

Nora. She's Mrs. Milton and lives fifty miles from here. She invited me to live with them, but I knew they were too poor. Besides, Esther here got lots of money from me when I had it. All I have now is a little mortgage. When I collect the interest, twenty dollars every six months, they take most of it away from me. I've got a dollar of the last payment left. Say," exclaimed the speaker with sudden animation, "I've thought of a great scheme."

"What is that, grandfather?" inquired Ned, curiously.

"Well, up in the old attic—is backs on the kitchen roof—is my old gun and knapsack. I asked them once to let me have them, but they only laughed at me and wouldn't even let me go up to the attic to get them myself. Say, you could."

"Oh, I would not dare!" declared Ned.

"Why not? It isn't stealing. They are mine. You can get up on the kitchen roof when they aren't watching. There's no sash to that attic window. You can't miss the gun and knapsack. I'll give you the dollar to do it."

It took some persuasion to induce Ned to follow out the suggestion of the old man. The bright silver dollar was a powerful argument, however. Two nights later Mr. Thwaite had his coveted accoutrements and Ned had the dollar in his pocket.

The old man spent one entire night polishing up the rusted old musket. He begged powder and caps from a neighbor. The old knapsack was nearly falling to pieces. He tied it up stoutly.

"I'll fix that when I get to Nora's," he decided. "I'm going to stop there to bid her good-by."

The following day he stole away from the house and the village and headed for the settlement where the Miltons lived. It was a long, hard tramp for the old man. Sturdily, however, he pursued his way, the knapsack strapped across his bent

shoulder, the heavy musket carried proudly. He had no money, but kind-hearted housewives gave him what he wanted to eat. Twice he slept in a haystack. He was looked upon with pity as a homeless wanderer. He was pretty glad when one morning from inquiries he found that it was only three miles to the little farm where the Miltons lived.

Half the distance accomplished, he was so tired out that he climbed a fence and lay down in a straw heap to rest. He was soon asleep.

One hour later a young man driving a horse attached to an old farm wagon went slowly past the spot.

Suddenly—bang!

He had some difficulty in quieting down the startled horse. Then he looked toward the spot where a puff of smoke had shown. An old man was picking himself up from the ground. It was Mr. Thwaite. He had gone to sleep. His dreams had been full of war and warriors. Awakening confused, he had taken a scarecrow near by for "the enemy," had fired, the gun had kicked and over he went.

It did not take Mr. Milton long to discover the identity of the old man. He welcomed him to their humble home. Its comfort soon put all warlike ideas out of the head of the delighted old veteran.

Nora wrote to her sister about his arrival. Esther wrote back: "Keep him and welcome—good riddance to bad rubbish!"

The old army musket was placed across the antlers of a deer in the dining room. The old knapsack Mr. Thwaite unpacked one day, preparatory to burning the rubbish.

Nora had not worried her grandfather by telling him of a mortgage on the little home. She was thinking of this sadly when the old man came rushing excitedly into her presence.

"I've found them!" he shouted hilariously.

"Found what?" inquired the startled Nora.