

director, and inquired how long a school they would have.

"Four months," he replied, "and we want it to begin the middle of October. What will you teach for?"

"What do you pay your teachers?" I asked in Yankee style.

"Well, last winter we gave Payson ninety-five dollars for three months, but he was an extra teacher. There was a man here the other day who talked as if he would take the school. He offers to teach for twenty dollars a month and find his board. How much do you want?"

"I would not like to teach for less than thirty dollars a month, because I could not board at home," I replied.

"H'm! thirty a month," he muttered slowly. "I think they will give this man the school. He's poor, has a large family, and didn't raise anything this year. He thinks he can get a certificate."

"So you don't think that there is any show for me?" I asked.

"Well, I wouldn't put too much strength on it, as he'll teach for less."

We stopped until after the rain had ceased, wedged into the seven-by-nine room with the thrashing gang like so many sardines. We then set out on our return, taking in the Mud Creek district on the way. We first called upon the treasurer, and found in him a deep sympathizer in my emergency. He was willing I should have the school, would board me if I wished, and, so far as he himself was concerned, would agree to pay me thirty-five dollars a month.

This encouraging news, the first that I had so far met with, at once raised my hopes from zero to one hundred degrees above, and I went on our way rejoicing. The moderator we did not find at home, and we went on to the director's. When we arrived there, uncle offered to see him himself, and I agreed thereto. I halted the team upon the road without going upon his premises, as we saw him at work near by. A row of cottonwoods partially screened me from him, and he was suffi-

ciently near for me to hear the colloquy that followed. After uncle had asked him for his consent in the matter, he commenced a long series of questions about me, and having ascertained that I had been to college, had not taught before, and was in my minority, he made this formidable objection:

"Now, I'm afraid he will spark my girls. He is just the right age for it. He's been to college, and I have heard tell of the way they carry on there. No, it wouldn't do. I'm in favor of letting Mr. Brass have the school. He can't find anything to do, and has lost his crops. He will teach a four months' term for fifty dollars, and will board around."

My uncle endeavored to assure him that I would conduct myself with discretion, while to me the announcement was appalling, since I was noted throughout the neighborhood for a contrary line of conduct. But no, he was inexorable, and as we knew that the moderator was a political cat'spaw in his hands, it was then evident that I would have to look elsewhere.

A few days later I made another effort, and visited a district some six miles distant in another direction. I started out on foot, and reached the house of the director about noon, as that individual was coming in from his work. I called him aside, and, with less circumlocution than formerly, for continued ill luck had developed in me desperation, I made known to him my business.

At first he did not speak very encouragingly, but as I grew importunate my prospects began to brighten. He informed me that they were intending to have a winter school to begin early in December, but the district was a new one, and they had but thirty-seven dollars and forty-four cents in the treasury. He said that several had applied for the school, but on learning the financial status of the district, had turned upon their heels and departed in disgust and sorrow. The school was therefore unengaged as yet,