

Some Philosophy By Uncle Silas

Stray Bits of Thoughts by the Old
Whittler—Story About Uncle
Jim Nash.

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WHEN you come across a man with a sharp knife in his pocket, a soft pine shingle handy and plenty of time to loaf in, watch him. If he'd rather sit with his hands in his pockets than to whittle don't bank on him.

I like to see my fellow man ambitious, but when it comes to spending a whole week to trap a woodchuck whose hide is worth only 15 cents it seems to me that he has got off the track a bit.

I've known at least fifty men who could sit down and figure out that Providence had always been ag'in 'em, but as far as I had time to investigate I found that laziness had also stuck by 'em like a brother.

When a man is so rich that he doesn't know what to do with his money he either becomes a miser and hangs on to every cent like grim death or blossoms out a philanthropist and makes a fool of himself. It's even up which is the worst.

Now and then a feeling comes over me that I ought to trust human nature more than I do, and I yield to it and leave my henhouse door unlocked for the night. When I go out in the morning and find all the chickens gone I get the feeling that somebody is an old fool and that it ain't the critter who walked away with the poultry.

I hold that nature made the man to boss the roost after getting married, but at the same time am willing to admit that if I'd allowed the old woman to butt in oftener I'd have been worth dollars where I hain't now worth cents.

Just where heaven is or whether I shall ever reach it has been a puzzle to me these many days, but I have taken the safe side by heaping up the measure when I sell taters and not lying any more than I can help when I go down to the postoffice of an evening.

When Uncle Billy Wilson found himself dying he sent for me and owned me that he had been stealing corn and

taters from me for years and that he had robbed my orchard and run off my hogs. He said he couldn't die with those things on his conscience, but as he didn't offer to square up and as I found one of my plows in his barn after his funeral I have never given him the credit that perhaps I should have done.

It is never too late to find out things. Old Uncle Jim Nash had lived for fifty years without creating any stir in this world when his wife patched his trousers with a sheet of tin. After that he



PATCHED HIS TROUSERS WITH A SHEET OF TIN.

rattled around at such a rate that his fellow men went at it and elected him overseer of highways. There are lots of men who'd amount to something if they only got a rattle started.

I made up my mind early in the game that when I became old and gray headed I'd take things as they came, but I don't mind admitting that whenever I have passed a bottle of hair dye since arriving at the age of fifty I've had the hardest kind of work to keep from making a fool of myself. When you hear of a man growing old gracefully set him down as a hero.

When I hear that my neighbor has a sick child I feel sorry for him. When I hear that he has lost a cow by death I give him my sympathy. When I hear that his uncle out west has died and left him \$5,000 I want to know of myself by what right such a man as he is should fall into such luck while I can't make enough to pay my taxes. It isn't

that we are envious of any one man, but it is that the good things should naturally come our way.

I fully believe and am firmly convinced that honesty is the best policy, but when a merchant sells me half a cotton for all wool I've just got to count him out 'leven eggs for a dozen in spite of all I can do. The first inmate of our county poorhouse was an honest man. **M. QUAD.**

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