IN THE OZARK WILDS.

QUEER CHARACTERS MET IN SOUTHEASTERN MISSOURI.

Backwoodsmen from Instinct, They Keep as Far from Civilizing Influences as Possible.

The natives of this region writes a correspondent of the Chicago *Times* from Grandin, do not differ materially from those farther south in Arkansas. They talk the same, build the same sort of rough houses, make love in the same shy fashion, and are altogether very like the man whom the Arkansaw traveler met so many years ago. There are not so many of them here as there used to be, either. When the Memphis railroad built its extension out along the picturesque Current river, so as to afford an outlet for the immense pine forests of all this section, the natives stepped back. They could not ply the manufacture of moonshine whisky so well with a railroad within such easy distance, and then school-houses began to spring up and outsiders with modern ideas came in and began to till the soil as the forests were cut away. The original native here does not do anything but fish, hunt, and "raise er dab o' cotton." His house is made of rough logs, with one story and a sort of loft where strangers who stop for the night are shown to bed.

There may be a little moonshine made down here in Carter county even now, but there haven bee no complaints of such operations for several months. It was within a few miles of this place, however, only a few days ago that a United States revenue officer arrested a party of men for running a saloon on wheels. The officer had known for several weeks that whisky was being sold to the saw-mill workmen all through Carter county, but he could secure no evidence. A few days ago he heard that the men at a mill not far from here were getting whisky, and he set out to look them up. A few miles from town he came upon a party of strapping natives gathered around a wagon, on top of which was a barrel. Two men were drinking when the officer stepped up.

"Good stuff," he queried, unconcernedly.

"Yas," drawled a young fellow, who seemed to be in charge; "d'ye want some?"

"Yes," responded the officer, "I guess I'll take it all."

A SALOON IN CARTER COUNTY.

The seller started to make a figure on the whisky when an old man in the party, sitting on a stump near by, shrewdly guessed the identity of the officer, and exclaimed:

"Ye kain't tech me on this hyar, fer I an't got nothin' ter do 'ith it ertall.

"You are in very bad company, then," returned the officer, holding his revolver in hand. "Who are you, any way?"

"I'm ther preach'r fer ther cerkit—er Meth'dis' preach'r."

"Why are you here?" questioned the revenue man.

"Jest a seein' of it war good. Ef I laked ther sample I 'lowed ter take er dab home 'ith me."

The preacher was permitted to go, but several of the others were put under arrest. The officer making the capture had but one revolver, while the members of the party were heavily armed. The surprise was complete.

When the Memphis company extended its Current river branch into this section even the native settlers were few and far between. They could not read and they knew nothing of the world at large. They contended that the earth was flat on the old argument of placing a jug of water out for the night and if it was all right in the morning proof was conclusive that there had not been a turnover in the night. If some one had turned the jug over the native might have been convinced that, after all, there was something faulty in his theory.

Courtship here is funny. Everybody knows everybody's business, even to affairs of the heart. Let one rough youth be found "waitin' on" a girl of the neighborhood and it is soon the talk for miles around. I dropped in at a Carter county cabin a few nights ago for the purpose of securing lodging. The spare room was in the loft and I retired early. It was a trifle warm, and the mattress was moved up to the little hole—always found at the end of these cabins, up near the comb of the roof—where a breeze fanned through. No one could help hearing the voices that came up from outside of the cabin. The night was oppressively still and the old folks had gone to bed below. The conversation at the end of the house outside was evidently between the girl of the place and her "feller."

UNDER THE EAVES.

"The boys was riggin' me erbout you over ter Peases terday," the male voice said.

"Naw, they wa'n't, now," murmured the girl.

"Yes, they wuz," insisted the other, "an' 'tan't ther fust time I've got rigged erbout you."

"Jim!" murmured the girl.

"An' I 'lowed," continued Jim, "thet may be yer'd lak ter hear erbout it."

"Oh, Jim," was all that came up to the window.

"Whut ef I'd say I didn't keer er durn erbout ther riggin'?"

THE BRIDE AND GROOM.

"But yer do keer," interposed the girl.

"Naw," came the response, evidently playful.

"Yes," was the equally playful retort of the girl.

The voices grew less distinct, or else I was asleep, but presently they were louder again.

"Goin'?" the girl's voice asked.

"Um," responded the youth.

That was all that came up to the window. Everything was quiet. Two minutes later there was a bit of noise in the cabin below. The youth had gone home and the girl was going to bed.

A few weeks ago a bridal couple came in from over near Pine Valley, in Reynolds county, bound to "maw's folks," over in Shannon county. The young pair got out of the wagon, that was pulled up by two sleepy oxen. The man took a box from the vehicle and set it on the platform. The box was the only trunk they had, and in it were the clothing of both bride and groom. The happy pair sat on the box making sheep's eyes at each other and looking down the track for the train by turns. The groom was very proud of his new wife, surveying her with a look of complete satisfaction. The train drew up at last and the agent took the box and put it in the baggage-car. The bridal couple stood around for a minute, when the conductor shouted "All aboard!"

'Come on, Mary," called the groom, catching his wife by the hand; "we must git on."

The pair climbed the steps at the rear of the baggage-car, and, going into the end door, surprised the baggageman by seating themselves on the box. Before that official had recovered himself so as to explain, matters the proud groom turned to his pleased wife and smilingly observed:

"It do beat all, Mary, how fine they's gettin' things. Ef ther folks et home c'ud on'y see us now, how'd they feel, d'ye reckon?"

When the baggageman kindly explained that the car was only for the conveyance of trunks and the like and showed the couple back into the day car, the groom was so much pleased that he kissed his beautiful bride right there before everybody.

Medical Superstitions.

There is a popular supposition of wide range, based upon I know not what, that it is very healthful for children to play with dogs. A weak child, it is thought, may gain strength by being with a dog, or, if diseased, the child may be cured by having the animal "take the disease"—for example, inflamed eyes or any disorder of the skin. Within a year a college graduate told me, in perfect good faith, of acquaintances, a Boston doctor and his wife, whose little girl had been greatly afflicted with some form of eczema, which they all hoped would disappear, as the parents had purchased a fine dog to play with the child.

When a dog is teething the upper incisors, according to a New England superstition, must be removed as soon as they become loose, or he may "swallow them and have fits." Perhaps even more generally received is the fancied danger of allowing a child's milk-tooth after extraction to fall into the possession of a dog or cat, lest the animal swallow it, and the child have a dog's or cat's tooth grow in place of the lost one. The Mexicans and Indians in Texas say that every animal has brains enough to tan its own skin, and so the latter, in the case of the wolf, panther, wild cat and some other animals, is mainly prepared by rubbing into the flesh side of it the brains of its former wearer. A somewhat common fancy among children, perhaps, too, adults as well, is that "every part strengthens a part"—that is, that the liver, heart, brains and so on, of animals, when eaten, go directly toward nourishing the corresponding organs in the eater. A similar doctrine was worked out in great detail by the American Indians, and is, I believe, held by many other savage tribes. It seems altogether probable that such beliefs, wherever found among civilized people, old or young, are survivals from some remote antiquity, and that they are closely akin in their nature and origin to the well-known doctrine of signatures which has played so great a part in the systems of medicines of primitive peoples.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

A Funny Country.

"America is a funny country," said a foreigner the other day. "If you ask a person to oblige you with a 2-cent stamp he feels insulted at our offering him the money for it, but if you ask him for a match he sarcastically asks you why you don't buy some."

An aged lady died suddenly in a hotel at Birmingham, Ala., and in her bustle $2,010 was found secreted.

Blind!

Come out in the orchard, Roger; the air is cool
and sweet,
Here, give me your hand, old fellow, we'll walk
to the arbor seat.
The wife's been sayin' that lately you've been
up to your gloomy tricks;
We cannot allow that, Roger, in a boy of
seventy-six.

Blind! Why, that is the reason you ought to
be light and gay;
(It wasn't till sixty-five, you know, that your
eye-sight went away);
And it 'pears to me that the Master in His
wisdom done it well
To give you in place of the weeds, Roger, the
blooms that in memory dwell.

Your hair, who shall say it is white, Roger? It's
silky and black as a crow;
And Nature has rubbed on your cheek, Roger,
the roslest roses that grow
'Tis I that am agoing quickly—I'm eighty-one
to-day,
And my sunken cheeks are yellow, and I'm
something more than gray!

I see all the winter snows, Roger, when the gay
field flowers are sear,
And the red leaf falls from the oak tree, like
an old man's deathbed tear.
I see, deserted and mossgrown, the aisle we so
oft have trod;
For the parson over the hill, Roger, has an
easier road to God.

The railway runs through the meadows where
the blackberries used to grow;
The ball field isn't the dear old spot of fifty
years ago:
And I'd like to lay on the rascal a whip with a
million knots
As made of our cherished school ground "desirable building lots,"

But you—you fortunate fellow—can sit in the
golden glow
That falls on your spirit's vision from the
jewelled long ago;
Can laugh at the mighty hammers that are
smashing our gods of clay,
For all that is dearest and best, Roger, you've
safely stored away.

—Thomas Frost

ON THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE.

A few years before the war I was a clerk in the store of my brother-in-law, Nathan Ritchie, in Pittsburg, and at just that age in which a young man begins to take a real serious interest in girls, and, naturally, to get into all sorts of scrapes and troubles therefrom.

The Washington county farmers used to come into town then on their wagons, bringing along not only big loads of grain, wool, flax, poultry, and other produce, but their wives and daughters as well. They would drive in one day, put up over night at the old "Farmers' inn," down near the Smithfield market, and the next day would make their necessary purchase and go home.

I got to know personally a great many of the farmer folks, and had occasion—or took it—to observe that there were plenty of very fine young women among them—buxom, full-bosomed, bight-eyed, red-lipped girls—full of health, vivacity, and natural honesty. But old man Dan Elder's daughter Jennie seemed to me the flower of the flock, and I assure you that, as far as I could, I made it an object of interest for the Elder family to do its trading at our store.

Jennie and I got quite friendly, and began to have a hopeful suspicion that she was pretty near as glad to see me when she came to town as I was to see her. Once I got her and her father to go with me to a theater, the first time either of them had seen a play, but he got a notion that there was something wrong about stage plays and would not let her go again. Still the old fellow seemed to take a sort of liking to me, and after he had got to know me quite well, nearly two years from our first meeting, he invited me to visit his place out on Raccoon creek.

About a week afterward I hired a good saddle horse and rode out to pay that visit. It was easy enough to find "Uncle Dan's" place, for everybody within a radius of ten miles about it seemed to know him, and I reached his house just at dusk. I thought it was a good omen when the dogs were so much more friendly than country dogs generally are in greeting a stranger, and was sure of it when Jennie said archly:

"Old Bose wouldn't be so good-natured if he did not know that I was expecting you. He must have heard me talking about you."

That evening the whole family, Jennie, her father and mother, an elder brother, and two sisters—went to a dance, about two miles distant, and, of course, I went along. At least I seemed to do so. In point of fact, I went to Paradise. I sat beside Jennie in the big wagon, with my arm around her while we went through dark patches of forest; danced with Jennie, I don't know how many times; waited upon Jennie at supper, rode home beside Jennie, with renewed utilization of forest shadows; and even snatched a kiss from Jennie ere she fled to her room. Under such circumstances how could I be expected to be more than vaguely conscious that there was a big, hulking, clod-hopper named Jim Arney, who scowled and glared at me as if he would like to eat me? What the mischief did I care for Jim Arney? But the fellow wouldn't be ignored. The very next afternoon, feeling that it was not quite the proper thing for me to loiter around the house all day, I borrowed brother Dave's rifle and went out to shoot a squirrel or two if I could find any. Suddenly at a turn in the road I was confronted by Jim Arney on horseback. Eying me with an insulting affectation of scorn he snarled:

"You're a pretty looking dandy from town, ain't you?" I replied that candidly speaking, I really did think I presented a rather agreeable contrast to him.

He flushed angrily, and speaking in a voice thick with passion, retorted:

"I'd break your back if Jennie hadn't said I was to leave you alone." I told him I would secure his pardon for all the back-breaking he could do on me, and invited him to "wade in," but he rode off on his way, and I went on squirrel-hunting.

Leaving my course to chance I strolled higher and higher up a gently sloping hill until I came out suddenly at the top of a precipice several hundred feet in height, which I subsequently learned was called the "Devil's Backbone." The face of the cliff was as sheer as a wall, but rough with great holes burrowed here and there in the soft sandstone by the elements, and with narrow ledges, on which trees and shrubs grew, masking all the rocky declivity with foliage. The tops of tall trees were down below me, and far in the depths beyond their roots I could catch glimpses of the creek, like a silver thread. Around where I stood bushes grew thickly up to the very verge of the precipice, with trees occasionally among them leaning over it.

An impudent, chattering gray squirrel sat upon his haunches in a tree on the brow of the cliff, barking at me, and I shot him. He fell and lodged on a little ledge full twenty feet below the top, where I stood. I made up my mind to get the body of the little beast, and the difficulty and even positive danger to be encountered in doing so were only incitements to achieve the feat. Laying my gun upon the ground, I seized a tough bush, swung over the edge of the precipice, and lowered myself to a point where I got a foothold and a second bush that would bend still lower. Before making the second descent I made the first bush fast, in its bent position, to the second, to have a way secured for return. Then I went to the ledge where the squirrel lay. In stooping to pick it up, I carelessly let go the bush by which I had swung down, and it sprung back instantly to its normal position, a dozen feet above my head. I was securely trapped in a place from which I couldn't safely get away unaided, without I could have flown like a bird. Not a friendly twig was within ten feet of my clutch; the precipice dropped sheer down hundreds of feet right at my toes, and the ledge was so narrow that I had barely room to stand upon it. I yelled for help, but, of course, nobody heard me. I took off my stockings, unraveled them, tied a stone to the yarn, and tried to swing it over the bush above me, almost throwing myself off the ledge in doing so. The effort was a failure. I was hoarse with futile howling. Night fell, and the darkness seemed very cold. I managed to sit down, with my legs dangling over the edge of the ledge; but was afraid to sleep for fear of falling off. An owl perched near me, hooting in great enjoyment of my predicament.

The night seemed years in duration. And there surely never was a slower dawn than that upon which I looked from my open-air prison. By this time I was weak with hunger and wild with thirst. A little after sunrise I was startled by a gunshot from the valley far below, and the vicious "spat" of a bullet upon the rock near my left ankle. It made me fling my legs up so suddenly that I came near toppling off my perch. "That, now," I said to myself, "is no doubt Jim Arney who has discovered me, and is popping away at me in safety; the cowardly assassin." But, as I learned afterward, I wronged him. The bullet was fired by a hunter, whose sharp eyes saw only my foot; and at that distance, thinking it an owl, took a snap shot at it. Thank heaven his aim was no better.

About 9 o'clock I heard the welcome baying of old "Bose" from the top of the cliff. The whole Elder family and some of the neighbors were out hunting for me, my absence through the night having occasioned much alarm; and when I shouted a whole chorus of voices answered me at once. Ropes were procured, and I, with no little difficulty, was dragged up to safety, where I received so warm a welcome from all—and especially so from Jennie—that I felt compensated by fortune for what I had suffered. The old man said, in a dryly sarcastic way, that he thought I rather "over-vallyed the squir'l."

I have often gone out to "Uncle Dan's"—less frequently since Jennie and I have been married than before—but have never had any inclination for fooling about the "Devil's Backbone" any more. No; I have never heard that Jim Arney came to any bad end. He simply married some other girl than Jennie.

Physical Culture for Girls.

"How would I bring up a girl? I would begin when she was 2 years old and teach her to stand poised from the hips and slightly forward, chest up, abdomen contracted, toes turned out at an angle of 60 degrees, and neck erect, so that the collar-bone should be horizontal. You can teach a little girl to know whether she is standing properly or not by having her occasionally walk up against a door. She should touch it with lips, chin, chest and toes. A plumb-line from the shoulders should pass through the hip and ankle joints. Then I would teach her to breathe slowly, inflating the chest upward and outward, not downward, keeping the abdomen contracted. This gives a wonderful feeling of buoyancy. As she grew older she should not take above ten breaths a minute, but they should be full vigorous ones. Good breathing and good standing are almost enough of themselves to give good health and a good figure. In walking I would show her how to keep her face and chest well over the advanced foot, and to lift the body by the muscles and the inflation of the lungs. I would see to it that she turned her toes well out. Seventy-five women out of every 100 walk with the feet straight or toe in. This increases the tendency to an inward turn of the knees and encourages a pelvic contraction. The weight should rest on the balls of the feet and the ball and heel should touch the floor at the same time. In her school days I would take pains to have her sit at her desk properly.—*Eliza Putnam Heaton.*

An Unexpected Pleasure.

Bunko Man—Good morning Mr.—er—er I've just forgotton your name for the moment.

Farmer Backlots—Backlots, sir; Joel Backlots of Botzum. I can't just place you, though, young man. Your name isn't Brown, is it?

Bunko—Well, it *is*, Mr. Backlots, and I'm mighty glad to meet someone I know.

Backlots—You don't mean to tell me you're 'Squire Brown's son Dan who ran away some years ago?

Bunko—You've hit it.

Backlots (grasping him warmly by the hand)—Well, I'm darned glad to meet you and I'm just goin' to fix you now for stealing my colt when you skipped. Police!

A writer in the *Journal of Medicine*, Paris, warmly advocates the adoption of the international language, Volapuk, for medical purposes.