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ACTON, ONTARIO, THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 19, 1912

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## THE GRINDSTONE OF FATE

One day when I, a boy, bewailed the wealth to me denied, I recollect my Uncle Niram taking me to chide me for my petulance and whisper in my ear. A bit of homespun logic and some facts designed to cheer. "My boy," he said, "in after years you'll recognize that advice. Unceasing toil, and poverty equip one best for life. For men, like tools, don't get an edge on things as smooth as wax. It's just the grindstone's roughness, lad, that sharpens up the ax."

## The Blue Spring School Whittling Club

VERA DAVENPORT

THE young teacher who had started his case to the school board so clearly and forcibly looked from one grizzled face to another with an expectant smile. But in his heart he knew he had lost.

Ami Peebles was trustee of the Blue Spring section and likewise directed the opinion of his colleagues. "For my part I send my children to school to be educated. Anybody can use tools."

"Well, I do know, 'Ami! I do know," objected Lefe Jackson. Mr. Jackson had been christened Lafayette, but he had been variously "shortened" by a busy world in later years to Lefe. He was a carpenter by trade and chairman of the board by accident. "I consider it takes brains to use 'em proper. But I'm like you, I send my young ones to school to learn what I can't teach 'em myself."

"The school laws don't mention a saw and a hammer and plane in the list of 'necessary' equipment," observed the treasurer solemnly. "A globe, and maps and a dictionary—all them we've provided 'ordial' to law—and likewise a broom and dustpan, water pail, wash-basin, a towel and soap—even soap! When I went to school we washed our hands in the creek. I think that Blue Spring School's mighty well fixed, myself."

"Possibly you're right." It was hard for John Toland to be both diplomatic and truthful, but "possibly" helped him out. "We do require more for our school nowadays. But what I meant to say was—"

In truth he had said it twice already, but again he went over his arguments, restating, amplifying the reasons for making a beginning in manual training in the Blue Spring School.

He hated to give up on several accounts. In the first place he heartily believed in the educational value of the plan he advocated. In the second place, he had been so sure of persuading the board to his way of thinking that he had called a "Boys' Council" the night before and laid the matter before them. It was cold comfort now to remember how enthusiastically it had been received.

"That'll be great!" Lefe Jackson

no objection to our starting out on our own hook if we furnish our own tools and lumber."

"Tools cost money," said Bradley Jackson briefly.

"Right you are!" said John Toland, laughing. "Only I think we have them already."

He drew a knife from a pocket, opened it and tested the edge of the shining blades with a careful thumb.

"Here's my outfit, boys," he said; "let's see yours."

Knives in a more or less serious state of dilapidation were fished from bulging pockets. John Toland went gravely down the line, examining and suggesting repairs. "Tighten the rivets a bit, Jack. A loose blade is bound to make trouble."

"Good stuff in this, Kent, but all the blades need sharpening. They'll take a fine edge."

"Broken off the point, ah? Well, that won't matter much. Just file it off to the shape you like best."

With an angry gesture, big Jim Peebles sent the blade of his knife deep into the floor, where it stuck, quivering with its owner's wrath.

"Whittling!" he growled. "What's the fun of making shavings? Why couldn't those old moss—"

"Steady, Jim, steady!" John Toland's firm hand fell lightly on his shoulder. "You are jumping at conclusions and missing them by a mile. You can do a lot of things with a good knife. Add a bottle of glue, a few brads and some sand paper and we'll be able to make a fine shewing."

The touch of John Toland's friendly hand calmed Jim Peebles as much as his words.

"Yes, but why couldn't it—" he swallowed the uncomplimentary thought with a gulp—"the board have let us take hold of some real work? I'd 'a' liked that."

"Jim," said his teacher, "when you can't get what you like, what's the next best thing?"

"Give it up."

"It's to like what you've got."

"When'll we get wood?" asked Len Hampton. "Pine's getting mighty scarce around here."

"Soft wood is all right for beginners," was the prompt reply. "But when we really get to work we'll want pieces of well-seasoned maple, basswood and hickory. It's tough stuff to work but you've got something when you're through."

"Say!" interrupted Perry Ward, "my uncle runs a planing mill, and there's all sorts of good pieces in the scrap pile. He will let us have all we want—I know he will."

"Good for you, Perry!" said his teacher heartily. "We'll depend on those planers."

So the Whittling Club of the Blue Spring School was organized. It wasn't exactly what John Toland wanted, but in the end, it proved a very satisfactory "peg."

Any boy with a jackknife was eligible to membership. He had his choice of a number of things to make—letter boxes, butter paddles, wooden spoons, toy spoons, cards and the like. The club was very organized and efficient. It met regularly on Saturday afternoons. They were called to order and

concomitantly as the

of this teacher of righteousness; it is

possible yet to see the effect which he

duced upon his age, upon its thought

upon its spirit.

A young man had appointed to

some friends to go to one of the

gardens in London on Sunday.

While waiting at the place assign

rendevous in one of the streets,

an old friend, a lady, passed by, an

Christian—a faithful missionar

ed and exalted hero, an apostle

of the invitation to go with

church. It was the turning

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