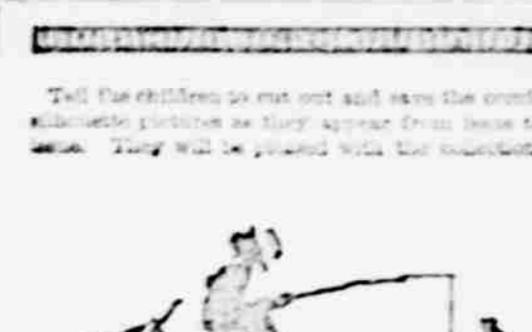


Running Rat River Falls.

Well, when old Sawlogs first located in Oshkosh, he took a job getting out some logs up on the headwaters of Rat River, and rafting them down to Wolf River. He got some logs aound Oshkosh, who were familiar with Rat River, to go and help him, and they tramped from Oshkosh up through the woods to the timber. Rat River is a little stream about thirty feet wide, that runs through the woods and marshes, and has hardly current enough to float a feather down stream, except in the spring, when the snow melts, and then it runs about three miles an hour, but it is a quiet and modest stream as ever was, without a ripple on it. While the boys were getting out the timber and rafting it they kept talking about the falls, and wondering if any of the party would be drawn on running the raft over, until Sawlogs became interested, and the boys told him Rat River Falls were the most dangerous falls on any of the leading streams of the state, except the falls of the Wisconsin, and it stood a man in hand to make his peace with his Master before the raft struck the rushing, foaming water, as the raft was liable to go twenty feet under water, and then take a scoop into the tree tops. Sawlogs became much interested, and while so far away took stock of him. The last of the party went started the boys would not play card, as was their custom, but seemed serious, and two of them hunted statements out of their past, and read extracts from them, until Sawlogs got no news, and went on out into the woods a thought over his past life, and wished the danger was past. If he then had any ambitions to a United States citizenship in the future, that still spoke of a way, thinking of the progress of the country in running the falls, knew the situation out of him. He arose in the morning pale and nervous, and when the raft was turned loose and the start was made, he acted as though he would give all he expected to be worth, if he had not taken the job. He could have returned to Oshkosh by land, and let the boys run the raft, but he would not think of any danger. Though now to rafting and rafting he was willing to learn, and he wanted to stand by and do all that any honorable man could do, but he told the boys that he would be thankful for any suggestions they would make as to safety in running the falls. He said life was perhaps as dear to him as to any, and while he was always prepared for anything that might happen, and hoped he had led such a life as to be ready at any time to meet the Great Judge, and he was not a coward, he felt that the duty of any man to take all the precautions that were possible to save his life. The boys had all they could do to keep from laughing at the keep straight faces, and told him that the only thing to do was to lash themselves to the raft before entering the falls, and trust in Providence. If the raft was destroyed and they were lost, their friends could find a body easier if it was lashed to a saw log than they could by dragging for it in fifty feet of rushing water. They said they would tell him long enough before reaching the falls, so he could get himself free, and then thanked them, and looked up at the bare sky as though it might be his last look at it. About four o'clock that afternoon, as the raft was nearing the mouth, when the Rat River empties into the Wolf, the boys put a little flour on their faces, to make them look pale, and began to prepare to run the falls. Each had some meat to make of the others, in case he should be lost, such as giving some bacon, a pipe or something, to some friend, and messages were given to be delivered to friends in Oshkosh. It was a trying time, and when the raft pilot said they were only a half a mile from the falls, and that it was time to lash themselves to the raft, Sawlogs felt as though it was the last act of his life. The boys helped him to lash him off to a log, told him to stay there, what ever happened, and then they retired to the rear of the raft to lash themselves, they said, but really to have a good laugh. All was still for half an hour, and the raft moved along like a snail, but every minute the man who was lashed to a log told that the next moment the falls would be reached. But the falls were never reached, because there were none. Half an hour more passed, when the man began to look around from his position, flat on the log. He was looking for the falls. Then he looked at the boys, who were jumping up and laughing, and then it dawned upon him that he had been sold. One of the boys came along to unlash him, and he asked what all this meant, and he was told that the falls had been passed in safety, and not a man had been lost. He was uplifted, and probably a madder man never lived. He began to talk sassy, but the boys told him he must have taken a deep and passed the falls in that condition, but he knew better. Well, the boy made it all right with the old man, who was a boy then, and he did not kill any of them, but it was a long time before he could think of Rat River without pain. Since then he has got rich, and the boys who played it on him are now some of the most successful on the Wolf, and the story teller knocked the ashes out of his pipe and prepared to turn in, while the rest prepared to explore Red River for ducks the next day, and perhaps go over the very falls where Sawlogs was lashed to the raft. —*Pete's Son.*

Rats in the cellar.

Shortly before winter, as the stores go in to cribs and cellar, young rats, raised by expert mothers in hollow trees, or other sides and sheltered corners, busy themselves at night looking for winter quarters where there will be defense from cold, and where food will be at hand. When a cellar is stored with fruit, vegetables, etc., it is very difficult to drive out rats, and the damage they do in such a place is enormous. All the finest fruits are soon bitten into, defiled and spoiled. A little antiseptic care, to prevent their establishing a colony, pays well. The openings for ventilation should have rat-proof screens; the doors and walls should be searched for holes; empty barrels or boxes moved, holes stopped with glass and mortar, and a fresh coat of whitewash given. If doubtful places remain, a good sprinkling of copperas and lime is hateful and deterrent to these troublesome animals. If from any cause the cellar itself can not be made secure, choice samples of fruit may be kept safe in old oil barrels or similar vessels, or in boxes suspended from the joists above by wire hooks. The rats that go out to form new colonies are mostly young, and much more easily caught than older ones. If fed for two or three nights on a tray of sawdust a steel trap placed in the tray will not be seen or suspeclied, and will generally catch and hold at least one messenger. —*V. F. Tritton.*



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