

OsteoLib® - Vol. I

Autobiography

A. T. Still

(1897)





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A.T. Still



About the book...

This book provides a first hand narrative of Andrew Taylor Still's life and the development of Osteopathy. This is the first edition of this work and is slightly longer than the second edition. This edition was published the first time June 15, 1897 by Still in Kirksville, MO. He states in the preface that this work is a collection of the truth of his life as he remembers it, and suggests that facts and figures may not be perfectly accurate as he took no notes in his life. He describes frontier living as a boy and young man. He talks about his becoming a physician and all that entailed. His political stand is evidenced by his support of the Free State movement in Kansas in the 1860s. He also discusses how Osteopathy developed out of his need to find something better than what medical practice had to offer at the time. The book outlines how Still began to train others in this work. Included are also some transcriptions of speeches given at birthdays and school events. Written in his own plain English style, this book provides a clear picture of the old doctor.



About the author...



A. T. Still (1828-1917) was born in Virginia in 1828. After serving an apprenticeship under his father, he completed additional coursework at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Kansas City, Missouri. He went on to serve as a surgeon in the Union Army during the American Civil War. After the Civil War and following the death of three of his children from spinal meningitis in 1864, Still concluded that the orthodox medical practices of his day were ineffective and devoted the next ten years of his life to studying the human body and finding better ways to treat disease.

His research and clinical observations led him to believe that the musculoskeletal system played a vital role in health and disease and that the body contained all of the elements needed to maintain health if properly stimulated. Still believed that by correcting problems in the body's structure, through the use of manual techniques, the body's ability to function and to heal itself could be greatly improved.

He also promoted the idea of preventive medicine and endorsed the philosophy that physicians should focus on treating the whole patient ("triume nature of man"), rather than just the disease. At the time, these beliefs formed the basis of a new medical approach, osteopathic medicine.

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A.T. STILL.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

Andrew T. Still

-WITH A-

HISTORY OF THE DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE SCIENCE OF OSTEOPATHY:: ::

Together with an account
of the founding of the.....
.....American school of
Osteopathy; and lectures
delivered before that....
....institution from time to
time during the progress
of the discovery

ILLUSTRATED



Published by
the Author

KIRKSVILLE, MO.

1897

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Os-tē-ōp'-ā-thy, *s.* [Gr. ὀστέον (*osteon*) = a bone, and πάθος (*pathos*) = suffering.]

Legal: "A system, method, or science of healing."

(See statutes of the State of Missouri.)

Historical: Osteopathy was discovered by Dr. A. T. Still, of Baldwin, Kan., 1874. Dr. Still reasoned that "a natural flow of blood is health; and disease is the effect of local or general disturbance of blood—that to excite the nerves causes muscles to contract and compress venous flow of blood to the heart ; and the bones could be used as levers to relieve pressure on nerves, veins, and arteries.

(A. T. Still.)

Technical : Osteopathy is that science which consists of such exact, exhaustive, and verifiable knowledge of the structure and functions of the human mechanism, anatomical, physiological, and psychological, including the chemistry and physics of its known elements, as has made discoverable certain organic laws and remedial resources, within the body itself, by which nature under the scientific treatment peculiar to osteopathic practice, apart from all ordinary methods of extraneous, artificial, or medicinal stimulation, and in harmonious accord with its own mechanical principles, molecular activities, and metabolic processes, may recover from displacements, disorganizations, derangements, and consequent disease, and regain its normal equilibrium of form and function in health and strength.

Os-tē-ō-pāth, *s.* The same as OSTEOPATHIST (q.v.).

Os-tē-ō-pāth, *s.* Of or belonging to Osteopathy; as, *osteopathic* treatment.

Os-tē-ō-pāth-ic-ā-l-ly, *adv.* In an osteopathic manner; according to the rules and principles of Osteopathy.

Os-tē-ōp'-ā-thist, *s.* One who believes or practises in osteopathy ; an Osteopath.

Dip'-lō-māte in Osteopathy. The technical and official designation of a graduate and practitioner in Osteopathy, the formal title of such graduate or practitioner being D. O.
—*Diplomate or Doctor in Osteopathy.*

PREFACE.

I WILL inform the reader at the outset that this book is written to state facts, without being confined to exact dates and figures. Events that have made lasting impressions on my mind, stated as correctly as possible from memory, are narrated here without regard to the rules of fine writing. I never kept any notes of my life, therefore the stories may appear disconnected. When I tell you of an event it will be the truth as I remember it, regardless of how it may look in print. I want to avoid "biography" as I write, for the reason that "biographies" are so nicely worded that the reader often has to ask whom the narrator "is giving a write-up." Notwithstanding I am often told that I ought to get a professional "biographer" to take my life, I have concluded to reserve it for myself.

When I read about the battles of the Rebellion, "How Major A. T. Still charged on rebels with uplifted saber, using his men to victory," I be-

gin to doubt history, for I know there was not a saber drawn nor any yelling during a hard fight of two hours' duration between thirty-five thousand combatants on a side. I remember also the reporters of the sixties, who never tried to write the truth, and could not if they wanted to, because five to ten miles was as near as they ever got to bullets; and I think they are sometimes just as afraid of the truth to-day as they then were of lead. I will say to the reader, if you wish to read my story, please read as I write it, and not the garbled account of some newspaper misrepresentative.

A. T. STILL.

KIRKSVILLE, MO., *June 15th, 1897.*

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A. T. STILL.

CHAPTER I.

Early Life—Schoolboy Days, and the Unsparing Rod—A Judge of Dogs—My Flint-Lock Rifle—The First Cook-Stove and Sewing-Machine—End of the World Coming—My First Discovery in Osteopathy.



SUPPOSE I began life as other children, with the animal form, mind, and motion all in running order. I suppose I bawled, and filled the bill of nature in the baby life. My mother was as others who had five or six angels to yell all night for her comfort. In four or five years I got my first pants; then I was the man of the house. In due time I was sent off to school in a log schoolhouse, taught by an old man by the name of Vandeburgh. He looked wise while he was resting from his duties, which were to thrash the boys and girls, big and little, from 7 A.M. till

6 P.M., with a few lessons in spelling, reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic sandwiched between. Then the roll-call, with orders to go home and not fight on the road to and from the schoolhouse, and be on time at seven next morning to receive more thrashings, till the boys and girls would not have sense enough to recite their lessons. - Then he made us sit on a horse's skull-bone for our poor spelling, and pardoned our many sins with the sparing rod, selecting the one suited to the occasion out of twelve which served in the walloping business, until 6 P.M.

In 1834 my father moved from that place of torture, which was at Jonesboro, Lee County, Va., to Newmarket, Tenn. Then in 1835 I was entered with two older brothers as a student in the "Holston College," located at Newmarket, Tenn., for more schooling, under the control of the M. E. Church, which school was conducted by Henry C. Saffel, a man of high culture, a head full of brains, without any traces of the brute in his work.

In the year of 1837 my father was appointed by the M. E. conference of Tennessee to go as a missionary to Missouri. We bade adieu to the fine brick college at Holston, and at the end of seven weeks' journey reached our destination,



HOUSE IN WHICH A. T. STILL WAS BORN.

and found we were in a country where there were neither schools, churches, nor printing-presses, so here schooling ended until 1839. Then my father and six or eight others hired a man by the name of J. D. Halstead to teach us as best he could during the winter of 1839-40. He was very rigid, but not so brutal as vanderburgh. The spring of 1840 took us from Macon County to Schuyler County, Missouri, where I received no more schooling until 1842. That autumn we felled trees in the woods, and built a log cabin eighteen by twenty feet in size, seven feet high, dirt floor, with one whole log or pole left out to admit light, through sheeting tacked over the space, so we could see to read and write. This institution of learning was conducted by John Mikel, of Wilkesborough, N. C., at the rate of two dollars per head for ninety days. He was good to his pupils, and they advanced rapidly under his training. The summer of 1843 Mr. John Hindmon, of Virginia, taught a three-months' term, in which mental improvement was noted. Then back to the old log-house, for a fall term in Smith's Grammar, under Rev. James B. Calloway. He drilled his class well in the English branches for four months, proving himself to be a great and good man, and de-

parted with the love and praise of all who knew him.

In the spring of 1845 we returned to Macon County. A school was taught by G. B. Burkhardt, but I did not attend it, as he and I did not agree, so I left home and entered school at La Plata, Mo., conducted by Rev. Samuel Davidson, of the Cumberland Presbyterian church. While attending his school I boarded with John Gilbreath, one of the best men I ever knew. He and his dear wife were a father and a mother to me, and I cannot say too many kind words of them. His grave holds one of my best and dearest friends. They opened their doors, and let myself and a dear friend and schoolmate, John Duvall (long since dead), into their home. Mornings, evenings, and Saturdays my friend and I split rails, milked cows, helped Mrs. Gilbreath tend babies, and do as much of the housework as we could. When we left she wept as a loving mother parting from her children. There are many more of whom I could speak with equal praise, but time and space will not admit. In the summer of 1848 I returned to La Plata, to attend a school given wholly to the science of numbers, under Nicholas Langston, who was a wonderful mathematician. I stayed with him

until I had mastered the cube and square root in Ray's third part Arithmetic. Thus ended my school-days in La Plata.

The reader must not suppose that all my time was spent in acquiring an education at log schoolhouses.

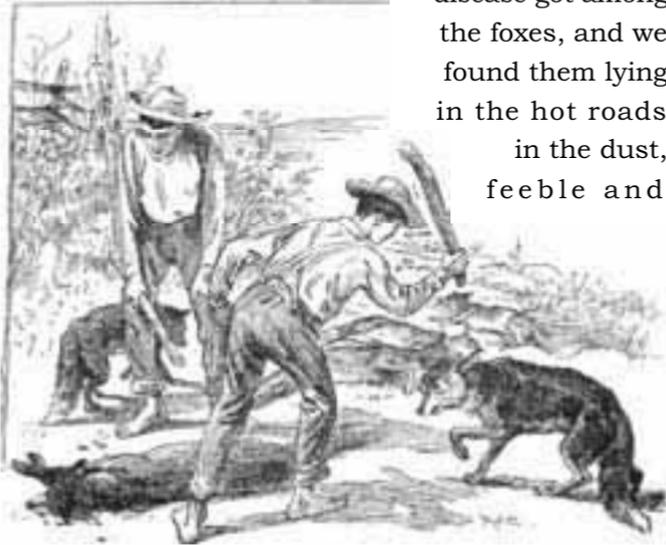
I was like all boys, a little lazy and fond of a gun. I had three dogs,—a spaniel for the water, a hound for the fox, and a bulldog for bear and panthers. My gun for many years was the old flint-lock, which went chuck, fizz, and bang ; so you see, to hit where you wanted to, you had to hold still a long time,—and, if the powder was damp in the pan, much longer, for there could be no bang until the fizzing was exhausted, and fire could reach the touch-hole leading to the powder-charge behind the ball. All this required skill and a steady nerve, to hit the spot.

I was called a good judge of dogs, and quoted as authority on the subject. A hound, to be a great dog, must have a flat, broad, and thin tongue, deep-set eyes, thin and long ears, very broad and raised some at the head, and hang three inches below the under-jaw. The roof of his mouth had to be black, his tail long and very slim, to be a good coon-dog. That kind of pups I was supposed to sell for a dollar each, though

I usually gave them away. When I went to the woods, armed with my flint-lock and three dogs, they remained with me until I said, " Seize him, Drummer !" which command sent Drummer out on a prospecting trip. When I wanted squirrels I threw a stick up a tree and cried : " Hunt him up, Drummer !" In a short time the faithful beast had treed a squirrel. When I wanted deer I hunted toward the wind, keeping Drum behind me. When he scented a deer he walked under my gun, which I carried point front. I was always warned by his tail falling that I was about as close as I could get to my game without starting it from the grass.

This old-fashioned flint-lock hunting was under the Van Buren and Polk's administration; but when Harrison—" old Tip"—came in, I possessed a cap-lock gun. Now I was a "man." "Big Injun me." To pull the trigger was "bang" at once, and I was able to shoot deer "on the run." Shot-guns were not in use at that time, but the frontiersman became very expert with the rifle. I could hit a hawk, wild goose, or any bird that did not fly too high or too fast for my aim. I killed great numbers of deer, turkeys, eagles, wildcats, and foxes. My frontier life made me very fleet on foot. Brother Jim and I ran down

and caught sixteen foxes in the month of September in the fall of 1839. Fearing some one will regard this as a fish story, I will explain that during the summer and fall some kind of



disease got among the foxes, and we found them lying in the hot roads in the dust, feeble and

WE FOUND THEM LYING IN THE HOT ROADS IN THE DUST.

shaking, as though they had the fever and ague, and incapable of running away from us. I have never since tried to outrun a fox.

As furs were not worth a cent in September, our sixteen foxes were useless, but during the preceding winter we caught a mink, and concluded to go to market with it, as we must have

a five-cent bar of lead before we could shoot more game. So I saddled my horse Selim, and went to Bloomington (nine miles) to exchange my mink-skin for lead. The barter was made with my good friend Thomas Sharp (an uncle of Rev. George Sharp, of Kirksville, Mo.), and soon the hide was with other furs, coons' and opossums'. Then I mounted Selim and started for home to tell Jim that I had found a permanent market for mink-skins at five cents apiece. In short time I shot a deer, and had a buck-skin to add to the fur trade, and took my "big" fifty cents in powder, lead, and caps.

Early in the forties I was very much in dread of the Judgment Day, or some awful calamity. I was told of the signs and half-signs that were to come before the "end cometh" until my young mind was nearly distracted.

Men had grown so wise that they knew just when the great wheels of time would stop. But the story of the Day of Judgment was nothing compared to a wonderful invention a great and wise man had gotten up, called a sewing-machine, which could make over a hundred stitches in a minute. I knew it must be so, for I read it in *The Methodist Christian Advocate* of New York. I told my chum, Dick Roberts, the

story, and he said it was a lie, because his mammy was as smart a gal as there was in the country, " and she couldn't make but twenty, so he wa'n't going to swallow any such stuff."

I didn't tell Dick all the wonderful things I had heard. I wanted to tell him that " Sister Stone," just four miles from where we stood, had told me she had brought a cook-stove with her from the East, and she could make coffee, fry or boil meat, bake bread, make syrup, and cook anything on it in good shape; but for the sake of my own veracity I determined to go and see if it was true before I told it to Dick.

I told father I was going to hunt stray cattle. He said "all right." Having joined the church a few Sundays before, he supposed I was honest about looking for cattle, while I really wanted to see Sister Stone's cook-stove, and determined to let evil prevail that good might come. So I mounted Selim, and as soon as I could get out of father's sight, I "put the bud" to his sides and hind legs, till four miles were left far behind us. Reaching Sister Stone's, I called:

"Hello, Sister Stone; have you seen any of our cattle around here for a day or two?"

"No," she said ; "but get down and come in." I slid off Selim too quick, asking:

"Can I get a drink of water?"

"Oh, yes. It is mighty warm!"

While drinking, she called my attention to her cook-stove. I asked her all about its cooking



I ASKED IF SHE COULD BAKE CORN-BREAD IN IT.

powers, and she explained all about it. I asked her if she could bake corn-bread in it.

"Oh, yes, just wait a few minutes, and I will bake you some." She did it to perfection, and I filled up with bread and milk. I thanked her for her kindness, jumped on Selim, and soon found the cattle where I knew they were when I left



HE WANTED TO STAY IN THE HOUSE FOR FEAR OF SNOW.

for her house; so father never knew I lied to him " just a wee bit."

In a short time I saw Dick and told him my stove story. He gave me an incredulous look, but did not deny my statement. I suppose he was afraid I would hurt his feelings by punching his nose. This was one of the signs of the end coming, and the sewing-machine story was another.

This happened about the time that Miller's prophecy that the world was to come to an end was frightening so many people, and many were making preparations for the great event. One good man had a nice pig to bake for the Saviour's supper when He came, and was much disappointed when told that He did not eat pork. So the story went, in the early days of signs and wonders. This same devout man, about that time, met an Indian who wanted to stay all night with him, and made many mysterious gestures at the clouds, and down to the ground, to tell white man, "*Chee muckeeman*," he wanted to stay in the house for fear of snow. The good man let him in, believing he might be the Saviour. He was at a great loss for not being able to speak Hebrew, or understand the Saviour, and was surprised that the Saviour could not

understand English. After a while Bill Williams came in, and said, " *Sago, towanin,*" and entered into a friendly chat with *Towanin*, the chief of the Sac Indians.

Not more than ninety per cent. of the people living in America know anything of the trials and realities of a Western pioneer's life. It is profitable amusement to read of their history when written by one whose childhood, youth, and old age were all spent in the West, during the days of hardships required to settle and civilize a country in which your happy homes now stand as monuments of civilization. The brain and energy of that day are mostly among the forgotten dead, but they fill the graves of some of the great minds of America, among whom are Boone, Benton, and legions just as good. Their voices are hushed, but their deeds are left on all the roads to fame. They were the men and women who tamed the savage, and cleared and tilled the fields, thus removing hardship and danger. They gave their comforts for the generations to follow, lived on but little, stood guard all the time until schools and civilization were planted in our wild country, and began the work of educating the minds to live another kind of life. You are to-day rich in the

inheritance left you by the blood and sweat of the pioneer, and though you may smile at his superstitions and sadness, you are bound to respect his memory.

After many days the fears aroused by Miller-began to pass away. The society of Millerites became a thing of the past, and their antics only remembered as amusing anecdotes.

My frontier experience varied. I enjoyed advantages which few did.

My father, who was a man educated to do all kinds of work, was a minister, doctor, farmer, and a practical millwright. My mother was a natural mechanic, and made cloth, clothing, and pies to perfection. She believed "to spare the rod would spoil the child," and did use it in a homeopathic way. My father said if you wish to get meal in a bag, hold the mouth open. If you wish to get sense in your head, hold it open. If you wish to ride a horse, get on his back; and if one wished to be a skilful rider, hold on to him. My mother said if you wish to drink milk, put it in your mouth, and not on your clothes; for there was but one way to drink milk. My father, being a farmer, concluded that a little corn-field education would be good with my millwright knowledge, and at an early age I was

taught to hold the teams, and do the duties of farm life, until I could manage teams, harrows, plows, scrapers. When I came from the cornfield for dinner, father told me I could rest myself by carrying slop to the hogs. I did not mind the work ; it was the exercise that bothered my mind. When I passed old Dan, the colored man, he would say :

"De crown is for de faifful," and many other words of encouragement, such as " Go and brung de eggs," " Start a little smoke under de meat," and then sing the "Sweet Bye and Bye" for my edification. In due course of time I entered my gawk age, for a long journey. I was awkward, ignorant, and slovenly until I got into my mother's real training-school, in which she used soap and switches freely. After which it seemed I had more spring in my heels and head than ever before. She gave me two buckets and a cup, and told me to go and milk the cows, and be in a hurry about it, so as to help her and Dan'l shear the sheep.

By seven o'clock we were in the sheep-pen. Old Dan'l says, "Ketch dat sheep," mother reiterated, "Catch that sheep," and Aunt Becky echoed, "Catch me one." By this time "old black Rachel" came in with her shears, and said:

"I wants one too." And right here is where the gawk was knocked out. When I caught a sheep for her, the old ram said, "It is time for music," and sprawled me with his head, causing me to



AND SPRAWLED ME WITH HIS HEAD.

howl, and the others to laugh. This incident taught me to look backward and forward, upward and downward, right and left, and never sleep in the enemy's country, but always be on guard.

My instructors thinking I was well enough

trained to be admitted into better society, I was permitted to go with Dan'l to the timber, to be instructed in chopping wood, splitting rails, burning brush, and clearing up the ground for the plow. All went off well except once or twice, when old Dan'l revived my see-ability by playing ram until I could see a limb as big as your finger. He then closed with the proverb, " ' Cleanliness is next to godliness.' I wants all dis trash cleaned up, every moufful of it." At noon he gave the welcome information, " Come on, we's gwine to dinner." When we came near the house, we met Aunt Becky, and she told us the preacher had come to take dinner, and for me to water his horse, take the saddle off, curry him down, then come in the smokehouse and she would give me a piece of pie, but it was not large as my hunger was. She said she had something to tell me.

" What is it?" I asked.

" Maybe that man will be your uncle some day. If you will stay in the smokehouse and wait till the second table, I will bring you out the chicken gizzard." I took her at her word and got the gizzard, and she got the preacher, and became the wife of a circuit-rider. Not long after I took a great notion that I would be a cir-

cuit-rider, too. I mounted horses, mules, and calves, and tried to look like a preacher. My favorite clerical steed was a calf which had a very stately step. I took him out to the meadow with halter, mounted him, and began to play preacher. All went well, and I was wondering where my appointment would be, when a snake ran under my calf's nose, and spread all my preachability before the calf on my back, and it has been there ever since.



MISHAP OF A YOUNG CIRCUIT-RIDER.

I will conclude this chapter of my boyhood experience with an incident which, simple as it was, may be said to be my first discovery in the science of Osteopathy. Early in life I began to hate drugs.

One day, when about ten years old, I suffered from a headache. I made a swing of my father's plow-line between two trees; but my head hurt too much to make swinging comfortable, so I let

the rope down to about eight or ten inches of the ground, threw the end of a blanket on it, and I lay down on the ground and used the rope for a swinging pillow. Thus I lay stretched on my back, with my neck across the rope. Soon I became easy and went to sleep, got up in a little while with headache all gone. As I knew nothing of anatomy, I took no thought of how a



FIRST LESSON IN OSTEOPATHY.

rope could stop headache and the sick stomach which accompanied it. After that discovery I roped my neck whenever I felt those spells coming on. I followed that treatment for twenty years before the wedge of reason reached my brain, and I could see that I had suspended the action of the great occipital nerves, and given harmony to the flow of the arterial blood to and through the veins, and ease was the effect, as the reader can see. I have worked from the days of a child, for more than fifty years, to obtain a,

more thorough knowledge of the workings of the machinery of life, to produce ease and health. And to-day I am, as I have been for fifty years, fully established in the belief that the artery is the father of the rivers of life, health, and ease, and its muddy or impure water is first in all disease.

3



CHAPTER II.

The Wild Game of the Frontier—Mr. Cochran's Deer—The Deer's Foot—Treed by a Buck—I Capture an Eagle—Night Hunting—Brother Jim's Horn—The Philosophy of Skunks and Buzzards—Milking Under Difficulties—Attacked by Panthers.

THE lad of the frontier enjoys many thrilling adventures with wild animals of which the city boy can know nothing save what he reads in books. If he is observing he learns more of the habits and customs of the animals he comes in contact with than he can gain by a course in natural history, for he has the great book of nature constantly spread before him.

Soon after my father moved to Missouri, when I was about eight years old, I was amusing myself in the yard with my younger brothers, three and five years old, when "bang" went a big gun from the back of our house, about a quarter of a mile away. My mother came running to us, and said:

"Did you hear that big gun go off over west?" We answered we did. She said: " I expect Judge Cochran has killed a buck." He had said

he was going out to look for deer at the spring-lick where they came to drink the water that flowed out of the hill, and had promised us venison for supper. By this time we were all wonderfully excited. We climbed on the fence, brother John, Tom, Jim, and Ed, with mother and the little girls standing in the door, all eyes turned expectant toward the deer-lick about half a mile distant. Every nerve in our bodies was on a perfect strain, with our eyes wide open to see who could catch the first glimpse of Judge Cochran. In a very few minutes he walked to an open place in the woods, and we saw him almost at the same instant. I "jumped up and down," and brother Jim followed my example. Soon the Judge was in the dooryard; but long before he got there we asked him if he had killed a deer. He answered :

" Yes, I have killed a fine buck, and you can all have some very nice venison, as I promised, for supper." He asked us if we had ever eaten any. We told him no, we had never seen any, much less tasted it.

He said the deer was lying over at the lick, and he would saddle up a horse and bring it in. When he mounted his horse he asked me if I did not want to go with him after the deer. I

jumped on behind the Judge, and away we went.

In a few minutes we were at the lick, and dismounted by the dead deer, which was the most wonderful thing I had ever seen. It was about five feet long, from the end of its nose to the end



THE JUDGE AND I RODE BACK TO THE HOUSE.

of its tail, full three feet high when standing, and its tail was about one foot long. Its feet and mouth were very much like a sheep's, except the feet were very sharp-pointed. Its hair was about the color of an Irish-

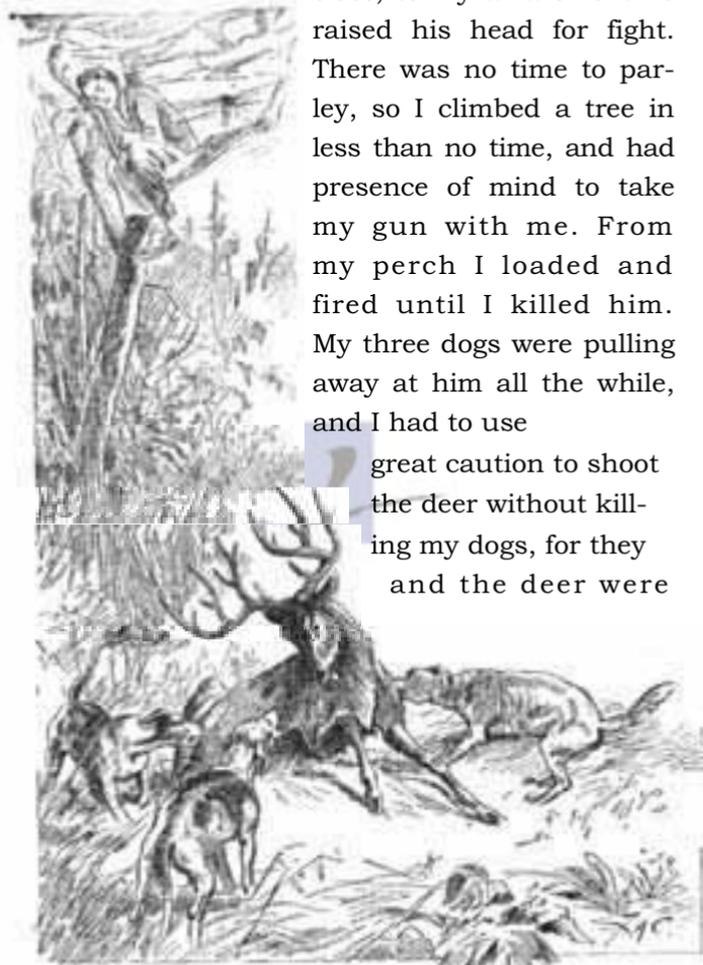
man's whiskers.

Its legs and feet were very nice and trim, not much larger than a broomstick, but about three feet long. I thought, " Oh ! how fast he could run, before he departed this life to cheer our table." A deer can jump as far in one jump as a boy can in six, or about fifty or sixty feet when running down a hill. He can jump over a man's head and never touch his hat.

Soon the Judge and I were back to the house with our deer. We took off his hide and hung him up in a tree to cool off, so we could have some for breakfast. Next morning we were out of bed bright and early. Mother cooked a big pot full, put it on a great big dish in the middle of the table. It was the most palatable food I ever ate. Perhaps the appetite of the boy and my continual exercise made the meat seem the sweetest I ever tasted. Before I quit the subject of deers I will narrate an adventure I once had with a wounded buck about twelve years later, when I was almost a young man. One day I was out with my gun and three dogs, when I heard a noise thrashing through the brush toward me, and soon a buck came in sight. He had nine points on each horn, and was more than three times as large as the one Judge Cochran killed. I began to realize the danger of an encounter with such a monster, if I missed my mark. Realizing that if I killed him I was safe, and if I missed him he would kill me unless my dogs could save me, I raised my gun when he was within a few feet. Bang went my gun, and down went the buck. "Hallelujah! Tom, I've got him!" By this time my brother Tom was within fifty yards of me. I walked toward the

deer, supposing him dead, but when I got very close, to my amazement he raised his head for fight. There was no time to parley, so I climbed a tree in less than no time, and had presence of mind to take my gun with me. From my perch I loaded and fired until I killed him. My three dogs were pulling away at him all the while, and I had to use

great caution to shoot the deer without killing my dogs, for they and the deer were



I HAD TO USE GREAT CAUTION TO SHOOT THE DEER WITHOUT KILLING MY DOGS.

fighting for life. I have since seen men grapple in a death struggle, but don't believe I ever witnessed a more desperate encounter. I was not the first man who had shot him, for when I skinned him I found eleven balls that had penetrated his hide, all failing to reach a vital point.

One night when it was very dark and the snow falling fast, I was two miles from home with neither gun nor dogs. On looking up in a tree, not over fif-



I HAD CAPTURED AN EAGLE.

teen or twenty feet high, I saw an object, but could not tell what it was, so I picked up a club and threw it into the tree-top. I had a knife in my belt, which I drew to do the best I could if that object proved a panther or any other dangerous animal. I hit it with my club and down it came to the ground. It seemed to square itself for a fight, and seizing another club,

I pressed the object down and got my foot on it. The night was so dark that I could not tell until I felt the object with my hand that I had captured an eagle, which measured seven feet two inches from tip to tip, while from head to end of tail it was three feet long. The back claws on each foot measured three inches and three-quarters, with legs as large as broomsticks. I took him under my arm, held his feet, and got him home safe and sound. On another night I brought in two large bald eagles. If you frighten an eagle after night he will always come to the ground, and can be captured with ease.

My father owned a farm and raised a large amount of corn, and had a great many horses, mules, cattle, sheep, and hogs to feed on it, so our crops were consumed at home. We had so much corn to husk and crib that we were compelled to commence very early; in order to get it stored away before cold weather. When we were all in our teens, my eldest brother nineteen, the next seventeen, and myself about fifteen, we gathered corn from early morn till late in the evening, fed the stock, ate our suppers, and prepared for a good hunt for coons, foxes, opossums, and skunks. We always took a gun, an ax, big butcher-knife, and flint and steel to make fire.

We had a polished cow's horn which we could blow as loud as the horn that overthrew the walls of Jericho. As brother Jim was a great talker, we made him chief horn-blower. He went into the yard, and bracing himself, tooted and tooted and split the air for miles, while the dogs collected around him and roared and howled. You never heard such sweet music as brother Jim and the dogs made. Shortly after his melodies began, we were in line of march, front, middle and rear rank, and soon journeyed to the woods to hunt opossums, polecats, coons, wildcats, foxes, and turkeys. Our dogs had a classic education, hunting and killing all classes of " varminths." When on a coon hunt we kept back all the dogs with us but two, Drum and Rouser. The roofs of their mouths were black, their ears long and thin, their tails very slim. If we wanted coons first, we told Jim to toot for coons, which he could do very nicely. At his sound of music, Drum and Rouser moved off in the darkness, and after some minutes Drum was sure to break the silence by yelping and roaring on the track. The bark of the dog indicated to our trained ear the kind of game he was after. If he barked slow and loud we were pretty sure he had treed a coon ; if he barked quick and sharp, we booked

him for a fox. If he barked fast and loud we could count on a polecat. In case it was a skunk we ran to the dogs as fast as possible, and ordered Jim at the same time to blow the horn to call them off, for if they ever got the skunk's perfume on them it was so stinking strong the scent of the animals was destroyed for other game. Sometimes a young untrained dog had the temerity to take hold of a skunk and spoil the hunt, so that all that was left for us was to let the bugle sound the retreat, and go home. The skunk possesses two wonderful powers : he can stink louder and faster than any other known animal; and if you do not kill him within a few hours he will absorb all of his disgusting odors and go away ; such is the power and quality placed in him by nature. I would advise you to never kill a skunk, unless you leave his body just where he falls. By so doing the stench will disappear in a very short time. In him you have one of the finest lessons of nature : he gives forth only what he absorbs from his surroundings.

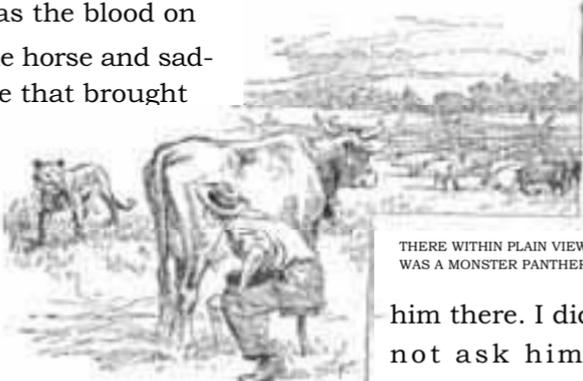
The polecat is the skunk of the ground, and stinks worse than any other animal. The buzzard is the skunk of the air, with but very little improvement in his stinking powers above the skunk of the ground. His tongue is wonder-

fully constructed for cutting and tearing flesh; otherwise his head and beak are formed just as a common turkey. Thus nature has provided amply for all things by which they move, defend themselves, and live, from the mighty lions of the jungles to the ant of the ground.

About the year 1852 I killed a great number of deer. I skinned, salted, and dried the meat, supplying not only myself, but my neighbors with all they wanted. One afternoon I killed a very fine young deer, brought him home, and put him in the smokehouse. My clothes, saddle, and horse were badly stained with the blood of the animal. It being late after changing clothes, I took a bucket and went to a lot adjoining my stable to milk my cow. In the lot I had about twenty large hogs. I sat down, and was milking the cow, when all at once the hogs jumped up and ran to the farther side of the lot, sniffing the air in great terror. I looked to see the cause of their flight, and there in plain view, within thirty feet of me, stood a monster panther not less than nine or ten feet from the point of his nose to the end of his tail, and fully three feet high. I was milking in a tin bucket, which made a great deal of noise, so he did not molest either myself or the hogs, but jumped out of the

pen and ran to the timber. Then he began to roar and scream like a woman in distress. I was very fond of his music, but the farther it was away the sweeter it sounded. I am glad he didn't think enough of me to spend any more time in my company than he did. No doubt it was the blood on

the horse and saddle that brought



THERE WITHIN PLAIN VIEW
WAS A MONSTER PANTHER.

him there. I did not ask him, and only guessed

that he came for a haunch of venison.

One day while driving home in my ox-wagon I came upon three panthers in the road, two old beasts and a young one. I had neither rifle nor knife to defend myself, and had they attacked me they would have killed my oxen and myself. My dogs saw the dangerous brutes, and made a bold charge upon them, and they ran up a tree. No doubt they had seated themselves to feast upon my oxen. Even when they had reached





I CRACKED MY WHIP, AND THEY SPRANG OUT OF THE TREE-TOP AND
RAN OFF IN THE WOODS.

safety in the tree-top, they cast fierce, hungry glances at us.

I cracked my whip, which sounded very much like a pistol, and they sprang out of the tree-top and ran off into the thick woods. I drove my oxen home in a hurry, every hair on my head feeling as stiff as a knitting-needle, and I never had any more desire to encounter panthers.

My frontier experience was valuable to me in more ways than I can ever tell. It was invaluable in my scientific researches. Before I had ever studied anatomy from books I had almost perfected the knowledge from the great book of nature. The skinning of squirrels brought me into contact with muscles, nerves, and veins. The bones, this great foundation of the wonderful house we live in, was always a study to me long before I learned the hard names given to them by the scientific world. As the skull of the horse was used at my first school as a seat for the indolent scholar, I have thought it might be typical of the good horse-sense that led me to go to the fountain-head of knowledge and there learn the lesson that drugs are dangerous to the body, and the science of medicine just what some great physicians have declared it to be,—a humbug.

But I am digressing from the purpose of this chapter, which is to give some of my adventures during my early days on the frontier. My adventures were not confined alone to panthers,, deers, skunks, and coons. We had an enemy far more subtle and dangerous than either. His fang was poisonous and his bite often death. I refer to the snakes of Missouri in an early day.

I have killed thousands of them, big and little, long and short, from ten feet in length to six inches, and all colors, red, black, blue, green, copper, spotted,—dangerous and harmless. They were so abundant in the timber and prairie country in the early days that it was necessary to carry a club about the size of a common walking-stick, three or four feet long, as protection. All persons carried something in their hands to kill snakes during the warm weather. Many kinds were very poisonous. I remember a man named Smith Montgomery who was bitten on the foot in the harvest-field, while he was at work bare-footed. The snake's tooth penetrated a vein which carries the blood to the heart, and he cried:

"I am bitten by a rattlesnake!" walked toward the other men, but after taking about six steps sank to the ground and was instantly

dead. The poison of the rattlesnake produces a numb feeling, which runs all through the body, and the lungs and heart cease to move as soon as the blood is conveyed to the heart and the poison gets into the large blood-vessels.

Rattlesnakes are stubborn antagonists. I have formed a ring of hay about a foot high, set it on fire, and when in full blaze all over, at the very hottest time, have thrown the rattlesnake in that ring of fire. He would fight and squirm until he was as stiff as a walking-stick, and only ceased when his body was cooked. Thus you see he is grit to the very last.

As I was traveling through some timber-land with my friend Jim Jessee, we saw in front of us a very large rattlesnake, six feet in length. I proposed to Jim to have some fun out of the gentleman. I drew my knife from my belt, cut down and trimmed up a bush, left the upper limb so as to make a fork, with which I straddled his neck, while with other sticks I opened his mouth and filled it with hartshorn (aqua ammonia); then we let him loose and stepped back to see the fun. To our great surprise he never cut a caper. The ammonia had done its work instantaneously. I tied his tail to a bush, thinking he might be only temporarily inactive. At the end of six hours I

returned to find him dead and in possession of the green flies. By that experiment I learned that ammonia would destroy the snake's deadly virus. In all cases of snake-bite, after that, I always used ammonia as an antidote, and if it was not handy I would use soda or some other alkali with equal success, but not so active. I would advise you to always have a little ammonia or soda in your pocket when going among snakes. And if your dog should go mad while out snake-hunting and bite you, apply sulphuric acid three parts water, and the virus will do you no harm, as it is alkali, and will yield to acids. I once treated a girl bitten by a rabid dog on the face, leaving two cuts two inches long, with sulphuric acid for ten days. Her face healed, and she is still alive, and though this was thirty years ago, has never shown any signs of rabies, while all the stock bitten by same dog went mad.

During the year 1847, when the United States and old Mexico were fighting like two she-tigers, I wanted to go to fight Mexicans. Being under age, my father would not consent to my going into the service. One day while riding on horse-back I was boiling over with fight; when my blood was at its highest heat, and I felt that I could thrash all such fellows as Samson, John

Sullivan, Fitzsimmons, and Corbett,—I raised my head and looked in front of me about one hundred paces. I saw something lying across the road which I took to be a fence-rail or a pole about three or four inches in diameter. I gave no farther thought of it until I had traveled about the distance to where I thought I had seen it. I looked backward and forward in search of my pole, but it had disappeared, and as it was a very hot day, I began to wonder if I had been asleep and seen a pole in my dream. A few more steps brought me up to a place in the road which was very dusty, and I was dumfounded to see the track of the snake in the road.

The imprint in the soft dust was about an inch deep and something over a foot wide. On discovering it was a snake-track without mistake I knew I could get war and plenty of it without going to Mexico. I rode out in the weeds, which were about a foot high, in the direction I thought I was most likely to find him. I found Mr. Snake coiled up; coil, snake, and all would easily have filled a half-bushel. He raised his head two feet in the air, and fixed those basilisk orbs on me—about three inches across, just back of the eyes. I knew well enough if this snake was ten feet long he could jump his length, To run was

cowardice, to fight was dangerous. The thought came in my mind, How will it look in a young man who wants to fight all Mexico to back out and run from a snake? I had seen the snake, and could not tell mother it had run off and I could not find it. In desperation I took the stirrup-strap off my saddle, to which was attached a very heavy iron stirrup, and with a great amount of emotion in both legs approached the general commanding the opposite side. He had ordered music by the band, which band was twenty-nine rattles fastened to the rear rank of his whole army. I gave the command in a low whisper to strike. With a circuitous swing with strap and stirrup, which weighed about one pound and a half, I unjointed the general's neck and took his whole army prisoners. I lined it up on dress parade, and found he was three full steps long and one foot over, with twenty-nine rattles, which equal seven inches, making the snake a fraction over ten feet long. Thus ended the greatest snake fight I ever had.

As the snake is an emblem of poison, and as all drugs are poison, this conflict may be said to be the first conflict between Osteopathy and poison, in which Osteopathy came off victorious.



FIRST CONFLICT BETWEEN DRUGS AND OSTEOPATHY.



CHAPTER III.

My Father—Transferred to Missouri—Long Journey—The First Steamboat—At St. Louis—An Unscrupulous Divine — Hardships in The West—The First Methodist Preacher in Northeast Missouri—Presiding Elder—Trouble in the M. E. Church—Stand Taken by Elder Abram Still—Removal to Kansas.

As I speak of Rev. Abram Still (my father), I will notify the reader that memory alone is my guide, and by it give my generalized history. The reminiscences I find written of him by others are simply nice stories, written by persons who personally knew but little of him.



REV. ABRAM STILL.

In the spring of 1836, as I now remember, while father was a member of the Holston conference of the M. E. Church of Tennessee, he was

transferred by that body to Missouri as a missionary.

We left Tennessee from New Market, Jefferson County, with two wagons, seven horses, and eight in family, and began an overland journey of seven weeks to Macon County, Mo. We had a pleasant time, good roads, and nice traveling until we reached the low land on the Ohio-River bottoms opposite Cairo, Ill. Here we began to find some deep mud for a few miles until we reached the river. But long before we reached it, we heard the whistle of a steamboat. We all wanted to see the mouth that could pucker and whistle so squealing loud. " Oh, my ! we could hear it roar just as plain as you could hear a rooster crow if he were on top your head." Just think of that! Meeting a man in the road, father asked how far it was to the river, and he said it was six or seven miles. We whipped up all the teams and pushed on, for we were determined to see that boat, see it pucker its mouth and whistle. Our ideas of steam were very crude, and we had much company then of the kind that knew but little of steam-engines or any other kind of machinery.

We drove up to the banks of the river, and there it was, big as life, full of people, cattle,

horses, sheep, merchandise, and movers, but they cut no figure with us. The boat was the sight; we saw it, and knew all that could be known. We had seen a real steamboat, and it was a whopper, too.

It soon steamed up the river and went out of sight, but we supposed we knew all about steamboats, and this one afforded food for conversation for many days after.

We were now ready to go to North Missouri as missionaries, and educate the heathens, and tell them all about steam.

We were taken across the river by a ferry-boat which ran by horse-power, or a treadwheel; the driver whipped his horse, shouting:

" Water up! water up!" to make them go faster.

In about one-half hour we landed in the State of Illinois, and set out through the mud and water from Cairo to St. Louis. We had to hire pilots to guide us through the mud and water of the Illinois bottoms, for by missing the road a few feet we would sink into the mire and never get out.

We crossed the State of Illinois with no bad luck, and drove up to the Mississippi River in sight of St. Louis, went on to a steam ferry-boat

that landed us on the Missouri side of that muddy stream. We concluded to stay a day or two and hunt up the stationed preacher of the M. E. Church of that place. We found him, and stayed over Sunday, as was father's custom.

I believe his name was Harmon. He borrowed



MRS. MARTHA P. STILL.

be-

"Brother Still's" money, seven hundred dollars. Father took his note without security, payable in six months, and left for Macon County, Mo., with Brother Harmon's "God bless you." Mother had a little bag of money (\$350), and that was our pile for the wilderness life

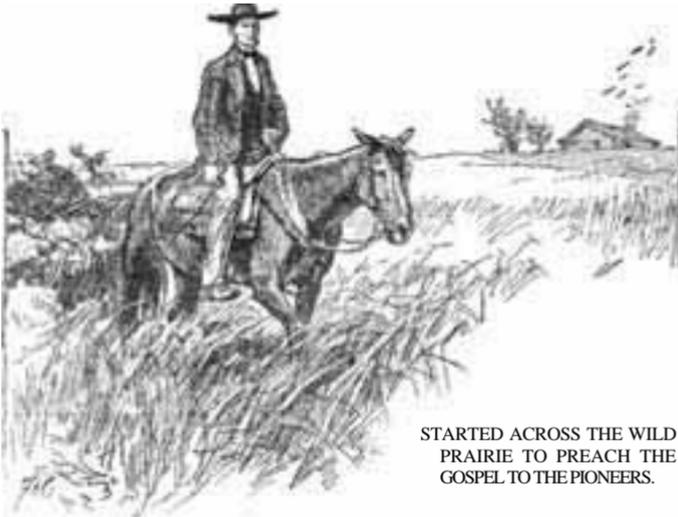
fore us for six months or longer. Brother Harmon did not pay father for eight years, then only paid the principal. By this time father learned that some preachers were not men of God, but dirty liars, just the same as other people. He was very much disappointed and disgusted to learn that a professed minister would play a confidence game

and rob him of the money given him by the Tennessee Conference to support his family in his missionary work in the wilds of North Missouri. Hard times soon began to close upon us. Money all gone, clothing worn out, and winter on us with all its fury. Our show for shoes was to tan deerskins and make moccasins, or go barefooted—deerskin pants or naked legs. Labor by the day was worth twenty-five cents, so you see money meant much work.

As I have stated in another chapter, in the beginning we had no schools, churches, nor any of the comforts of older-settled States. We had to make all our comforts or do without them for many years. But we brought *grit* with us, and went to work with a will.

Father worked with us three boys all he could in the spring, and harvest-time gave us a start in our work; then mounting his horse, started across the wild prairies to preach the Gospel to the pioneers. His missionary journeys usually lasted six weeks. During his absence, mother had to manage the farm, which she did as well as any one could. She spun, wove, cut and made clothing, butchered hogs or a beef, and managed it just as well as father, or a little better, for she was fully master of the situation.

Father was the first minister of the M. E. Church in North Missouri, and held the fort, preached and established the first churches and classes of Methodists and Methodism in all North Missouri. He stood his ground until 1844, at



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which time the M. E. Church was divided; those that believed the Bible justified human slavery left the old M. E. organization and organized the church known as the M. E. Church South.

Father did not believe that "human slavery was of Divine origin," and refused to go with the new church. Committees of the M. E. Church

South waited on him to induce him to go with them, but all was of no avail. He stayed with the old church, and preached that slavery was a sin, which did not suit his brethren with the pro-slavery sentiments. He attached himself to the Iowa conference of the M. E. Church, and was appointed Presiding Elder (as I now remember) to look after those Missouri Methodists who opposed slavery. His brothers who went with the new organization informed him he must join them or leave Missouri, as his anti-slavery teachings could not be tolerated; but he did not heed their warning, and after a few year's preaching in his old territory, where he had established Methodism, he was appointed as missionary to the Shawnee Indians in Kansas. This ended his fight in Missouri. The latter part of that struggle was full of bitterness, and tar and feathers were strong arguments at that time freely used, which, not being strong enough, gave place to ropes and bullets.

He was a man of strong convictions, which he maintained at all times and places. He took a bold stand for abolition, which he maintained until he saw human slavery wiped from every foot of North America, whether it was Divine or devilish, and died rejoicing that he had been per-

mitted to live to see all men in his country, whether white or black, free.

I could give much history of his life from 1844 until he moved to Kansas, such as being threatened with violence, having his cane broken by the enemies of his religious stand with the M. E. Church, in the belief that he might have a spear cane to defend himself, and much more of the wars of the heated prejudice and church disputes, but I think I have said enough for the reader to know the character of the man and the time in which he lived.



CHAPTER IV.

In Which I Take a Wife—The Infair—A Destructive Hail-Storm—At Wakarusa Mission—Bereavement—The Pro-Slavery Trouble—A Dangerous Ride—The Pro-Slavery Men Drilling—My Legislative Experience.

THE schoolboy days, the days of youthful trials and sports, passed like vanished joys, and I arrived at man's estate. I will omit my later schooling and medical training, and merely state that, like my Father who art in heaven, I thought it not good to be alone, and began to go on dress parade, to see how the girls would like the looks of a young soldier. Like Bunyan, I shouldered my arms and marked time until a loving eye was fixed on mine. Behind that eye was the form of Mary M. Vaughn, the daughter of Philamon Vaughn. She was to me beautiful, kind, active, and abounded in love and good sense. She loved God and all His ways. After a few words by Rev. Lorenzo Waugh at her mother's house on January 29th, 1849, her name was changed to Mrs. M. M. Still. The memorable event was followed by a good supper, and next day we journeyed for an infair dinner to my father's house. After

these formalities, so essential to frontier society, I took my wife to her new home, on eighty acres of land one mile from my old home. I was young and stout, worked early and late, put in sixty acres of corn and kept it clean. It was a beauty all in silk and tassel. I was proud of it. I began to feel that I would soon have a crib filled with many thousand bushels. The morning of the Fourth of July (the day we love to celebrate) came, and I was full of joy and hope. At 3 P.M. a dark cloud arose, and at 4 showered three inches of hail over every acre of my corn, not leaving a single stalk nor a blade of fodder in all my sixty acres. Nor did it leave a bird or rabbit on my farm. All were gone. Some one consoled me and himself by the following quotation : " The Lord loveth whom He chastened]." I had no corn, and he, whose crop was not torn to shreds like mine, would have some to sell, so after all, things, as usual, were about evened up. I taught school that fall and winter at \$15 per month, and thus ended my first year of married life.

In May, 1853, my wife and I moved to the Wakarusa Mission, Kans., occupied by the Shawnee tribe. It was all Indian there. There was not much English spoken outside the mission-

school. My wife taught the papposes that summer, while I with six yoke of oxen in a string, fastened to a twenty-inch plow, turned ninety acres of land, closing the job the last of July. Some days I broke four acres of sod. Then with my father I doctored the Indians all fall. The erysipelas, fever, flux, pneumonia, and cholera prevailed among the Indians. The Indian's treatment for cholera was not much more ridiculous than are some of the treatments of some of the so-called scientific doctors of medicine. They dug two holes in the ground, about twenty inches apart. The patient lay stretched over the two, vomit in one hole and purge in the other, and die stretched over the two, thus prepared, with a blanket thrown over him. Here I witnessed cramps which go with cholera dislocate hips and turn legs out from the body. I sometimes had to force the hips back to get the corpse in the coffin. As curatives they gave teas made of black-root, ladies' thumb, sagatee, muck-quaw, chenee olachee. Thus they doctored and died, and went to *Illinoywa Tapamalaqua*, " the house of God."

I soon learned to speak their tongue, and gave them such drugs as white men used, cured most of the cases I met, and was well received by the

Shawnees. I was at the Shawnee mission of the M. E. Church, located forty miles west of Kansas City on the Wakarusa, now east of Lawrence, Kansas, about six miles. A treaty was made in 1854 with the Shawnees and other tribes of Indians, in which treaty the Government purchased much of the Indian lands which were declared open to white settlement. In 1855 the country was alive with home hunters, though some squatters came into the territory in 1854. After the treaty was made, people began to settle up the country. Then my wife, who had shared my misfortunes, trials, and sorrows, and had lived with me until September 29th, 1859, at which time the thread of life was cut, and she soared to that world of love and glory for which she had lived all her life, left me to care for her three children. Two of them have since gone to join her. The eldest, Rusha H., at the age of eighteen years, was married to John W. Cowgill, of Ottawa, Kansas, and at the present time is living on a farm near that place. Since our friends by legions become celestial beings, and to be with them any more in this life is hopeless, we are left to make the best of the few years left to us in this world, and seek the company of the terrestrial beings. Some are angels of mercy, love, wisdom,

and kindness, and say, Come unto me and I will help you bear the burden of life, which has been proven to me to be true in one Mary E. Turner, who on November 20th, 1860, became Mrs. Mary E. Still. She is the mother of four children living,—three boys and one girl. All are leaders in the division of the greatest war ever known on earth—the war for truth under the banner of Osteopathy.

But to return to my narrative, and in order to do so it will be necessary to briefly recount some of the history of the period.

About 1835 some of the good people began to argue that human slavery was an evil, and existed only by force of arms and injustice. That it was ungodly, unprogressive, unmanly, a shame and a disgrace to be tolerated by a people who would claim to be proud of the word "freedom," and at the same time by force of law forbid under heavy penalties any and all persons to pass the sweet cup of liberty to any of the six millions of famishing beings. Souls whom their masters taught were accountable to God equally with the white race were held in bondage. This feeling of duty to free all and let each person have an equal chance to so live this life as a part of a vast eternity, preparatory to joys immortal, which

were bought and paid for by the life and blood of the Son of God, continued to grow. Still our laws made one person lord and master, the other slave, with all that ambition could crave forever barred from his mind.

On this subject arguments arose in the thirties among the churches,—one for, and the other against, master and servant, until early in the forties an open rupture and a division of one of the strong and influential churches was the result. Previous to the thirties a fear arose in Congress that the slave by law would get freedom unless a majority of the States were admitted as slave States. And when Missouri asked to be christened a member of the States of America, much anxiety arose over the progress of freedom. Illinois was a free State, and to make Missouri free would give the balance of power in the Senate. And with the State and Church interested, an ambition existed to get and keep slavery equal in the national law-making councils, as there was doubt as to the vote of the " Territory of Missouri," when cast, whether it was free by a majority of fourteen votes or not. After much talk for and against, in about the year 1820 Missouri was awarded to slavery by a compromise to let all lands be forever free north

of 36° 30' north latitude, and west of a line beginning at the mouth of the Kaw River and running due south to 36° 30' north latitude, and north to the north boundary of " Nebraska"; so here began the struggle in earnest. To let Kansas come in as a slave State and Nebraska free was the bone of contention. I give this short history not for its historical worth so much as to say that in the early days of Kansas much dispute arose among the "squatters" as to whether it would be admitted as a slave State or free. The contest was bitter, and not without bloodshed. I cast my lot and vote for freedom, which meant to the pro-slavery element a "bad man," and one who would steal a lawful piece of property from its owner. As the Government recognized the right of one man to use another as lawful property, to be bought and sold as land by deed and record, they agreed that opposers of slavery were dishonest. I chose the side of freedom. I could not do otherwise, for no man can have delegated to him by statute a just right to any man's liberty, either on account of race or color. With these truths before me I entered all combats for the abolition of slavery at home and abroad, and soon had a host of bitter political enemies, which resulted in many thrilling and curious

adventures, some of which it will be proper to narrate.

Sometimes a man will take great risks, particularly in times of war, high waters, fire, and sickness. Then he will volunteer and do such things as he could not be hired to repeat for love or money. We never know what we will do until we get into a tight place. To economize time and distance often becomes very precious in hours of danger. Armies are lost by being a few minutes too late ; crops fail for not being put in at the proper time; thus the importance of punctuality is very necessary at all times. During the bloody days of the Kansas war in the fifties, the man who loved freedom was hated upon the face of the earth, and the enemies of freedom thought he had no right to live, so he was hunted with shot-guns and revolvers. It was dangerous for a free-state man to be found alone, and as I was one of the freedom-loving men of the Territory of Kansas, and was practising medicine all over the country, I usually traveled roads I knew to be safe, especially during periods of the highest excitement, at which time the pro-slavery element of the country was assembled together for the purpose of war, and the free-state men collected together at one common headquarters.

Both armies armed and equipped—on the one side to extend slavery, on the other to prohibit it. During the year 1855 the territory was in a condition of civil war. Partisan bands were arrayed against each other, and skirmishes and assassinations of daily occurrence.

During this period I once found myself in a dangerous position. On returning home from one of my professional visits I suddenly found myself cut off by a creek with steep banks. The only means of crossing this stream was a log hewn on the upper side to a face of fourteen inches, with the ends imbedded in the banks. The log was a cottonwood about twenty feet long, twenty inches in diameter. The two ends were made fast in the banks on both sides of the creek. This log was used for a foot-log for the people of the neighborhood. I must cross the stream at this point to reach home or take a four-mile circuit, with many chances of being killed by the pro-slavery party, who hated me with the gall of political bitterness, which had long ceased to be a joke. Thus I took the choice with my life in my hands and my body upon the back of a trusty mule that had just been roughly shod. She pressed her nose down to the log, which was ten feet above the surface of the ice-covered

water. The ice was not over an inch thick, then two feet of water, with two feet more of mud under it, while the distance from bank to bank was sixteen feet. My mule placed first one foot and then another upon the log and boldly undertook with firm and cautious feet, and nose to the log, to transfer me to the adjacent bank. She succeeded, and in one minute's time the log and all dangers were left behind me. I was soon in the camps of my friends, about a half-mile on my way home.

When I told my mule and log story in camp I made many unbelievers. Having a great admiration for the truth, and not relishing the accusation of false statements, I requested the Captain to give me a committee of three, and I would prove that the mule had crossed it. As the log was less than a half-mile off, the Captain said : " We will resolve ourselves in a committee of a whole," and all went with me, saying that if they found I had told a lie they would put me in the creek. On reaching the place the Captain said :

" Here are marks of horseshoes all over the log, and as they correspond with the shoes on the mule's feet, Still has told the truth, and the shoe-marks are his witnesses."



MY MULE PLACED FIRST ONE FOOT AND THEN ANOTHER ON THE LOG.

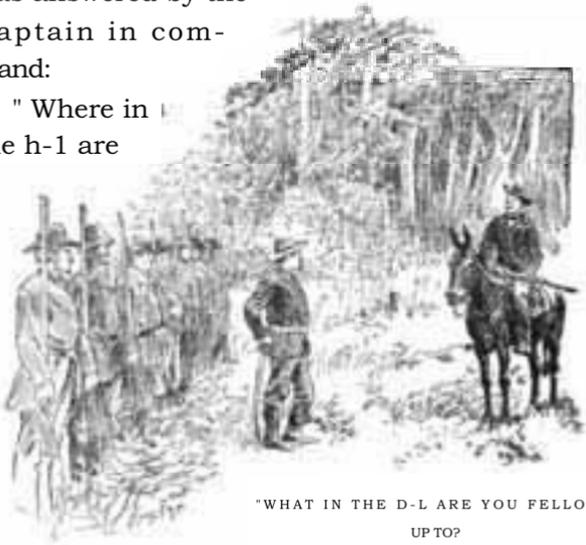


A few months after the mule and foot-log adventure I was called to visit a sick lady named Jones, about ten miles from my home, and in order to make the trip to and from short as possible I took near cuts, some of which led through the woods. On this particular occasion, by going through a thick body of timber I could save about two miles. Entering the timber, I followed a path at full gallop. All at once my mule began to slack up and threw her ears forward, walked carefully and very reluctantly, by which I knew that men were close. Knowing that the blood of the opposition was up to a fever heat, I brought my revolvers front in my belt, unslung my sharpshooter, and prepared for any emergency. Not knowing the exact position or the number of the enemy, I concluded the best plan to be safe was to prepare to be dangerous. In a minute's time I was in an open space of about one acre in the timber, in presence of a company of fifty or more pro-slavery men, my deadly enemies in politics, who had assembled in this secluded and secret place to drill for the purpose of fighting anti-slavery men within a very few days. I cannot say that my hair stood on end. Under the circumstances, I didn't consider there was any time to fool with hair, and knowing that

the bulge counts much in all engagements, I spoke with a loud, firm, and commanding voice:

"What in the d-l are you fellows up to?" I was answered by the Captain in command:

"Where in the h-l are



you going?" I saw in a moment that my firmness had produced good effect, and there was no further danger.

I rode up and stopped in front of the company, shook hands with the Captain, told him to give the command to me and I would drill his men, and show him how Jim Lane and John Brown did it, concluding with :

"If you don't have your men better trained,

and Jim Lane ever meets you, he will shake you up."

The Captain turned his men over to me, and I drew them up in line, put them through all the cavalry movements, tangled them up, straightened them out, and told the Captain he must drill better, so they could get out of tight places when they met us. Then I turned the company over to the original Captain Owens, who said:

"Attention, company ; this is Dr. Still, the d—dest abolitionist out of h-1, who is not afraid of h-1 or high water. When you are sick, go for him ; he saved my wife's life in cholera, and I know him to be successful any place you are a mind to put him. In politics he is our enemy, in sickness he has proven to be our friend." And closed by saying: "Doc, go home to dinner with me, and I will go with you to see Mrs. Jones." I went with the Captain to dinner, and he made his word good by going with me. From that time until the close of the pro-slavery question in 1857 I met, passed, and repassed his men without fear or molestation.

I was chosen by the people to represent Douglas County, Kansas, in the Legislature. Among my colleagues were such men as John Speer, George Ditzler, and Hiram Appleman, all ardent

"free-state men," who loved to hate slavery, in all its forms, believing it to be opposed to all progress of men and nations.

I was chafed to know that my old State Missouri, my home for twenty years, had 150,000 acres of school lands, of which not a dollar was applied to school purposes. When I wanted schooling in my young days this money, over a million dollars, was being used to buy " mules and niggers," and I, cheated of my rights, paid for my schooling by mauling rails. As a legislator I was determined that no such tyranny should lord it over Kansas. The Legislature was for freedom by a large majority. Both houses and the territorial Governor, Reeder, were with us heart and soul.

When first elected to the Kansas Legislature, which was in 1857, the free-state men agreed to meet at Lawrence and Topeka and march to Leecompton in a body. Being in the lower district, I was with the party that met at Lawrence. Ten-thirty was the hour agreed upon, where the free-state men were to march into the town escorted by an armed guard.

We entered before the others by several minutes, and hitching our horses, scattered about the town, talking in small groups. Our conduct

soon aroused the apprehensions of the pro-slavery men.

When not far from the state house, I was accosted by some pro-slavery men, Judge Elmore, a man named Kato, another Brindle, and the third, Hall, with:

"Whar ar' you'ns from ?"

I answered that I was from Douglas County, and Elmore asked:

" What ye here for?"

"I was sent by Jim Lane," I answered. "

What ye goin' to do?"

" Whatever Jim Lane wants done."

They began to talk quite loud, interspersing their remarks with unholy adjectives, among which "d—d abolitionist," " d—d fools," " d—d nigger-thieves" were the least complimentary.

At this time a little Yankee of about one hundred and ten pounds, from Massachusetts, named G. F. Warren, came up, took me by the arm, and said he wished to speak with me on a private matter, and hoped my friends would excuse me, as he was in a great hurry. With the assurance that I would return, I excused myself, and when we were apart from the others, asked :

" What do you want, Warren?"

"I want you to keep away from those fellows; I am afraid they will kill you."

I had on my overcoat, with pockets on the inside. I opened it, showed him the two Colt's revolvers in the inside pockets, and told him to go on and attend to his own business, that I wanted to talk to those gentlemen myself. If in the course of our discussion I found need of his aid I would surely call on him.

Leaving Warren, I went back to the pro-slavery men, whose numbers had been reinforced by several additional, among them Colonel Young. The Colonel wore a meat-knife, or what people not accustomed to polite language would call a "bowie," in his belt. A glance showed me that Warren was watching me with considerable anxiety from the corner. I took care to keep the pro-slavery men in front while talking to them. Young, in a milder tone than any of the others had used, asked :

" What do you expect to accomplish in this assembly, anyway?"

" We propose to break every link in the pro-slavery chain, and do all Jim Lane requires, to make Kansas free from master and slave."

They grew boisterous, and Judge Elmore be-

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A. T. STILL. 75

came insulting. I looked him in the face and said:

"The angels are coming. The Lord is on our side, and His angels will soon be with us; then you will hear the music from on high." One of the gentlemen said :

"Listen to the d—d fool; he is crazy." I answered :

"I am not crazy, Judge," then looked at my watch, which had been set the evening before to correspond with the watches of our friends. It lacked less than two minutes of the time designated. I said :

"I can almost smell the breath of the angels. I hear the rustling of their wings." To which Elmore cried :

" The d—d fool is either drunk or crazy ; what is the matter with him?"

His deep-toned voice, trained to command negroes when he rawhided them, had scarce died on the air, when:

"Boom! boom ! boom !" went the big bass-drum, and the fifes' shrill shriek rose on the air.

" What the h—l is that?" roared Judge Elmore.

"That is the music of the Lord's cavalry, corn-

ing to help us knock the shackles from every slave."

By this time the head of Jim Lane's column, seven hundred strong, could be seen coming over the hill, with colors flying and drums beating.



Judge Elmore,

Colonel Young, and the followers started to run. I called to them to halt.

"We are afraid of personal violence from Yankee fools," they

BY THIS TIME THE HEAD OF JIM LANE'S COLUMN COULD BE SEEN.

answered.

"There is no danger whatever," I answered. "We are free-state men, and I will see you are protected, for I am at the head of a company, and not a

hair of your heads shall be touched." But their legs controlled their bodies, and they could not be persuaded. They ran away.

We assembled and made a temporary organization. On that night the free-state members of the assembly and some friends to the number of three hundred went to a night session of a Pro-Slavery Constitutional Convention.

The convention was assembled in a hall capable of holding about seven hundred persons. We took our seats in the rear, and though every man was armed with one and many with two revolvers, we were inclined to be peaceable if unmo-
lested.

The pro-slavery men were very quiet, and their proceedings quite orderly. We listened to them for about thirty minutes, when a member began a tirade upon us, denominating us as the sons of feminine dogs, prefixed by an abundance of brimstone adjectives.

In a moment the cup was filled and running over. Captain Walker, of our side, leaped to his feet and yelled :

" G—d d—n you, take that back !"

I looked about and was surprised to find in addition to my own revolvers five hundred more

covering every drop of pro-slavery blood in the house, from the chairman down.

Striking his gavel on the desk, the chairman sprang to his feet, crying:

"For God's sake, don't shoot! That man is drunk and don't know what he is doing!" Captain Walker quickly retorted :

" Trot him out of there then, and do it pretty G—d d—n quick, or I will order them to fire, and keep it up until the last dirty pro-slavery cuss is dead, pitched out of the window, and in h-l. We're not here to take any such stuff."

In a second's time four men had the drunken member by the legs and arms, hurried him out and ran him off, we never knew where. Captain Walker then addressed the chairman, asking if it was true that we began this trouble.

"No, you have been gentlemen," was the answer.

"Now, Mr. Chairman, I want you to so report us. If I find that you have not so reported us over your own signature I will kill you, G—d d—n you!"

When the Legislature was assembled next morning, there was no opposition for us, and we had our own way. After the permanent organization we adjourned to meet at Lawrence.

At the close of our deliberations, March, 1858, we had territorial law that was all new, except that referring to the records of deeds and marriages, which was thankfully received, and peace followed.

I went home to follow the practice of medicine and saw lumber, which I did from 1856 to 1860, except the time spent in the Legislature. During the fall of 1860 we elected "Abraham Lincoln" to champion the coming conflict between Slavery and Freedom—not of Kansas alone, but of all North America. Then the struggle began, and lasted until he dipped his pen and wrote the golden words: "Forever free, without regard to race or color." When the war of the Rebellion was declared against the laws and authorities of the United States, I saw at once another move whose object was to extend slavery and illiteracy by a division of the Territory, which could only be an example for other States to imitate when any political party was unsuccessful in an election, and divide the country up into a "North and South" and East, Middle and West, Southern Confederacy. Then the East Middle, and West, Northern Confederacy, and thus have six empires of quarreling fools, who would ruin all our forefathers had given us under a sworn pledge to