

# THE LIGHT IN THE CLEARING

A TALE OF THE NORTH COUNTRY IN THE TIME OF SILAS WRIGHT

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AUTHOR OF  
EVEN HOLDEN, D'RI AND I, DARREL OF THE BLESSED ISLES,  
KEEPING UP WITH LIZZIE, ETC., ETC.

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## BARTON GETS NEW INSPIRATION FROM THE WORDS OF THE GREAT SILAS WRIGHT.

**Synopsis.**—Barton Baynes, an orphan, goes to live with his uncle, Peabody Baynes, and his Aunt Deel on a farm on Rattleroad, in a neighborhood called Lickitysplit, about the year 1826. He meets Sally Dunkelberg, about his own age, but socially of a class above the Bayneses, and is fascinated by her pretty face and fine clothes. Barton also meets Roving Kate, known in the neighborhood as the "Silent Woman." Amos Grimshaw, a young son of the richest man in the township, is a visitor at the Baynes home and Roving Kate tells the boys' fortunes, predicting a bright future for Barton and death on the gallows for Amos. Reproved for an act of boyish mischief, Barton runs away, intending to make his home with the Dunkelbergs. He reaches Canton and falls asleep on a porch. There he is found by Silas Wright, Jr., a man prominent in public affairs, who, knowing Peabody Baynes, takes Barton home after buying him new clothes. Silas Wright evinces much interest in Barton and sends a box of books and magazines to the Baynes home. A short time later the election of Mr. Wright to the United States senate is announced. Barton learns of a wonderful power known as "Money," and how through its possession Grimshaw is the most powerful man in the community. Grimshaw threatens to take the Baynes farm if a note which he holds is not paid.

### CHAPTER V—Continued.

To Aunt Deel wagon grease was the worst enemy of a happy and respectable home.

We hitched our team to the grass-hopper spring wagon and set out on our journey. It was a warm, hazy Indian-summer day in November. As we passed "the mill" we saw the Silent Woman looking out of the little window of her room above the blacksmith shop—a low, weather-stained, frame building, hard by the main road, with a narrow hanging stair on the side of it.

"She keeps watch by the window when she ain't travelin'," said Uncle Peabody. "Knows all that's goin' on—that woman—knows who goes to the village an' how long they stay. When Grimshaw goes by they say she hustles off down the road in her rags. She looks like a sick dog herself, but I've heard that she keeps that room o' hers just as neat as a pin."

Near the village we passed a smart-looking buggy, drawn by a spry-footed horse in shiny harness. Then I noticed with a pang that our wagon was covered with dry mud and that our horses were rather bony and our harness a kind of lead color. So I was in a humble state of mind when we entered the village.

There was a crowd of men and women in front of Mr. Wright's office and through its open door I saw many of his fellow townsmen. We waited at the door for a few minutes. I crowded in while Uncle Peabody stood talking to a villager. The Senator caught sight of me and came to my side and put his hand on my head and said:

"Hello, Bart! How you've grown! and how handsome you look! Where's your uncle?"

"He's there by the door," I answered.

"Well, he's go and see him."

Mr. Wright was stouter and grayer and grander than when I had seen him last. He was dressed in black broadcloth and wore a big beaver hat and high collar and his hair was almost white. I remember vividly his clear, kindly, gray eyes and ruddy cheeks.

"Baynes, I'm glad to see you," he said heartily. "Did ye bring me any jerked meat?"

"Didn't think of it," said Uncle Peabody. "But I've got a nice young doe all jerked an' if you're fond o' jerk I'll bring ye down some to-morrow."

"I'd like to take some to Washington, but I wouldn't have you bring it so far."

"I'd like to bring it—I want a chance to talk with ye for half an hour or such a matter," said my uncle. "I've got a little trouble on my hands."

The Senator took us into his office and introduced us to the leading men of the county.

"Here," said the Senator as he put his hand on my head, "is a coming man in the Democratic party."

The great men laughed at my blushes and we came away with a deep sense of pride in us. At last I felt equal to the ordeal of meeting the Dunkelbergs. My uncle must have shared my feeling, for, to my delight, he went straight to the basement store above which was the modest sign: "H. Dunkelberg, Produce."

"Well I swan!" said the merchant in the treble voice which I remembered so well. "This is Bart and Peabody! How are you?"

"Pretty well," I answered, my uncle being too slow of speech to suit my sense of propriety. "How is Sally?"

The two men laughed heartily, much to my embarrassment.

"He's getting right down to business," said my uncle.

"That's right," said Mr. Dunkelberg. "Why, Bart, she's sly as a cricket and pretty as a picture. Come up to dinner with me and see for yourself."

Uncle Peabody hesitated, whereupon I gave him a furtive nod and he said "All right," and then I had a delicious feeling of excitement. I had hard work to control my impatience when they talked.

By and by I asked, "Are you 'most ready to go?"

"Yes—come on—it's after twelve o'clock," said Mr. Dunkelberg. "Sally will be back from school now."

So we walked to the big house of the Dunkelbergs and I could hear my heart beating when we turned in at the gate—the golden gate of my youth it must have been, for after I had passed it I thought no more as a child. That rude push which Mr. Grimshaw gave me had hurried the passing.

I was a little surprised at my own dignity when Sally opened the door to welcome us. My uncle told Aunt Deel that I acted and spoke like Silas Wright, "so nice and proper." Sally was different, too—less playful and more beautiful with long yellow curls covering her shoulders.

"How nice you look!" she said as she took my arm and led me into her playroom.

"These are my new clothes," I boasted. "They are very expensive and I have to be careful of them."

I behaved myself with great care at the table—I remember that—and, after dinner, we played in the dooryard and the stable, I with a great fear of tearing my new clothes. I stopped and cautioned her more than once: "Be careful! For gracious sake! be careful o' my new suit!"

As we were leaving late in the afternoon she said:

"I wish you would come here to school."

"I suppose he will some time," said Uncle Peabody.

A new hope entered my breast, that moment, and began to grow there.

"Aren't you going to kiss her?" said Mr. Dunkelberg with a smile.

I saw the color in her cheeks deepen as she turned with a smile and



"I'm Not Afraid of Him."

walked away two or three steps while the grown people laughed, and stood with her back turned looking in at the window.

"You're looking the wrong way for the scenery," said Mr. Dunkelberg.

She turned and walked toward me with a look of resolution in her pretty face and said:

"I'm not afraid of him." We kissed each other and, again, that well-remembered touch of her hair upon my face! But the feel of her warm lips upon my own—that was so different and so sweet to remember in the lonely days that followed! Fast flows the river to the sea when youth is sailing on it. They had shoved me out of the quiet cove into the swift current—those dear, kindly, thoughtless people. Sally ran away into the house as their laughter continued and my uncle and I walked down the street. How happy I was!

I observed with satisfaction that the village boys did not make fun of me when I passed them as they did when I wore the petticoat trousers. Mr. and Mrs. Wright came along with the crowd, by and by, and Colonel Medad Moody. We had supper with the Senator on the seat with us. He and my uncle began to talk about the tightness of money and the banking laws and I remember a remark of my uncle, for there was that in his tone which I could never forget:

"We poor people are trusting you to look out for us—we poor people are trusting you to see that we get treated fair. We're havin' a hard time."

My uncle told him about the note and the visit of Mr. Grimshaw and of his threats and upbraidings.

"Did he say that in Bart's hearing?" asked the Senator.

"Ayes!—right out plain."

"Too bad! I'm going to tell you frankly, Baynes, that the best thing I know about you is your conduct toward this boy. I like it. The next best thing is the fact that you signed the note. It was bad business but it was good Christian conduct to help your friend. Don't regret it. You were poor and of an age when the boy's pranks were troublesome to both of you, but you took him in. I'll lend you the interest and try to get another holder for the mortgage on one condition. You must let me attend to Bart's schooling. I want to be boss about that. We have a great schoolmaster in Canton and when Bart is a little older I want him to go there to school. I'll try to find him a place where he can work for his board."

"We'll miss Bart but we'll be tickled to death—there's no two ways about that," said Uncle Peabody.

The Senator tested my arithmetic and grammar and geography as we rode along in the darkness and said by and by:

"You'll have to work hard, Bart. You'll have to take your book into the field as I did. After every row of corn I learned a rule of syntax or arithmetic or a fact in geography while I rested, and my thought and memory took hold of it as I plied the hoe. I don't want you to stop the reading, but from now on you must spend every evening on your lessons."

As I was going to bed the Senator called me to him and said:

"I shall be gone when you are up in the morning. It may be a long time before I see you; I shall leave something for you in a sealed envelope with your name on it. You are not to open the envelope until you go away to school. I know how you will feel that first day. When night falls you'll think of your aunt and uncle and be very lonely. When you go to your room for the night I want you to sit down all by yourself and open the envelope and read what I shall write. They will be, I think, the most impressive words you ever read. You will think them over but you will not understand them for a long time. Ask every wise man you meet to explain them to you, for all your happiness will depend upon your understanding of those few words in the envelope."

In the morning Aunt Deel put it in my hands.

"I wonder what in the world he wrote there—ayes!" said she. "We must keep it careful—ayes!—I'll put it in my trunk an' give it to ye when ye go to Canton to school."

"Has Mr. Wright gone?" I asked rather sadly.

"Ayes! Land o' mercy! He went away long before daylight with a lot o' jerked meat in a pack basket—ayes! Yer uncle is goin' down to the village to see 'bout the mortgage this afternoon, ayes!"

It was a Saturday and I spent its hours cording wood in the shed, pausing now and then for a look into my grammar.

What a day it was!—the first of many like it. I never think of those days without saying to myself: "What a God's blessing a man like Silas Wright can be in the community in which his heart and soul are as an open book!"

As the evening came on I took a long look at my cords. The shed was nearly half full of them. Four rules of syntax, also, had been carefully stored away in my brain. I said them over as I hurried down into the pasture with old Shep and brought in the cows. I got through milking just as Uncle Peabody came. I saw with joy that his face was cheerful.

"Yip!" he shouted as he stopped his team at the barn door, where Aunt Deel and I were standing. "We ain't got much to worry about now. I've got the interest money right here in my pocket."

We unhitched and went in to supper. I was hoping that Aunt Deel would speak of my work but she seemed not to think of it.

I went out on the porch and stood looking down with a sad countenance. Aunt Deel followed me.

"Why, Bart!" she exclaimed, "you're too tired to eat—ayes! Be ye sick?" I shook my head.

"Peabody," she called, "this boy has worked like a beaver every minute since you left—ayes he has! I never see anything to beat it—never! I want you to come right out into the wood-shed an' see what he's done—this minute—ayes!"

I followed them into the shed. "Why of all things!" my uncle exclaimed. "He's worked like a naller, ain't he?"

There were tears in his eyes when he took my hand in his rough palm and squeezed it and said:

"Sometimes I wish ye was little again so I could take ye up in my arms an' kiss ye just as I used to. Horace Dunkelberg says that you're the best-lookin' boy he ever see."

I repeated the rules I had learned as we went to the table.

"I'm goin' to be like Silas Wright if I can," I added.

"That's the idee!" said Uncle Peabody. "You keep on as you've started an' everybody'll milk into your pail."

I kept on—not with the vigor of that first day with its new inspiration—but with growing strength and effec-

One Day Mr. Grimshaw Came Out in the Field to See My Uncle.

Nights and mornings and Saturdays I worked with a will and my book in my pocket or at the side of the field and was, I know, a help of some value on the farm. My scholarship improved rapidly and that year I went about as far as I could hope to go in the little school at Leonard's Corners.

"I wouldn't wonder if ol' Kate was right about our boy," said Aunt Deel one day when she saw me with my book in the field.

I began to know that that ol' Kate had somehow been at work in my soul—subconsciously as I would now put it. I was trying to put truth into the prophecy. As I look at the whole matter these days I can see that Mr. Grimshaw himself was a help no less important to me, for it was a sharp spur with which he continued to prod us.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### My School Peril.

One day Mr. Grimshaw came out in the field to see my uncle. They walked away to the shade of a tree while the hired man and I went on with the hoeing. I could hear the harsh voice of the money-lender speaking in loud and angry tones and presently he went away.

"What's the rip?" I asked as my uncle returned looking very sober.

"We won't talk about it now," he answered.

In the candle-light of the evening Uncle Peabody said:

"Grimshaw has demanded his mortgage money an' he wants it in gold coin. We'll have to git it some way, I dunno how."

"Why of all things!" my aunt exclaimed. "How are we goin' to git all that money—these hard times?—ayes! I'd like to know?"

"Well, I can't tell ye," said Uncle Peabody. "I guess he can't forgive us for savin' Rodney Barnes."

"What did he say?" I asked.

"Why, he says we hadn't no business to hire a man to help us. He says you an' me ought to do all the work here. He thinks I ought to took you out o' school long ago."

"I can stay out o' school and keep on with my lessons," I said.

"Not an' please him. He was mad when he see ye with a book in yer hand out there in the corn-field."

What were we to do now? I spent the first sad night of my life undoing the plans which had been so dear to me but not so dear as my aunt and uncle. I decided to give all my life and strength to the saving of the farm. I would still try to be great, but not as great as the Senator.

Barton passes through what are looked upon as the second and third of the four perils predicted for him by "Rovin' Kate." Don't fail to read of his experiences in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

It's Ended Then.

Youngham—"How can I tell when the honeymoon is over?" Oldham—"When your wife stops telling things and begins asking questions."

### Pilate's Dilemma

By REV. W. W. KETCHUM  
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TEXT—Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?—Matt. 27:22.

Much to Pilate's surprise, when at the feast he asked the multitude:



"Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas or Jesus which is called Christ," the multitude, prompted by the chief priests and the elders, asked for the release of Barabbas. This left Jesus on his hands.

Pilate, troubled and perplexed, cried unto the multitude: "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" And again, prompted by the chief priests and the elders, the crowd shouted back: "Let him be crucified." Pilate answered: "Why, what evil hath he done?" "But they cried out the more saying: Let him be crucified."

When Pilate saw that the crowd was tumultuous and he could prevail nothing, thinking to rid himself of the responsibility of having Christ crucified, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." And the crowd, beside itself with frenzy, little realizing the import of the words, answered as one man: "His blood be on us and on our children."

God took them at their word, and the blood of Jesus has rested upon them and their children to this day, and they have suffered, as the prophets testified they would, because of it. Amongst the nations of the world the Jews have borne the stigma of their crime, and everywhere their name is a by-word and a hissing.

But Pilate did not, by the pantomime of washing his hands, neither by his word nor that of the maddened crowd, release himself from his dilemma. Jesus was on his hands, and he was responsible for what he did with him, and any court of justice would hold him accountable.

Pilate's name might have gone down in history as that of a just man, had he refused to be a party to the diabolical designs upon Jesus. But Pilate was a spineless, weak-kneed, political sycophant. He thought more of the security of his throne and his political future than he did of justice, and so he yielded up Barabbas to the multitude and sent Jesus to be crucified.

Pilate's dilemma is the dilemma of all men. As in Pilate's case, circumstances beyond control have placed Jesus on our hands, and it is no easier for us to shift responsibility for our treatment of Jesus than it was for Pilate to do so.

We say we will have nothing to do with Jesus, but that does not relieve us of our dilemma. Jesus is on our hands, for God sent him to be the Savior of the world, and that very fact makes us responsible for what we do with him.

To say that we will avoid responsibility by having nothing to do with Jesus, thinking thereby to relieve ourselves of responsibility, is as silly as it was for Pilate to think he could relieve himself of responsibility by going through the pantomime of washing his hands.

To refuse to heed the claims of Jesus as Savior is to decide against him. We have his own word for this, which says, "He that is not with me is against me." Do not think, then, to relieve yourself of Pilate's dilemma by assuming a negative attitude toward Jesus, for you have not thereby shifted your responsibility to do something for him. You have by your very attitude done something with him. By not heeding his claim upon you, you have denied that he has any claim, and by not accepting him as your Savior you have refused him. This is so evident that the wonder is that men will persistently try to shift their responsibility for their treatment of Christ, saying: "I will do nothing with him," hoping that the word relieves them of their dilemma. No, no, brother, sister, Jesus is on your hands, and do not think that your words wash away your responsibility. A gift, though not willfully refused, if not accepted is rejected, and so Christ, even though not willfully refused by you as your Savior, is, if he is by you neglected, thereby rejected.

Pilate's question is your question: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" Let me tell you, brother, sister, what to do with him. Accept him by faith as your savior, for "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John 3:36.

Pilate, if he had done the right thing with Jesus, would have his name written in history today as a man of justice. You, if you do the right thing with Jesus, namely, accept him as your Savior and Lord, will have your name written forever in the Lamb's Book of Life, and you will have joy and peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, a joy and a peace that the world cannot give, neither take away.

### BRACE UP!

The man or woman with weak kidneys is half crippled. A lame, stiff back, with its constant dull ache and sharp, shooting twinges, makes the simplest task a burden. Headaches, dizzy spells, urinary disorders and an "all worn out" feeling are daily sources of distress. Don't neglect kidney weakness and risk gravel, dropsy or Bright's disease. Get a box of Doan's Kidney Pills today. They have helped people the world over.

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### Warblers All Kinds.

Not taking into account the human beings who are sometimes referred to as warblers, you will find on looking into the bird book that there are many kinds of warblers ranging alphabetically all the way from bay-breasted warblers to yellow-rumped warblers, says the American Forestry association, Washington, which is conducting the national bird-house building contest. If you had a collection of them all together they would take in about all the colors of the rainbow, yellow, orange, chestnut, black, white, green, gray, brown and other colors with numerous shades entering into their beautiful plumage.

Now is the time to flush the system, in helping the bowels to work regular. Wright's Indian Vegetable Pills work like a charm—adv.

### Dubious Indignation.

An American motorist, stopped by a Scotch constable for speeding, hinted broadly that he might pay to be let off.

"What, sir?" cried the constable. "Dae ye suggest that I widge take a bribe? Dae ye dare to insult me, sir?"

"Oh, excuse me," said the American. "I really—"

"But now," put in the constable, "supposh' I was that kin' o' a man, how much widge ye be inclined to gie?"

### Country Wants Bigness.

The bigger the man the more room there is for him out in the country. Not much room there for the small souls.

Just Retribution.

"They are railroadin' this man to prison." "That's all right; he's a train robber."

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