe the perspiration from his forehead. Then he informed Mr. Balfour that he was not alone in the camp, and, in his own inimitable way, having first enjoined the strictest secrecy, he told the story of Mr. Benedict and his boy.

"Benedict will hunt and fish with ye better nor I can," said he, "an' he's a better man nor I be any way; but I'm at yer service, and ye shall have the best time in the woods that I can give ye."

Then he enlarged upon the accomplishments of Benedict's boy.

"He favors yer boy a little," said Jim, eyeing the la

closely. "Dress 'em alike, and they wouldn't be a bad pair o' brothers."

Jim did not recognize the germs of change that existed in his accidental remark, but he noticed that a shade of pain passed over the lawyer's face.

"Where is the other little feller that ye used to brag over, Mr. Balfour?" inquired Jim.

"He's gone, Jim; I lost him. He died a year ago."

Jim had no words with which to meet intelligence of this character, so he did not try to utter any; but, after a minute of silence, he said: "That's what floors me. Them dies that's got everything, and them lives that's got nothin'—lives through thick and thin. It seems sort o' strange to me that the Lord runs everything so kind o' car'less like, when there ain't nobody to bring it to his mind."

Mr. Balfour made no response, and Jim resumed his oars. But for the moon, it would have been quite dark when Number Nine was reached, but, once there, the fatigues of the journey were forgotten. It was Thede Balfour's first visit to the woods, and he was wild with excitement. Mr. Benedict and Harry gave the strangers a cordial greeting. The night was frosty and crisp, and Jim drew his boat out of the water, and permitted his stores to remain in it through the night. A hearty supper prepared them all for sleep, and Jim led his city friends to Number Ten, to enjoy their camp by themselves. A camp-fire, recently lighted, awaited them, and, with its flames illuminating the weird scenes around them, they went to sleep.

The next day was Sunday. To the devoutly disposed, there is no silence that seems so deeply hallowed as that which pervades the forest on that holy day. No steamer poughs the river; no screaming, rushing train profanes the stillness; the beasts that prowl, and the birds that fly, seem gentler than on other days; and the wilderness,

with its pillars and arches, and aisles, becomes a sanctuary. Prayers that no ears can hear but those of the Eternal; psalms that win no responses except from the echoes; worship that rises from hearts unencumbered by care, and undistracted by pageantry and dress—all these are possible in the woods; and the great Being to whom the temples of the world are reared cannot have failed to find, in ten thousand instances, the purest offerings in lonely camps and cabins.

They had a delightful and bountiful breakfast, and, at its close, they divided themselves naturally into a double group. The two boys and Turk went off by themselves to watch the living things around them, while the men remained together by the camp-fire.

Mr. Balfour drew out a little pocket-Testament, and was soon absorbed in reading. Jim watched him, as a hungry dog watches a man at his meal, and at last, having grown more and more uneasy, he said:

"Give us some o' that, Mr. Balfour."

Mr. Balfour looked up and smiled, and then read to him the parable of the talents.

"I don't know nothin' 'bout it," said Jim, at the conclusion, "but it seems to me the man was a little rough on the feller with one talent. 'Twas a mighty small capital to start with, an' he didn't give 'im any chance to try it over; but what bothers me the most is about the man's trav'lin' into a fur country. They hadn't no chance to talk with 'im about it, and git his notions. It stan's to reason that the feller with one talent would think his master was stingy, and be riled over it."

"You must remember, Jim, that all he needed was to ask for wisdom in order to receive it," said Mr. Benedict.

"No; the man that travelled into a fur country stan's for the Almighty, and he'd got out o' the way. He'd jest gi'n these fellers his capital, and quit, and left 'em to go

it alone. They couldn't go arter 'im, and he couldn't 'a' hearn a word they said. He did what he thought was all right, and didn't want to be bothered. I never think about prayin' till I git into a tight place. It stan's to reason that the Lord don't want people comin' to him to do things that they can do theirselves. I shouldn't pray for breath; I sh'd jest h'ist the winder. If I wanted a hucket o' water, I sh'd go for it. If a man's got common sense, and a pair o' hands, he hain't no business to be botherin' other folks till he gits into what he can't git out of. When he's squeezed, then in course he'll squeal. It seems to me that it makes a sort of a spooney of a man to be always askin' for what he can git if he tries. If the feller that only had one talent had brushed round, he could 'a' make a spec on it, an' had somethin' to show fur it, but he jest hid it. I don't stan' up for 'im. I think he was meaner nor pusly not to make the best on't, but he didn't need to pray for sense, for the man didn't want 'im to use no more nor his nateral stock, an' he knowed if he used that he'd be all right."

"But we are told to pray, Jim," said Mr. Balfour, "and assured that it is pleasant to the Lord to receive our petitions. We are even told to pray for our daily bread."

"Well, it can't mean jest that, fur the feller that don't work for't don't git it, an' he hadn't oughter git it. If he don't lift his hands, but jest sets with his mouth open, he gits mostly flies. The old birds, with a nest full o' howlin' young ones, might go on, I s'pose, pickin' up grasshoppers till the cows come home, an' feedin' 'em, but they don't. They jest poke 'em out o' the nest, an' larn 'em to fly an' pick up their own livin'; an' that's what makes birds on 'em. They pray mighty hard fur their daily bread, I tell ye, and the way the old birds answer is jest to poke 'em out, and let 'em slide. I don't see many prayin' folks, an' I don't see many folks any

way; but I have a consait that a feller can pray so much an' do so little, that he won't be nobody. He'll jest grow weaker an' weaker all the time."

"I don't see," said Mr. Balfour, laughing, and turning to Mr. Benedict, "but we've had the exposition of our Scripture."

The former had always delighted to hear Jim talk, and never lost an opportunity to set him going; but he did not know that Jim's exposition of the parable had a personal motive. Mr. Benedict knew that it had, and was very serious over it. His nature was weak in many respects. His will was weak; he had no combativeness; he had a wish to lean. He had been baffled and buffeted in the world. He had gone down into the darkness, praying all the way; and now that he had come out of it, and had so little society; now that his young life was all behind him, and so few earthly hopes beckoned him on, he turned with a heart morbidly religious to what seemed to him the only source of comfort open to him. Jim had watched him with pain. He had seen him, from day to day, spending his hours alone, and felt that prayer formed almost the staple of his life. He had seen him willing to work, but knew that his heart was not in it. He was not willing to go back into the world, and assert his place among men. The poverty, disease, and disgrace of his former life dwelt in his memory, and he shrank from the conflicts and competitions which would be necessary to enable him to work out better results for himself.

Jim thoroughly believed that Benedict was religiously diseased, and that he never could become a man again until he had ceased to live so exclusively in the spiritual world. He contrived all possible ways to keep him employed. He put responsibility upon him. He stimulated him with considerations of the welfare of Harry. He disturbed him in his retirement. He contrived fatigues that

would induce sound sleep. To use his own language, he had tried to cure him of "loppin'," but with very unsatisfactory results.

Benedict comprehended Jim's lesson, and it made an impression upon him; but to break himself of his habit of thought and life was as difficult as the breaking of morbid habits always is. He knew that he was a weak man, and saw that he had never fully developed that which was manliest within him. He saw plainly, too, that his prayers would not develop it, and that nothing but a faithful, bold, manly use of his powers could accomplish the result. He knew that he had a better brain, and a brain better furnished, than that of Robert Belcher, yet he had known to his sorrow, and well-nigh to his destruction, that Robert Belcher could wind him around his finger. Prayer had never saved him from this, and nothing could save him but a development of his own manhood. Was he too old for hope? Could he break away from the delights of his weakness, and grow into something stronger and better? Could he so change the attitude of his soul that it should cease to be exigent and receptive, and become a positive, self-poised, and active force? He sighed when these questions came to him, but he felt that Jim had helped him in many practical ways, and could help him still further.

A stranger, looking upon the group, would have found it a curious and interesting study. Mr. Balfour was a tall, lithe man, with not a redundant ounce of flesh on him. He was as straight as an arrow, bore on his shoulders a fine head that gave evidence in its contour of equal benevolence and force, and was a practical, fearless, straightforward, true man. He enjoyed humor, and though he had a happy way of evoking it from others, possessed or exhibited very little himself. Jim was better than a theatre to him. He spent so much of his time in the conflicts of his profession, that in his vacations

he simply opened heart and mind to entertainment. A shrewd, frank, unsophisticated nature was a constant feast to him, and though he was a keen sportsman, the woods would have had few attractions without Jim.

Mr. Benedict regarded him with profound respect, as a man who possessed the precise qualities which had been denied to himself—self-assertion, combativeness, strong will, and "push." Even through Benedict's ample beard, a good reader of the human face would have detected the weak chin, while admiring the splendid brow, silken curls, and handsome eyes above it. He was a thoroughly gentle man, and, curiously enough, attracted the interest of Mr. Balfour in consequence of his gentleness. The instinct of defence and protection to everything weak and dependent was strong within the lawyer; and Benedict affected him like a woman. It was easy for the two to become friends, and as Mr. Balfour grew familiar with the real excellences of his new acquaintance, with his intelligence in certain directions, and his wonderful mechanical ingenuity, he conceived just as high a degree of respect for him as he could entertain for one who was entirely unfurnished with those weapons with which the battles of life are fought.

It was a great delight to Jim to see his two friends get along so well together, particularly as he had pressing employment on his hands, in preparing for the winter. So, after the first day, Benedict became Mr. Balfour's guide during the fortnight which he passed in the woods.

The bright light of Monday morning was the signal for the beginning of their sport, and Thede, who had never thrown a fly, was awake at the first daylight; and before Jim had the breakfast of venison and cakes ready, he had strung his tackle and leaned his rod against the cabin in readiness for his enterprise. They had a day of satisfactory fishing, and brought home half a hundred spotted beauties that would have delighted the eyes of

any angler in the world; and when their golden flesh stood open and broiling before the fire, or hissed and sputtered in the frying-pan, watched by the hungry and admiring eyes of the fishermen, they were attractive enough to be the food of the gods. And when, at last, the group gathered around the rude board, with appetites that seemed measureless, and devoured the dainties prepared for them, the pleasures of the day were crowned.

But all this was comparatively tame sport to Mr. Balfour. He had come for larger game, and waited only for the nightfall to deepen into darkness to start upon his hunt for deer. The moon had passed her full, and would not rise until after the ordinary bedtime. The boys were anxious to be witnesses of the sport, and it was finally concluded, that for once, at least, they should be indulged in their desire.

The voice of a hound was never heard in the woods, and even the "still hunting" practised by the Indian was never resorted to until after the streams were frozen.

Jim had been busy during the day in picking up pine knots, and digging out old stumps whose roots were charged with pitch. These he had collected and split up into small pieces, so that everything should be in readiness for the "float." As soon as the supper was finished, he brought a little iron "Jack," mounted upon a standard, and proceeded to fix this upright in the bow of the boat. Behind this he placed a square of sheet-iron, so that a deer, dazzled by the light of the blazing pine, would see nothing behind it, while the occupants of the boat could see everything ahead without being blinded by the light, of which they could see nothing. Then he fixed a knob of tallow upon the forward sight of Mr. Balfour's gun, so that, projecting in front of the sheet-iron screen, it would be plainly visible and render

necessary only the raising of the breech to the point of half hiding the tallow, in order to procure as perfect a range as if it were broad daylight.

All these preparations were familiar to Mr. Balfour, and, loading his heavy shot-gun with a powerful charge, he waited impatiently for the darkness.

At nine o'clock, Jim said it was time to start, and, lighting his torch, he took his seat in the stern of the boat, and bade Mr. Balfour take his place in the bow, where a board, placed across the boat, made him a comfortable seat. The boys, warmly wrapped, took their places together in the middle of the boat, and, clasping one another's hands and shivering with excitement, bade good-night to Mr. Benedict, who pushed them from the shore.

The night was still, and Jim's powerful paddle urged the little craft up the stream with a push so steady, strong, and noiseless, that its passengers might well have imagined that the unseen river-spirits had it in tow. The torch cast its long glare into the darkness on either bank, and made shadows so weird and changeable that the boys imagined they saw every form of wild beast and flight of strange bird with which pictures had made them familiar. Owls hooted in the distance. A wild-cat screamed like a frightened child. A partridge, waked from its perch by a flash of the torch, whirred off into the woods.

At length, after paddling up the stream for a mile, they heard the genuine crash of a startled animal. Jim stopped and listened. Then came the spiteful stroke of a deer's forefeet upon the leaves, and a whistle so sharp, strong and vital, that it thrilled every ear that heard it. It was a question, a protest, a defiance all in one; but not a sign of the animal could be seen. He was back in the cover, ~~was~~ and watching, and was not to be tempted nearer by ~~the~~ light.

Jim knew the buck, and knew that any delay on his account would be useless.

"I knowed 'im when I hearn 'im whistle, an' he knowed me. He's been shot at from this boat more nor twenty times. 'Not any pine-knots on my plate,' says he. 'I seen 'em afore, an' you can pass.' I used to git kind o' mad at 'im, an' promise to foller 'im, but he's so 'cute, I sort o' like 'im. He 'muses me."

While Jim waited and talked in a low tone, the buck was evidently examining the light and the craft, at his leisure and at a distance. Then he gave another lusty whistle that was half snort, and bounded off into the woods by leaps that struck every foot upon the ground at the same instant, and soon passed beyond hearing.

"Well, the old feller's gone," said Jim, "an' now I know a patch o' lily-pads up the river where I guess we can find a beast that hasn't had a public edication."

The tension upon the nerves of the boys was relieved, and they whispered between themselves about what they had seen, or thought they had seen.

All became still, as Jim turned his boat up the stream again. After proceeding for ten or fifteen minutes in perfect silence, Jim whispered :

"Skin yer eyes, now, Mr. Balfour ; we're comin' to a lick."

Jim steered his boat around a little bend, and in a moment it was running in shallow water, among grass and rushes. The bottom of the stream was plainly visible, and Mr. Balfour saw that they had left the river, and were pushing up the debouchure of a sluggish little affluent. They brushed along among the grass for twenty or thirty rods, when, at the same instant, every eye detected a figure in the distance. Two blazing, quiet, curious eyes were watching them. Jim had an instinct which assured him that the deer was fascinated by the light, and so he pushed toward him silently, then

stopped, and held his boat perfectly still. This was the signal for Mr. Balfour, and in an instant the woods were startled by a discharge that deafened the silence.

There was a violent splash in the water, a scramble up the bank, a bound or two toward the woods, a pitiful bleat, and then all was still.

"We've got 'im," said Jim. "He's took jest one buckshot through his heart. Ye didn't touch his head nor his legs. He jest run till the blood leaked out and he gi'n it up. Now, boys, you set here, and sing hallelujer till we bring 'im in."

The nose of the little craft was run against the bank, and Mr. Balfour, seizing the torch, sprang on shore, and Jim followed him into the woods. They soon found track of the game by the blood that dabbled the bushes, and stumbled upon the beautiful creature stone dead—fallen prone, with his legs doubled under him. Jim swung him across his shoulders, and, tottering behind Mr. Balfour, bore him back to the boat. Placing him in the bottom, the two men resumed their seats, and Jim, after carefully working himself out of the inlet into the river, settled down to a long, swift stroke that bore them back to the camp just as the moon began to show herself above the trees.

It was a night long to be remembered by the boys, a fitting inauguration of the lawyer's vacation, and an introduction to woodcraft from which, in after years, the neophytes won rare stores of refreshment and health.

Mr. Benedict received them with hearty congratulations, and the perfect sleep of the night only sharpened their desire for further depredations upon the game that lived around them, in the water and on the land.

As the days passed on, they caught trout until they were tired of the sport ; they floated for deer at night ; they took weary tramps in all directions, and at evening, around the camp-fires, rehearsed their experiences.

During all this period, Mr. Balfour was watching

Harry Benedict. The contrast between the lad and his own son was as marked as that between the lad's father and himself, but the positions were reversed. Harry led, contrived, executed. He was positive, facile, amiable, and the boys were as happy together as their parents were. Jim had noticed the remarkable interest that Mr. Balfour took in the boy, and had begun to suspect that he entertained intentions which would deprive the camp of one of its chief sources of pleasure.

One day when the lawyer and his guide were quietly eating their lunch in the forest, Mr. Balfour went to work, in his quiet, lawyer-like way, to ascertain the details of Benedict's history; and he heard them all. When he heard who had benefited by his guide's inventions, and learned just how matters stood with regard to the Belcher rifle, he became, for the first time since he had been in the woods, thoroughly excited. He had a law-case before him as full of the elements of romance as any that he had ever been engaged in. A defrauded inventor, living in the forest in poverty, having escaped from the insane ward of an alms-house, and the real owner of patent rights that were a mine of wealth to the man who believed that death had blotted out all the evidences of his villany—this was quite enough to excite his professional interest, even had he been unacquainted with the man defrauded. But the position of this uncomplaining, dependent man, who could not fight his own battles, made an irresistible appeal to his sense of justice and his manhood.

The moment, however, that the lawyer proposed to assist in righting the wrong, Mr. Benedict became dangerously excited. He could tell his story, but the thought of going out into the world again, and, particularly of engaging in a conflict with Robert Belcher, was one that he could not entertain. He was happier in the woods than he had been for many years. The life was

gradually strengthening him. He hoped the time would come when he could get something for his boy, but, for the present, he could engage in no struggle for reclaiming and maintaining his rights. He believed that an attempt to do it would again drive him to distraction, and that, somehow, Mr. Belcher would get the advantage of him. His fear of the great proprietor had become morbidly acute, and Mr. Balfour could make no headway against it. It was prudent to let the matter drop for a while.

Then Mr. Balfour opened his heart in regard to the boy. He told Benedict of the loss with which he had already acquainted Jim, of the loneliness of his remaining son, of the help that Harry could afford him, the need in which the lad stood of careful education, and the accomplishments he could win among better opportunities and higher society. He would take the boy, and treat him, up to the time of his majority, as his own. If Mr. Benedict could ever return the money expended for him, he could have the privilege of doing so, but it would never be regarded as a debt. Once every year the lawyer would bring the lad to the woods, so that he should not forget his father, and if the time should ever come when it seemed practicable to do so, a suit would be instituted that would give him the rights so cruelly withheld from his natural protector.

The proposition was one which taxed to its utmost Mr. Benedict's power of self-control. He loved his boy better than he loved himself. He hoped that, in some way, life would be pleasanter and more successful to the lad than it had been to him. He did not wish him to grow up illiterate and in the woods; but how he was to live without him he could not tell. The plucking out of an eye would have given him less pain than the parting with his boy, though he felt from the first that the lad would go.

Nothing could be determined without consulting Jim, and as the conversation had destroyed the desire for further sport, they packed their fishing-tackle and returned to camp.

"The boy wasn't got up for my 'commodation," said Jim, when the proposition was placed before him. "I seen the thing comin' for a week, an' I've brung my mind to't. We hain't got no right to keep 'im up here, if he can do better. Turk ain't bad company fur them as likes dogs, but he ain't improvin'. I took the boy away from Tom Buffum 'cause I could do better by 'im nor he could, and when a man comes along that can do better by him nor I can, he's welcome to wade in. I hain't no right to spile a little feller's life 'cause I like his company. I don't think much of a fellow that would cheat a man out of a jews-harp 'cause he liked to fool with it. Arter all, this sendin' the boy off is just turnin' 'im out to pastur' to grow, an' takin' 'im in in the fall. He may git his head up so high t' we can't git the halter on 'im again, but he'll be worth more to somebody that can, nor if we kep 'im in the stable. I sh'll hate to say good-bye t' the little feller, but I sh'll vote to have 'im go, unanimous."

Mr. Benedict was not a man who had will enough to withstand the rational and personal considerations that were brought to bear upon him, and then the two boys were brought into the consultation. Thede was overjoyed with the prospect of having for a home companion the boy to whom he had become so greatly attached, and poor Harry was torn by a conflict of inclinations. To leave Jim and his father behind was a great sorrow; and he was half angry with himself to think that he could find any pleasure in the prospect of a removal. But the love of change, natural to a boy, and the desire to see the wonders of the great city, with accounts of which Thede had excited his imagination, overcame his inclination to remain in the camp. The year of separation

would be very short, he thought, so that, after all, it was only a temporary matter. The moment the project of going away took possession of him, his regrets died, and the exit from the woods seemed to him like a journey into dreamland, from which he should return in the morning.

How to get the lad through Sevenoaks, where he would be sure to be recognized, and so reveal the hiding-place of his father, became at once a puzzling question. Mr. Balfour had arranged with the man who brought him into the woods to return in a fortnight and take him out, and as he was a man who had known the Benedicts it would not be safe to trust to his silence.

It was finally arranged that Jim should start off at once with Harry, and engage Mike Conlin to go through Sevenoaks with him in the night, and deliver him at the railroad at about the hour when the regular stage would arrive with Mr. Balfour. The people of Sevenoaks were not travellers, and it would be a rare chance that should bring one of them through to that point. The preparations were therefore made at once, and the next evening poor Benedict was called upon to part with his boy. It was a bitter struggle, but it was accomplished, and, excited by the strange life that was opening before him, the boy entered the boat with Jim, and waved his adieus to the group that had gathered upon the bank to see them off.

Poor Turk, who had apparently understood all that had passed in the conversations of the previous day, and become fully aware of the bereavement that he was about to suffer, stood upon the shore and howled and whined as they receded into the distance. Then he went up to Thede, and licked his hand, as if he would say: "Don't leave me as the other boy has done; if you do I shall be inconsolable."

Jim effected his purpose, and returned before light