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## EC570 Favorite American Story Tellers

J. W. Searson

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1924

IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating

W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

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Circular

570

FAVORITE AMERICAN STORY-TELLERS

By J. W. Searson

"Man can not live by bread alone."

Stories and story-tellers are the world's great teachers. Whether they are fable or myth or parable or folk-tale, stories lead children naturally into the world of adults, and help grownups to get and to share their richest inheritance.

Bible Stories

Who has not been charmed by the matchless stories of the Bible? The stories of Samuel, of Joseph, of Daniel, of David, and of others, will never lose their appeal. The stories of creation, of the flood, of the great conquests, and of great national organization, are read over and over again with increasing interest. When one reads these wondrous tales from the Bible, he realizes that "all that the sages said is in the book our mothers read."

Old Folk-Stories

Stories of the Far East, the tales of Greece and Rome, the great folk-stories of Germany, France, Scandinavia, and the British Isles, reveal interestingly and fascinatingly the important steps in the development of these peoples. To know these folk-tales is to be well acquainted with the backgrounds of race and national development in Asia and Europe. Once all peoples are more familiar with each other's folk-lore, it will become more and more difficult to induce nations to hate each other. Someone has said: "Story-telling is the path to international good will." Certainly an appreciation of the world's greatest stories leads to better mutual understanding and to less of anger and bitterness.

Early American Stories

None the less absorbing than the Old World stories, are the myths, legends, and folk-tales of the New. Once we come to realize that America is one of the oldest of the countries of earth, we shall study with delight and appreciation the stories of its primitive life. The stories of the mound-builders, of the cliff-dwellers, of roaming tribes of savages, and of civilized races far antedating the present era, are worthy of the background literature of any age of any country. We are just coming to appreciate the wealth of legend, song, story, and nature-tale that lies in the unexplored backgrounds of Indian life. Because we have greatly misunderstood the Indian's songs and stories, the Indians have remained unknown to us. Loftiest purposes and broad visions of life and service are artistically revealed in these wonder stories of the so-called savages.

Here is a story well worth reading. It is here given almost literally as it fell from the lips of an old Indian chief who reported it as a familiar legend among the Kaw Indians. The story shows that the Indians were familiar with the Far-East conception of the universe as composed of Earth, Fire, and Spirit. In this legend, Earth and Sea appear as beings in fierce contest for great leadership. The Sky Queen is the "Fire" which consumes all worldliness and dross, leading the tribes of the great Star-Field ultimately to seek the Spirit. While ancient forms and names appear, the story speaks a strangely up-to-the-minute message for all who read or listen closely.



LEGEND OF THE SKY-QUEEN

The great Sky-Battle at the gates of Star-Field was at hand. Each tribe of the universe had sent its choicest brave. By lot, the warriors were separated into war-groups, each group containing as many braves as there were autumn-leaves. The war-groups - one called Earth, the other Sea - were drawn in battle array, awaiting the Star-Sign. He who alone survived was to be honored over all others as the Sky-Chief who should lead the unnumbered spirit-hosts into the wide Star-Field in quest of the Great Spirit.

Seven days and seven nights the war-groups waited. As the seventh night was fading, a blazing star shot far across the blood-field. Then the Sky-Battle began. The fragrance of spring zephyrs died. The petals dropped from summer blossoms. Fruits of autumn ripened. Winter snows came. But the Sky-Battle raged and roared on. Brave warriors fell fast - until only two huge giants were left fighting. Many days and many nights they fought, but neither could get advantage of the other.

Suddenly, a shining messenger appeared before the spirit-hosts and shouted: "Oh, Earth and Sea! Long have ye fought and well! Let us summon the beautiful Sky-Queen. She alone can render justice."

At once, out of the glory of a golden cloud came a Voice as of music. And the Voice said, "Hail, all hail, ye spirit-hosts! Hail ye giants contending! Know ye not, men of battle, that ye alone must decide. O contending braves, ye are equal in battle. Now throw down your fierce weapons, and show if aught else ye can do to win the Sky-Smile."

Thereupon Earth seized a huge rock mountain and crushed it to powder. The Sea smote the battle-mead, and painted flowers smiled from Blood-wet Soil. In turn, Earth loosed the white earth-fire and its flames lapped the near-stars. Sea stretched forth his hand and touched mountain, vale, and cloud with the ineffable beauty of sunrise. Then Earth reached down to the very foundations of the Universe, and everything trembled and groaned, and the spirit-hosts cried out in despair. Finally, Sea arose and, with up-raised face, he sang the Indian Star-Song until the spirit-hosts loud-shouted their praises to the Great Spirit.

Then came the voice of the Sky-Queen from the gold-cloud saying, "Oh, Sea! Thou art mightiest of men - thou art Sky-Chief! For, bear witness all ye spirit-hosts, Earth hath shown wondrous might and power, but Sea moreover hath revealed the charm of flower, and of sunrise, and of Star-Song!"

Then the Sky-Chief led the spirit-hosts thru the gates of Star-Field on the everlasting quest.

Out of the wealth of song and story and ceremonial, the Indian is gradually winning his way as a real story-teller. Long before the advent of the Christian missionary, every tribe had its story of creation, the flood, and the sky-spirit's miraculous care of the Indian. Even the title to his hunting-ground was guaranteed. Here is a Winnebago legend telling these wonderful stories all in one. The story is called "The Story of the Little Papoose," and it is here recorded for the first time just as it has passed from lip to ear among different tribes for many generations:



THE STORY OF THE LITTLE PAPOOSE

On that day, the warriors crouched in council. Above were the dark blue skies and below the black earth. Suddenly the darkness seemed made of black storm-clouds, and the dark skies seemed to lower all about the fierce braves in council. They could now no longer see each other, but they could hear the Great Chief who was speaking:

"O braves," he said, "the great Sky-Spirit frowns. Some among us are boasters. Some hide at the Sioux warwhoop. Some cringe before the soft-handed white man. Some tremble at thunder and hide their faces from the lightning. White-hearted tremblers are hated by the Great Spirit."

Then the huge sky-cloud arose until it formed a great cone with its rim far outside the council-circle and its apex sky-high above the center of the brave-circle. High in the sky-peak was a bright-star which lighted the cloud cone and the grim warriors. All looked towards the wonder-light in the sky-peak and many trembled with fear as they heard the rushing of many waters. And a voice spoke low and clear:

"I am the Little Papoose! I come from the Sky-Spirit. Behold, from sunrise to sunset, this land all that is therein is yours and your childrens' as long as your hearts are brave! Hear! Hear! Hear! The Sky-Spirit has spoken!"

Then there was great darkness. Outside was rain and the roar of thunder. Torrential waters were falling on the sky-cone, and great rivers rushed roaring into the outer dark. Suddenly the bright star again appeared in the sky-peak, and a beautiful Little Papoose stood in their midst. As all bowed low, they heard a voice saying:

"I am the Little Papoose! I come from the Sky-Spirit. Behold, from sunrise to sunset, this land and all that is therein is yours and your childrens' as long as your hearts are brave! Hear! Hear! Hear! The Sky-Spirit has spoken!"

When they arose, great darkness was everywhere, and the sound of waters, and the thunder-roar. Then the star-light came and soon the heaven-cone was light and the Little Papoose stood in their midst. Again the grim warriors bowed low and a voice said:

"I am the Little Papoose! I come from the Sky-Spirit. Behold, from sunrise to sunset, this land and all that is therein is yours and your childrens' as long as your hearts are brave! Hear! Hear! Hear! The Sky-Spirit has Spoken!"

While he yet spoke, the bright star fell slowly from the sky-peak and rested just above the head of the Little Papoose, and a voice like low music half-chanted:

"This is the word of the Little Papoose,  
This is the pledge of the Sky-Spirit,  
Stars and Skies shall darken and fall,  
But the word and the pledge of the Little Papoose  
Shall stand and endure  
As the word and the pledge of the Sky-Spirit."

Again there was darkness, and thunder, and the noise of waters, and then came soft evening light, and Great Chief arose and addressed the council:



"O braves, ye have seen and heard. Know now that from sunrise to sunset the hills and the valleys are to the brave-heart, for thus the great Sky-Spirit has spoken."

Then, in the deepening shadows of evening, the braves crouched in silence around the great council-fire and smoked their pipes in peace.

#### Typical All-American Stories

Aside from the unexplored riches of Indian story and legend, America has developed a distinctive story literature. Some of the stories are long and are called novels. Others are short and are generally known as short-stories. Only a few in each of these classes may be said to be all-American, or accepted by all as interpreting fundamental phases of the American life and spirit. The stories that have won all-American approval perhaps best interpret the genius of American life and literature. Among such stories we find the following upon which there is no longer any wide difference of opinion:

Rip Van Winkle, by Washington Irving. In many respects this story may well be said to be typically all-American. Its distinctively American setting, its characteristic plot, its vivid imagery, its fun without a sting, and its quaint yet original humor, mark it as a general favorite. Irving was at his best in this story and its popular companion-piece, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

The Great Stone Face, by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Here is a true American classic. The story is in itself artistically developed. Its background is an old prophecy which foretold that one day there should come to the valley one whose features should resemble those of the Great Stone Face on the mountain-side - a huge pile of rocks which nature, "in a mood of majestic playfulness" had shaped so as to suggest a human face. Little Ernest, a child born in the valley, had been disappointed many times when heroes came to the valley, and often he turned away sadly almost despairing of the old prophecy's come true. Well, read the story, and you'll find how it all ended, and you'll discover in this story a fascinating interpretation of all aspiring life at its best.

The Gold Bug, by Edgar Allan Poe. Here is a story told with indefinable finish and charm. All the elements that go to make a good story are here. Poe, by creating a unique series of such stories, gave to American literature the perfected short-story, now coming into its own as a universal favorite. This is a story in which, if any moral purpose is discerned, the reader must make his own discoveries.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, by Harriet Beecher Stowe. When this story was written, it gripped people's inner emotions with the force and frenzy of a new religion. It struck conviction deep. It caused high action. Altho not perfect in its technique, it became the most potent one story in American literature interpreting anew to the American heart the eternal principles of liberty, justice, and equality.

The Man Without a Country, by Edward Everett Hale. Perhaps no other short-story in American literature has had such a firm hold on the purely patriotic emotions of our people. Young and old everywhere respond to the charm and appeal of this story. Thru our rapid growth toward internationalism, "The



Man Without a Country" has continued to grow in power and popularity, for even the most finished citizen of the world recognizes the force of loyalty and true patriotism in nation and in world building.

The Perfect Tribute, by Mary Shipman Andrews. This story is based on a typical but unfamiliar incident in the life of President Lincoln. To be appreciated, the story must be read. Once read, it holds its own in the heart, and grows ever into a perfect gem whose pure rays light the sacred precincts of the soul.

#### Something of the Story-Tellers

The best story-tellers, like the best stories, belong to all time. Their appeal is universal. But for convenience merely, we may group some of our American writers geographically. It seems easier to think of each as a real human being living in some certain place and writing to entertain his neighbors and friends. Roughly speaking, then, American story-tellers may be grouped into the New England group, the New York and Middle Atlantic group, the Middle West and Western group, and the Southern group. The story-tellers here considered do not include typical story-tellers and story-writers for children among whom the very best are Laura E. Richards, daughter of Harriet Beecher Stowe; Maud Lindsay with her famous "Mother Stories"; Elizabeth Harrison, famous national leader in kindergarten work; and Emilie Poulsson, who has done more than all others to bring to American mothers and teachers the charm and value of story-telling to children.

#### The New England Group

Typical representatives of this group are Hawthorne, Hale, Louisa M. Alcott, Trowbridge, and Sarah Orne Jewett. Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) is America's most finished recreator of the tales and legends of the old world. His "Wonderbook" "Tanglewood Tales," and "Twice-Told Tales" form an important contribution to the standard stories of our literature. The "Great Stone Face" is easily singled out as the favorite story, just as "Scarlet Letter" has come to be recognized as one of the most powerful and artistic of American novels.

"Little Men" and "Little Women", with a number of other attractively written stories for boys and girls, have endeared Louisa M. Alcott to young persons who love wholesome and inspiring interpretations of young life.

#### New York and Middle Atlantic Group

For many years, Washington Irving, with his inimitable "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and James Fenimore Cooper, with his charming "Leather Stocking Tales," have stood first in this group. The one interpreted with artistic grace and rare humor the life of the early Dutch settlers along the Hudson; the other the scenes of early pioneer and Indian life. Of later years, a strange master of the short-story appeared - fat, freckled country boy of promise, a Texas bank clerk of real misfortune, and later a New York resident with rare powers of observation and interpretation, always the big country boy who was not blinded by the lights of a great metropolitan city. O. Henry (William Sidney Porter), born in the country town of Greensboro, North Carolina in 1862, familiar with poverty on the one hand, familiar with life in the brown-stone-fronts on Fifth Avenue on the other, has interpreted American life in a congested city with a breeziness, truthfulness, and artistic skill possessed by no other short-story writer in America. Easily first among America's story-tellers of city life, O. Henry has seen and revealed the inner secrets of hearts that suffer or rejoice, has sneered at the false and superficial, and has ever fearlessly and courageously revealed the typical life regardless of scathing critics, reformers, and uplifters.



He knows no uplift save truth, and he tells it with uncanny frankness, directness, and effectiveness. In his own field he stands unrivaled and alone - like Poe or Joel Chandler Harris. Mark Twain once said of him: "O. Henry is actually that rare bird of which we so often hear false reports - a born story-teller." To get something of his art and spirit, one should read such typical stories as those in the following collections: "Cabbages and Kings", "The Four Million" (1906); "Voices of the City" and "The Gentle Grafter" (1908); "The Trimmed Lamp" and "The Heart of the West" (1907); "Roads of Destiny" and "Options" (1909); "Strictly Business" and "Whirligigs" (1910), and others. Some of his short-stories are masterpieces of technique and of spontaneous literary expression. They are art-gems "of purest ray serene." Since his death in 1910, his popularity has steadily increased.

Every period of his life is reflected in his stories. His care-free days in the General Land Office at Austin, Texas, are mirrored in "Georgia's Ruling," "Buried Treasure", and "Witches Loaves". On a hurried trip to San Antonio, he caught the thrills that later resulted in "The Enchanted Kiss", "The Missing Chord", "Seats of the Haughty," "The Higher Abdication", and "A Fog in Santone".

Altho the opening of the twentieth century found him in prison in Columbus, Ohio, on what his friends have always believed was a false charge of embezzlement from the Texas bank, he there wrote some of his most charming stories, such as "An Afternoon Miracle," "Rouge et Noir," "Money Maze", "The Marionettes," and "Hygeia at the Lolito". Later he was received and honored by artists, thinkers, writers, and statesmen, one of the best characterizations of him being written by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson on the occasion of his visit at the Wilson home. From "Madam Bo-Peep of the Ranches" in Texas to his wealth of short-story interpretations of every phase of city life in New York, O. Henry shows himself an artist whose writings are the very breath of the life around him - never seamy nor sordid but ever bearing a smile and a word of cheer no matter how deep the squalor or how dark the despair.

#### Southern Story-Tellers

Among the inimitable masters of the story-tellers art in the Southland, exclusive of Edgar Allan Poe, are George W. Cable with his pictures of life in New Orleans in "Old Creole Days"; Thomas Nelson Page with his well known story of "Marse Chan" found in "In Ole Virginia"; Ruth McEnery Stuart whose "Sonny's Christenin'" and other stories of the far south have charmed thousands; and James Lane Allen with his delightful "Kentucky Cardinal" and "Aftermath" to say nothing of "The Choir Invisible," "Reign of Law," and other charming stories.

But the master story-teller of the Southland is unquestionably Joel Chandler Harris (1868-1908) creator of Uncle Remus with Brer Rabbit, Brer Bear, Brer Fox, Brer Tarrypin, and a host of other animal characters that acted at times suspiciously like human beings of the happy-go-lucky negro race. Harris was a native of Georgia, and served successively as printer, lawyer, and editor, his work on the Atlanta Constitution giving him the outlet for his charming tales. Uncle Remus, the colored narrator of the stories, was a creation of Harris, who made the lovable old negro tell these stories to the nine-year-old child of Mistress Sally. The stories are written in negro dialect and are simple, full of fun and surprises, and abounding in quick action and interesting episodes treated with rare imaginative touches. It was Harris's purpose to charm, to amuse, to entertain, but not to preach. Chief among his best story-collections are "Nights with Uncle Remus", "On the Plantation", "Stories of the South", "Told by Uncle



Remus", "Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit", "Uncle Remus and His Friends" and "Uncle Remus and the Little Boy".

As a typical specimen showing many of the finest characteristics of Harris as a story-teller, the following story is reproduced in the original dialect of Uncle Remus as he told it to the wide-eyed son of Miss Sally:

A FRENCH TAR BABY

"Didn't the fox never catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy the next evening.

"He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho's you born - Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fool 'im wid dat calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk en got 'im some tar en mix it wid some turkentine, en fix up a contrapshun wat he call a Tar-Baby, en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot'er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer to see wat de news wuz gwine ter be. En he didn't hatter wait long, nudder, kaze bineby here come Brer Rabbit pacin' down de road - lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity - dez ez sassy ez a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin' 'long twel he spy de Tar-Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he wuz 'stonished. De Tar-Baby, she sot dar, she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Mawnin!" sez Brer Rabbit, sezee - 'nice wedder dis mawnin!', sezee.

"Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nothin' en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"How duz you' sym'tuns seem ter segashuate?" sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nothin'.

"How you come on, don? Is you deaf?" sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Kaze if you is, I kin holler louder,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Youer stuck up, dat's w'at you is', says Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en I'm gwineter kyore you, dat's w'at I'm a gwineter do', sezee.

"Brer Fox, he sorter chuckle in his stummuck, he did, but Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nothin'.

"I'm gwineter larn you howter talk ter 'spectubble folkes ef hit's de las' ack,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Ef you don't take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I'm gwineter bus' you wide open,' sezee.

"Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Brer Rabbit keep on axin' 'im, en de Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin' nothin', twel present'y Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis', he did, en blip he tuck 'er side er de head. Right dar's whar he broke his merlasses jug. His fis' stuck, en he can't pull loose. De tar hilt 'im. But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.



"'Ef you don't lemme loose, I'll knock you agin,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch 'er a wipec wid de udder han', en dat stuck. Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nothin', en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"'Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, but de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nothin'. She des hilt on, en den Brer Rabbit lose de use er his feet in de same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squall out dat ef de Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im loose he butt'er cranksided. En den he butted, en his head got stuck. Den Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort', lookin' des ez innercent ez one er yo' manny's mockin'-birds.

"'Howdy, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. 'You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin',' sezee, en den he rolled on de groun', en laughed en laughed twel he couldn't laugh no mo'. 'I speck you'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse,' sez Brer Fox, sezee."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

"Dat's all the fur de tale goes," replied the old man. "He mout, en den agin he moutent. Some say Jedge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im -- some say he didn't. I hear Miss Sally callin'. You better run 'long."

#### Middle West and Western Group

Stars of the first magnitude in the galaxy of western story-tellers are Booth Tarkington with his matchless "Penrod" stories; William Allen White with his unrivaled "Court of Boyville"; Frank R. Stockton with his "Fanciful Tales" chief of which is "The Lady or the Tiger"; Hamlin Garland with his cameo finished stories "The Son of the Middle Border" and "The Daughter of the Middle Border"; and Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) the humorist-philosopher and recognized master in the homely art of fireside story-telling.

Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens, 1835-1910) was born at Hannibal, Missouri, and served in many different capacities, among them those of traveller, journeyman printer, newspaper writer, soldier, miner, and lecturer. No other writer has so thoroly caught and reproduced the spirit and typical experiences of the great crude West. Mark Twain was a humorist whose fun carried no sting, whose tales pointed no moral, and whose homely philosophy illuminates charmingly every page of his writings. He is chiefly endeared to us by such household stories as "Tom Sawyer," "Huckleberry Finn," "A Connecticut Yankee at the Court of King Arthur," and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog". A fair specimen of his sly twinkling humor and easy treatment of commonplace incidents is shown in the following extract from "Tom Sawyer," known as "Whitewashing the Fence."



### WHITEWASHING THE FENCE

He took up the brush and went tranquilly to work. One of the boys, Ben Rogers, came by with a hop-skip-and-jump, eating a large red apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was imitating a steamboat. Tom went on whitewashing - paid no attention to the steamboat. Ben stared a moment, and then said: "Hi-yi! you're a stump, ain't you?"

No answer. Tom surveyed his last touch with the eye of an artist: Then he gave his brush another gentle sweep, and surveyed the result as before. Ben ranged up along-side of him. Tom's mouth watered for the apple, but he stuck to his work, Ben said, "Hello, old chap; you go to work, hey?"

Tom wheeled suddenly, and said:

"Why, It's you, Ben; I warn't noticing."

"Say, I'm going in a-swimming, I am. Don't you wish you could? But of course, you'd rather work, wouldn't you? 'Course you would!"

Tom contemplated the boy a bit, and said:

"What do you call work?"

"Why, ain't that work?"

Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered, carelessly:

"Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. All I know is, it suits Tom Sawyer."

"Oh, come now, you don't mean to let on that you like it?"

"Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it! Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?"

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth - stepped back to note the effect - added a touch here and there - criticized the effect again, Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed. Presently, he said: "Say, Tom, let me whitewash a little".

"No, no, I reckon it wouldn't hardly do, Ben. You see, Aunt Polly's awful particular about this fence - right here on the street, you know - if it was the back fence I wouldn't mind, and she wouldn't. Yes, she's awful particular about this fence; it's got to be done very carefully; I reckon there ain't one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it in the way it's got to be done."

"No - is that so? Oh, come now, let me just try, only just a little. I'd let you, if you was me, Tom."



"Ben, I'd like to, honest injin; but Aunt Polly - well, Jim wanted to do it, but she wouldn't let him. Sid wanted to do it, but she wouldn't let Sid. Now don't you see how I'm fixed? If you was to tackle this fence and anything was to happen to it -"

"Oh shucks! I'll be just as careful. Now let me try. Say - I'll give you the core of my apple."

"Well, here. No, Ben; now don't; I'm afraid -"

"I'll give you all of it."

Tom gave up the brush with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart. And while Ben worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents.

There was no lack of material; boys happened along every little while; they came to jeer, but remained to whitewash. By the time Ben was fagged out, Tom had traded the next chance to Billy Fisher, for a kite in good repair; and when he played out, Johnny Miller bought it for a dead rat and a string to swing it with; and so on, and so on, hour after hour. And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor poverty-stricken boy in the morning, Tom was literally rolling in wealth. He had, beside the things before mentioned, twelve marbles, a part of a jewsharp, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look thru, a spool cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, six firecrackers, a kitten with only one eye, a brass door-knob, a dog-collar - but no dog, the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange-peel, and a dilapidated old windowsash.

Tom had had a nice good idle time all the while - plenty of company - and the fence had three coats of whitewash on it! If he hadn't run out of white-wash he would have bankrupted every boy in the village.

He said to himself that it was not a hollow world after all. He had discovered a great law of human action without knowing it - namely, that in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make it difficult to attain.

#### The Big Thing About Story-Telling

The big thing about story-telling and about reading these tales of the story-tellers is that new windows are opened into life. These entertainers pass the hours for us happily, profitably, and they steal away all our doubts and gloom and give us richer notions of life and service. They make us see the roses that grow from the dust of lane and street. We can take long journeys with these story-tellers. We can meet new faces, hear new voices, see new and beautiful sights - and all the while we are just having real fun, the joy of discovery, God's choicest gift to the soul.