

COAL OIL JOHNNY BACK TO NATURE

John W. Steele, Known Throughout World As "Coal Oil Johnny," Regaining Self Respect.

HE ONCE LIVED IN DENISON

House Situated Where Central Together With Wife and Son Occupied School Building Stands.

Many of the older citizens of Denison will remember John W. Steele, known as "Coal Oil Johnny," who lived in a house where the Central school building now stands. While in Denison he ran a dray line. Afterwards the family moved to Nebraska, where he engaged in railroad work, and the son became an expert telegrapher. As will be seen from the following taken from the Sioux City Journal, Mr. Steele is now operating a farm near Franklin, Pa. His life's history may prove interesting reading.

Franklin, Pa.—Quietly working out his destiny on a farm near here, John W. Steele, known throughout the world as "Coal Oil Johnny," the man to whom riches proved to be a bane, is regaining self respect after a hard fight and has become a credit to himself and his family.

After several decades of patient labor the one time oil king, now nearly 70 years old, reviews his past with regret, tinged with a certain quaint philosophy of life that somehow lessens the enormity of his offenses against himself and society.

In the estimation of the world "Coal Oil Johnny" stands as the representative type of the spendthrift and oil region prodigal. Coming into an immense fortune before his judgment had matured and without anyone to advise him, he set out to see the world and abandoned his wife and friends. And he saw it.

When he had finished with the world Steele went back to the soil, not as an oil producer, but as an agriculturist and he admits that he has received more pleasure wielding the hoe than he obtained in squandering his fortune.

Johnny was born of poor parents near Sheakleyville, Mercer county, at an early age he and his little sister went to Venango county to live with an uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. McClintock, who had a large farm on Oil creek. When Johnny was 12 years of age his adopted uncle died. A few years afterward oil was discovered, and Widow McClintock, along with other land owners in Oil creek valley, found that she was encamped above an independent fortune. She soon found herself a rich woman. One day while attempting to hasten a fire by means of oil, Mrs. McClintock was burned to death—the first victim of the treacherous oil can. With her death Johnny came into all her possessions, his little sister having died some years before.

Had Too Many Advisers.
Mrs. McClintock had hoarded her wealth in a safe, which was opened after her death. The amount of cash found has been placed as high as \$500,000, but Johnny says it was less. At this time Steele was just of age. Wealth continued to roll in on the innocent and well behaved young man and he soon lost track of how much money he had.

But like all youths who suddenly acquire great wealth, he had advisers by the score. They told him to "save his money," that he would "need it some day." The retort was that, since there seemed to be a disposition on the part of everybody to get it away from him, he guessed he would spend it before it was stolen.

Johnny started for Philadelphia, leaving behind his wife whom he had married in 1862, and a baby son. He took with him Seth Slocum, the man at whose door Steele lays the greatest blame for his undoing.

Upon his arrival in Philadelphia Steele was met by W. H. Wickham, of New York, who offered him, \$1,000,000 for the McClintock farm. Johnny accepted and received \$30,000 to bind the bargain. With more than a million dollars dangling before his eyes, Steele and his friend, Slocum, to whom Steele had given the power of attorney, started out to paint the town. They did it, all at Steele's expense.

While in the Quaker city Johnny came in contact with the managers of the Skiff & Gaylord minstrel show, that was then in sore financial straits and decided to finance the concern. John W. Gaylord, a member of the minstrel company, tells an interesting story of Steele that throws some side-lights on the character of the oil king that have never before been published.

Bought Himself a Train.
"Yes," declares Gaylord. "Coal Oil Johnny was my particular friend. He saw our show perform in Philadelphia, got stuck on the business and bought a third interest in the show. We went on the road, did a monstrous business, turned people away and were prosperous.

"Reaching Utica, N. Y., Johnny gave

a supper to the company that cost him \$1,000. He then conceived the idea of traveling by his own train and accordingly purchased an engine, sleeper and baggage car. Dates for two weeks ahead were cancelled and we went junketing, Johnny footing the bills. It was in Philadelphia that Johnny bought his first hack. After a short drive he presented it to the driver. Our dates being cancelled, Johnny indemnified us for the loss, estimating the probable business receipts on the basis of packed houses.

"Johnny was a prince with his money. I've seen him spend as high as \$100,000 in a day. That was the time he rented the Continental hotel in Philadelphia and wanted to buy the Girard house. He sent to the Continental and politely said to the clerk: 'Will you kindly tell the proprietor that Mr. Steele wishes to see him?'"

"No, sir," said the clerk, "the landlord is busy."
"Johnny suggested that he could make it pay the clerk to accommodate the whim. The clerk became disdainful and Johnny tossed the bell boy a \$20 gold piece with the request. The result was an interview with the landlord. Johnny said that he had been mistreated and requested the summary dismissal of the clerk. The proprietor refused and Johnny offered to buy the hotel. The man said he couldn't sell because he was not the entire owner. A bargain was made to lease it for one day for \$8,000. The cash was paid over and Johnny installed himself as land lord. He made me bellboy, while Slocum officiated as clerk.

Open House for All.
"The doors were thrown open and every guest in the house had his fill of wine and edibles free of charge. A huge placard was posted in front of the hotel, 'Open house today; every thing free. All are welcome.' It was a merry lark. The whole city seemed to catch on and the house was full. When Johnny thought he had enough fun he turned the house over to the landlord who reinstated the odious clerk. Johnny was frantic with rage. He went over to the Girard house and tried to buy it. He arranged with the proprietor to 'buck' the Continental by making the prices so low that everybody would come there. The Continental did mighty little business as long as that arrangement lasted."

While Johnny was away from his oil farm it dwindled in production, Mr. Wickham declined to purchase it, then Johnny came to himself. When he hurried home he had very little money and no self respect. He was thoroughly ashamed of his course in Philadelphia. In 1867 he was sold under the sheriff's hammer to George W. Hinkle, of Philadelphia, for \$35,000. It was at this time that Steele "shook" Slocum.

Steele became a wanderer with only a few hundred dollars in his pockets. Wife and child he left behind. Try as he would he could not get away from his past and he was heart sick, but he says he never once thought of suicide.
Forgiven by his wife, Steele returned home, was warmly received by Mrs. Steele and his relatives and started to live down the past. For a few years he lived in the west with his family and engaged in railroad work. In the 90s Steele returned to the oil regions. Since then they have all been living on a farm of Steele's father-in-law, where the former oil king enjoys himself leading the simple life and working about the farm. He has enough to live on comfortably and is contented.

Review "want ads," 5c per line.

Review "want ads" do the business.

Review "want ads," 5c per line.

Motherhood

is the highest type of womanhood.

Scott's Emulsion

is the highest type of curative food.

The nourishing and curative elements in Scott's Emulsion are so perfectly combined that all (babies, children and adults) are equally benefited and built up.

Be sure to get SCOTT'S—it's the Standard and always the best.

ALL DRUGGISTS

WHAT IS LIFE?
What is life? How shall I answer?
Life is like the boundless sea,
Sometimes smooth without a ripple
Sometimes rough and tempest tossed.
Some are care-free, full of laughter,
Some with sorrow are bowed down;
Some are like the pure white lilies,
Some are like rank weeds that grow.

Some are innocent and spotless,
Angels in this world of sin;
Pure of thought and clear of conscience,
Knowing not of vice and sin.
Others firm, with upright conscience,
Strongly tempted oft have been;
But passed through the fire unscathed
And come forth stronger, braver men.
Some have got the best intentions
But their will is at too weak,
And when they are strongly tempted
Their weak will cannot resist.
Some are steeped in degradation
They are oft like ravening wolves;
Tempting and devouring others
With impurities and sin.

Some beneath gray smiles and laughter
Hide an aching, broken heart;
Others show their sorrows plainly
And in frolic take no part.
Some are as so false and fickle
While they seem to be our friends;
Others are so true and noble
Nothing can their friendship change.

How unjust we judge each other,
And what sad mistakes we make;
Often those we think all honor
Are sinners of the deepest dye.
Some we oft accuse unjustly,
And we wrongfully condemn;
Treating innocent like sinners,
Treating sinners like just men.

Many a careless little slander
Which once spoke cruelly be recalled,
Floats upon the wings of gossip
Till a raging scandal it becomes.
Our lives meet on life's vast ocean,
Like the sailing ships at sea;
Sometimes to sail awhile together,
And then part no more to meet.

—MARY GRIFFIN, Denison, Iowa.

Review "want ads" do the business.

MRS. HOSTETLER DEAD.

Mother of Rev. Harvey Hostetler Dies at Marshalltown Last Wednesday Evening of Heart Trouble.

Word has reached Denison friends announcing the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Hostetler, at Marshalltown, on last Wednesday evening. She was the mother of Rev. Harvey Hostetler, now of Elgin, Ill. The following concerning her death is taken from the Marshalltown Times-Republican:

"Mrs. Elizabeth Hostetler, mother of County Superintendent Mary Hostetler, died quite suddenly Wednesday evening at her home, 209 South Sixth avenue, of valvular disease of the heart. Mrs. Hostetler had been in failing health since an illness of last winter. She had been in bed for about a week during her last illness, but on Wednesday was much better. The end came very suddenly during a sinking spell.

"Mrs. Hostetler was born at Kretzman, in Somerset county, Pa., Aug. 25, 1837. She became the wife of Jonas Hostetler in her native county, and continued to live there until she died her husband came to this city, arriving here April 14, 1865—the day Lincoln was assassinated. Mr. Hostetler died in this city Dec. 29, 1874.

"Mrs. Hostetler was a member of the Presbyterian church of this city, and was an earnest christian woman. Aside from her own family she reared a little girl, Ruth Highberger, whose mother died when she was an infant. This little girl has always been as a daughter to Mrs. Hostetler and, although never legally adopted, has taken the name Hostetler. Mrs. Hostetler's six children are: Rev. Harvey Hostetler, of Elgin, Ill.; Norman Hostetler, of Astoria, Wash.; Mrs. Barbara Kennedy, of Portland, Ore.; Wm. Hostetler, of Beresford, S. D.; Charles, of Dillon, Mont.; and Miss Hostetler, of this city."

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS.

Monday, Feb. 12, 1912.

J. C. Pedersen and wife to William Berens—SW 1/4 20-82-41. Con. \$13,600.
Thomas B. Gunigel and wife to E. B. Patterson—Und. 1/2 int. S 1/2 SE 1/4 19-82-40. Con. \$1800.00.

Henry Pipgras and wife and Herman Pipgras and wife to Henry Laumbach—Lot 17, block 17, Schleswig. Con. \$1600.00.

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 1912.

J. P. Heeren and wife to C. L. Voss—N 1/2 N 1/2 NW 1/4; N 1/2 N 1/2 NE 1/4; SE 1/4 NE 1/4; S 1/2 NE 1/4 NE 1/4 1-82-39. Con. \$16,300.00.

Edward Saunders to Town of Manilla—Lot 1 in SE 1/4 SW 1/4 26-82-38. Con. \$150.00.

Friday, Feb. 16, 1912.

Thomas Adams and wife to Arthur J. Adams and William A. Adams—Und. 1/2 of lots 1 and 2, irregular survey of SE 1/4 NW 1/4 30-84-37, and lots 1 and 2, block 37, 8th add. Vail. Con. \$1,000.

Same to Trustees Diamond Lodge No. 422 A. F. & A. M. of Vail—Lot 14, block 1, Vail. Con. \$700.

Same to Cora Hoffman—S 1 1/2 acres E 1/2 N 1/2 of W 12.33 acres SW 1/4 NW 1/4 30-84-37. Con. \$350.

Saturday, Feb. 17, 1912.

Theo. Drake and wife to August Ricker—Lot 14, block 4, Schleswig. Con. \$100.

E. A. Packard and wife to Fred Lahndorf, Sr.—Lot 7, block 14, Manilla. Con. \$2,300.

I. B. Alfred and wife to Earl D. McLaren and W. C. White—Lot 19, block 8, Manilla. Con. \$3,750.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.
The Kind You Have Always Bought

Bears the Signature of *Dr. J. C. Holt*

Our Cut Price Sale

of Farm Implements and Machinery, Gasoline Engines, Etc., at our Denison house is still on and will continue until March 15th only.

Everything goes at cut prices until that date. The Corn Graders are all sold, but we still have a few of those good Owens Fanning Mills left at \$7.00 each, and a full line of Wagons, Buggies, Plows, Harrows, Corn Planters, Cultivators, Drills, Manure Spreaders; in fact, anything you need. Don't forget this and don't forget that this sale only lasts until March 15th.

We want you to remember also that we are in position to take care of your needs in the way of all kinds of building material, fence posts, Royal Woven Wire Fencing, Barbed Wire, etc., and we will not be undersold, quality considered, by anyone.

Examine our fine, complete, well seasoned and well preserved stock, and get our prices.

We are after your business, and if fair dealing, good grades and right prices will get it, we are anxious to "show you."

We have bought and contracted 600 barrels of Northwestern States Portland Cement at a low price, and are in a position to take care of your needs in that line with the cement that has Never Had a Failure. Every sack of this cement is good and just alike. You take no risk when you use the Northwestern States Cement.

Yours for a SQUARE DEAL,

Stewart Lumber Co.

DENISON, IOWA

Button Shoes—Pre-eminent



The public's demand for button shoes is larger and increasing very rapidly. In women's goods especially, but also in men's. All signs point to a still greater percentage of button shoe sales. Regular and extra high top button boots will be the leading features for the early spring. Queen Quality leads.

The Boys' Dep't. Store

The Best Commission Firm for You to Con-
sign Your Cattle, Hogs and Sheep to is

Baker, Heyne & Company

UNION STOCK YARDS, CHICAGO

Write to Them for Any Information You May Want Re-
garding Your Live Stock.