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The Old Log School-House.

It was an old log school-house, standing back from the country road, with the creepers twining over the face of it, and the branches of an elm interlacing above it.

The robins had nested in the crevices under the roof for so long that they had forgotten when they had known other home.

Years and years ago, bare-footed boys and sun-bonneted girls had climbed over the stile, and had sat all the long day with feet dangling from the high, hard benches.

That morning in August, the old schoolhouse assumed a jaunty expression ill suited to its scarred visage; it suggested a decrepit old man, reaching backward with one hand to grasp the pleasures of boyhood, while the other touched the latchstring of immortal ity's door.

The birds sang low, the soft splash of the brook came faintly; the drip, drip of the sweet spring water ran an undertone with the rustling leaves. Above all there was borne the sound of voices, subdued and tremulous in tender minor tones.

The children were coming back to school. They came by twos and threes, and climbed over the rickety stile with a slowness and weakness not of childhood.

They greeted one another, and stepped softly over the worn door sill. They sat on the benches which were as they knew them forty years ago.

The master who ferruled them in those good old days, took his place behind the desk, and the "old school," a quaint Indiana reunion, was begun.

The master's hand trembled as he unfolded the yellow roll-call. His voice faltered as he called the first name: "Hiram Brown."

A white-haired man from the back row answered, clearly, "Here."

Yet even as he spoke, his eyes filled with tears, for there on the battered desk was a roughly-carved heart, holding the initials of his boyish love.

Through young manhood and golden middle life she had been his help, and now—"absent," he answered low, to her name.

There were eyes cast down, and a stray sunbeam lighted up precious dew drops of sympathy on wrinkled cheeks. "Seth Green."

But Seth was absent.

A while before there had come t

him a messenger from a far off country with promises of peace and rest and joy; and so Seth, who had grown tired of unrecompensed labor, followed willingly.

"Catherine Clark," the master read.

"Present," a sweet quavering voice replied—"present, bless the Lord for his good mercies; but Daniel, he's gone where school keeps always."

"Mary Reed." And the master's own voice added, "Absent forever."

The silvery head bowed on the desk, the withered hands tightly clasped each other, for from among the old-fashioned flowers he had culled the fairest for himself, and while yet the glow of youth and love lay on them, she had yielded for sweetness to celestial growth.

Through the long record the master read slowly. Sometimes there were smiles at some memory, but often tears: and now these faded, wrinkled children sat waiting for the final roll-call. The old master grew strangely white.

"First class in addition," the master called. "One here plus many there equals what?"

He waited with the old-time patience, then gently gave the answer himself.

"Joy is the result, my child—perfect joy in the heavens.

"Second class in division."

No one stirred. A bird flew in at the open window. It circled about and alighted on the old man's arm.

"Take one from among you and what is the result?" Then, without a pause, "A little while to wait—just a little while; a little folding of the hands to sleep.

"First class in reading."

But the master held the book himself. He read by faith, God bless him!

"Come unto me, ye weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

A sigh, and the "old school" was dismissed. The master had resigned for a place where there is no truancy, no failure in lessons, no tardiness. The pupils came down the path to meet him with welcoming step.

Some yet await the calling of their names, but they will not wait long, for every day some one whispers "good-morning" to the Master. Every sunset finds some pupil's lessons over; some new beginner in the A. B. C. of heavenly lore.

The bird flew from the master's arm, and perching in the elm, trilled of love and rest and eternal youth.