

BILL NYE'S BOYHOOD

If I were a boy again, endowed with the same wild passion for plucking watermelons in the dark of the moon, I would no doubt fall a victim to the overmastering passion as I did before, but looking at it as I do now, I would be wiser. Boys cannot, however, have the mature judgment of manhood without the experience and rheumatism to go with it. So it is better that in our childhood we may be able to eat a raw turnip with safety, and know something later on in life. I notice a great change in myself while comparing my present condition with that of joyous boyhood. Then I had no sense, but I had a good digestion. Now I haven't even the digestion. The hurrying years have cavorted over my sunny head till they have worn it smooth, but they have left a good deal yet for me to learn. I am still engaged in learning through the day and putting arnica on my experience at night.

Childhood is said to be the most gladsome period of our lives, and in some respects this statement may be regarded as reliable, but it is not all joy. I have had just as much fun later years as I did in boyhood; though the people with whom I have been thrown in contact claim that their experience has been different. I hope they do not mean anything personal by that.

I do sometimes wish that I could be a boy again, but I smother that wish on account of my parents. What they need most is rest and a change of scene. They still enjoy children, but they would like a

chance to select the children with whom they associate.

My parents were blest with five bright-eyed and beautiful little boys, three of whom grew up and by that means became adults. I am in that condition myself. I was the eldest of the family with the exception of my parents; I am still that way. My life was rather tempestuous in places, occasionally flecked with sunshine, but more frequently with retribution. I was not a very good roadster when I was young, and so retribution was most always in the act of overtaking me. While outraged justice was getting in its work on me, the other boys escaped through an aperture in the fence.

This is another reason why I do not yearn to be a boy again.

When we ran away from school to catch chubs and when we built a fire to cook them and the fire got into the tall, dry grass and burned four miles of fence and sixteen tons of hay for a gentleman for whom I had a high regard, and I went back to put out the fire, the other boys escaped and have so remained ever since.

A just retribution has never in any difficulty in overtaking me and walking up and down over my wish-bone.

When a party of us had been engaged in gathering Easter eggs in the barn of a gentleman who was away from home at the time, and he returned just as we had filled our pockets with the choicest vintage of his sun-kissed hens, the other boys escaped while I was occupying the attention of the dog, and I had to slide out of the second story of the barn. It is still fresh in my mind as

I write. I wore my father's vest at the time, and it was larger than was necessary. My father was larger than I at that time for I was only nine years of age and had not arrived at my full stature. In sliding down the batten, I discovered that the upper end of it was loose and that my flowing vest had slipped over it, so that when I got down about four feet I hung, with the board buttoned inside my bosom and scrambled egg oozing out of my knickerbockers.

The batten had sprung back against the barn in such a manner as to prevent my unbuttoning my vest, and while I hung there at the side of the barn like a coon skin, the proprietor came around and accused me of prematurely gathering his eggs.

I had heard truth very highly spoken of by people who had dabbled in it more or less, and so I resolved to try it in this instance. So I admitted that such was the case, and it was the best thing I could have done, for the man said as I had been so frank with him he would take me down as soon as he got his other work done and he was as good as his word. After he had milked nine cows and fed nine calves he came around with a ladder and took me down. He also spanked me and set his dog on me, but I did not mind that, for I was accustomed to it. To hang on the side of a barn, however, like an autumn leaf, trying to kick large holes in the atmosphere, is disagreeable.

This incident cast a gloom over my whole life. It has also reconciled me to the awful decree that I can never be a boy again.

PEOPLE SAY THAT—

Popular opinion is the most fickle thing on earth.

The artful female is ever trying to improve nature's handwork.

It's a pity that some women can't think as fast as they can talk.


You can't bluff a pretty girl by telling her there are microbes in kisses.

Some people wouldn't object if the deadly cigarette were a little more so.

Sweden is even more particular than the United States, the Swedish government having ruled that deported radicals from the United States are not fit even to set foot on Swedish soil.

—For Sale—Nine room house. Best part of town. Modern. Priced right and good terms. See Nebraska Land Company.

Out of the half dozen cases filed in county court against Walker D. Hines, railroad administrator, just prior to the railroads taking back their lines, four have been settled out of court to date, and prospects are good for private settlement of the remaining claims.



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