PROGRESS.

Pages 9 to 16.

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TAR MAKING IN GEORGIA.

WINTER WORK IN THE BACKWOODS, NOT PROVITABLE.

The Pine Trees Have to Give Up Their Last Drop of Blood Before They Are Destroyed—the Turpentine Bleeds Them, then the Tar Maker Distills Them.

The pine forest in its native state is a thing of beauty, redolent of the piney odors and fragrant with wild flowers; but it is much more attractive after man has worked laboriously through it with his axe, clearing away the underbrush, and hewing down the small trees that have no chance of reaching maturing in the shade of their elders and betters. It takes but a few strokes of the axe, however, to turn the most beautiful grove of giant pines into a scene of desolation. There is nothing more dismal than a tract of pine trees killed and left to decay.

The tar maker of Georgia fortunately has no longings for the artistic and the picturesque, or his surroundings would make life a burden; for his cabin stands always in or near a dead forest, where in every winter's storm the crash of falling trees adds to the commotion. He cannot object to this destruction, for he brings it on himself by killing the trees, and every tree that falls saves him so much labor in chopping. He has no love for the trees, cares nothing for them except to extract as much money as he can for them, and get them out of the way. After the trees are gone his land is worth more than it was before; but he does not let them go without sucking the honey from them. They would be worth something for lumber or fuel if they stood in the right place, but generally they are two far away to be available. Twenty dollars worth of lumber is not worth much when it would cost $25 to get it to market, and as to cord wood, one might as well try to sell turnips to a market gardener as to try to sell fuel in a country where most people own their own pine lots.

Up in North Carolina, where tar making is a standard industry, they do it on a larger scale; but here in Georgia it is a side issue—the last step toward turning a wood lot into a clearing. How it is managed can best be illustrated by taking an individual case. Here is Bill Jones, a white man, a cracker of course, with abundant muscle and great capacity for living on pork and corn meal, or anything else that fate may bring. He was born in a cabin, and his wife was born in a cabin, and his children were born in a cabin, and they are all satisfied with the world as long as the pork and the meal hold out.

Largely through living so far away from towns and stores that he has had no chance to spend the few dollars he has earned by working for the planters or the turpentiners, Bill has accumulated enough money to buy two or three hundred acres of pine woods, which in his case means two or three hundred dollars, or a dollar an acre, for he is sure to buy in so remote a district that the land will bring no more. With a week's work, or perhaps two weeks, he builds his cabin, and when he gets a frying pan and a bit of bagging to stuff with moss for a bed, it is furnished. Once settled he is a fixture, for no poverty can drive him out of his own cabin or his own land. Hard times does not mean running into debt with him; it means merely a little less pork and a little less meal at the very worst, until he is well enough settled to produce his own pork and meal. After that the times make no difference to him. He is as independent as the biggest millionaire in New York; not because he has so much, but because he needs so little.

Once settled in this way, there arises a problem that requires more brain work than Bill is accustomed to. Many a corncob pipe of tobacco is burned while he thinks it over. He knows that the easiest way to turn his forest into a little farm is to go out with his axe and girdle the trees. In a few months the trees will die, and in a few more months the dead branches will fall, and the land will be light enough for him to cultivate between the trees. Gradually the sapwood will rot away; but the hard hearts of the trees, as well as the stumps, will stand for years, and his farm will look as if a hundred rival telegraph companies had planted their poles all over it. This is the lazy man's way of making a clearing, and being easy it has its attractions. But there are other ways, requiring more labor and giving better results.

If by good luck a turpentiner wanders that way, he may be able to rent 200 acres of his land, enough to make a "crop," for $50 for the four years during which the trees will yield resin. This will leave him 100 acres for his own work, enough to support his family with, and the $50 he will receive is only part of the benefit to be derived, for the turpentiner will clear away the underbrush to protect himself against fire, rake up the pine needles and leave clear good forest where he found a thicket. But if no turpentiner appears with an offer, Mr. Jones goes into turpentining on his own account and on a small scale. He has no $5,000 to invest in a still and the rest of the necessary plant; but he has an axe with which he can cut "boxes" in the trees and for four years he gathers crude resin and gets it to market the best way he can in barrels made with his own hands. Meanwhile he has girdled and killed the trees on a third of his land, and is raising scanty crops of corn and perhaps a little cotton, and his hogs are running wild in the woods—his own woods and his neighbors. Throughout this process, it must be borne in mind, he is not making as much out of his resin as he would receive for his daily labor if he went out to work on a plantation; but he is gradually improving his place, and has the satisfaction of being thoroughly his own master.

It is at the end of his four years of turpentining that our business properly begins with Mr. Bill Jones, if we would see him develop into a tar maker. By this time he has a hundred acres of land that he calls cleared, though every acre of it is defaced with forty or fifty tall, thin poles and as many stumps. The trees on the 200 acres of land that he has "turpentined" look as well as ever, but they are no longer of any use as yielders of resin. Lumbermen would not buy them now at any price, for lumbermen look askance at trees that have been turpentined. They have given up every cent they will in the way of resin, but they are still full of tar, and when the tar is extracted from them that is the end of them. The oldest boy by this time is big enough to swing an axe, but the boy has by hook or crook become the owner of a gun, and his preference lies rather toward roaming the woods for game than for laboring with an axe. But Mr. Jones is the master of his premises and of his family, in a wild region where there is no law but muscle. He knows from long experience what small trees furnish the most lithe and lasting switches, and having found one to his mind he brings such powerful arguments to bear upon the boy that in a day or two, or as soon as he is able to walk comfortably, the youngster shoulders his axe with great cheerfulness and follows his father into the woods.

To see this pine forest in all its beauty we must see it now, for it will never be beautiful again. To girdle a pine tree requires only a few easy strokes with the axe, for it involves only cutting through the soft bark and the almost equally soft sapwood. In a week or two the entire tract is girdled, and then nature begins her work. The needles begin to drop, and turn brown. In a few weeks they fall, and the ground is covered with a thick and fragrant brown carpet. The shade is gone; instead of the beautiful green canopy overhead, there remain only the dead limbs and branches, too thin and sparse to shut out the sunlight. Weeds begin to grow that never grew there before, and the forest is doomed. This girdling is done in the early spring, before the sap begins to flow, and before summer comes it will be as sure to kill everything but a tract covered with gaunt dead trees.

The soaking rains and burning suns of summer do the work quickly on the dead trees. Decay soon sets to work upon the bark and soft sapwood that envelop the heart of the tree. That is precisely what the tar maker wants. The bark and sapwood are only in the way. It is not well now to walk through the forest on a windy day, for limbs are constantly falling. The ground is soon littered with them, and they are gathered up and burned, for it is only the heart-wood that dries "on the stump" that is worth distilling for tar. By fall one who saw the forest in its prime would hardly know it. The largest trees have changed into spindling poles by the rapid decay and falling off of bark and sapwood. Sometimes a tree has fallen and carried away two or three trees in its descent. There is enough bark and slabs of half-rotten wood on the ground to support a family for years; but the family has more firewood than anything else that takes little account of this stuff.

When summer and fall are gone, the corn housed, the cotton picked, and enough hogs killed to insure a supply of bacon for the winter, begins the process of converting the spindling poles into tar. Father and son go out into the wilderness of dead sticks and chop and chop till everything within reach is down. There is little harder work than chopping down the hearts of dead pine trees, as the wood is almost as tough as iron, and it goes slowly. Presently a few acres are cleared in this way, and the fallen logs are chopped up into short lengths. If there is a mule on the premises, as there generally is, he is kept at work drawing the short sticks to a central point, where the first kiln is to be made—or the first series of kilns, for a dozen kilns can be operated simultaneously as well as one. In the absence of a mule the children carry the sticks, which are full of resin and heavy. Every stick is what the Georgians call "lightwood," perhaps because it is the heaviest part of the tree. It is so full of resin that a fire may be kindled by touching a match to any splintered part of a log.

The coldest days of the short Georgia winter have come by the time everything is ready for actually making the tar. Then Mr. Jones looks about his property for a bed of solid clay, which he can generally find without difficulty, and draws a few loads of it to the spot where he intends to make his kiln directly over a clay bed, which is not often the case. He begins operations by raising a small hillock two or three feet high, composed entirely of clay, and a trifle larger in diameter than six feet to ten or twelve. The top of this elevation is at first flat, but he hollows it out till it becomes a basin, with the lowest point in the centre, and he makes a hole in the middle to communicate with a gutter which runs underneath to carry off his tar to the receiver. The receiver four or five feet from the kiln, is simply a hole dug in the ground and lined with clay. The base of the kiln is well pounded down with the back of a spade, and after being thoroughly wetted it is left to stand exposed for a few days to harden, and the receiver is treated in the same way. If there comes a hard rain meantime, the work has to be done over again.

When the base is ready for use he begins to pile on wood, much in the fashion that the charcoal burner builds his kiln, the object being to lay the sticks as closely as possible, receding toward the top to make a secure and shapely cone. Near the bottom he puts some small split sticks to kindle readily, and when he finishes the stack is higher than his head, and so well put together that the hardest wind cannot blow it over. The next step is to cover the heap of wood with clay and sods, leaving a small vent hole here and there for the smoke to escape through. The clay is put on damp and makes a hard casing which is necessary to prevent the side from bursting into a blaze. The object of course is to burn it slowly.

When the cone is finished it looks like an immense beehive, and the little apertures that are made at the base through which to apply the fire look like doorways for the bees. As soon as the casing is hard and dry enough not to crack from sudden heat and fire is started in a dozen different places, and from every opening near the top come streams of smoke. For a short time the fire is allowed to burn freely, to spread through all the pile, and then most of the little holes at the bottom are stopped with wet clay to shut off the draught. For the next nine or ten days the tar maker sees no results beyond the smoke pouring out at every opening; but he knows that the fire is doing its work, for the cone is too hot to be touched safely with the hand. Still he must keep a close watch upon the kiln, now opening a fresh vent, now closing one, stopping up the cracks that come, and occasionally piling on more sods or clay. The fire must not be neglected, for a big crack is liable to appear at any moment, and if that should be left open and the air allowed to enter too freely the kiln would turn into ashes in a few minutes.

For nine days at least, oftener for ten, there is nothing to be done with the kiln but to watch it and keep down the flame by shutting out the air. But in those days Mr. Jones and his boys are not idle. They know that the tar is sure to flow in time, and they must have vessels to store it in. To buy casks for this purpose would cost more than the tar will be worth, and the only resource is to make barrels on the spot. There is plenty of wood about, because a few trees are reserved for that purpose; and with no tools but their axes and a hammer and drawing-knife they hew out the hoops and staves and make barrels that are crude in appearance, but strong and tight enough to hold the tar and bear handling. This is the custom not only in the home-made tar factories of Georgia, but in the larger works in North Carolina; all barrels are made on the spot. It would be useless to repeat to Mr. Jones the old couplet:

> Tar, pitch, and turpentine,
> All begins with A,

because he has no idea whether tar begins with a t or a q; but he knows just how long he must cut his staves to make a barrel that will hold the 320 younds net of a standard tar barrel.

After the fire has been smouldering for ten days a delicate little stream of tar begins to trickle through the gutter under the kiln. It is only a thread at first, for the melted tar is much thiner than the tar we are accustomed to seeing; but its appearance is sure to be the signal for a shout, whether it is discovered by Mr. Jones himself or by Mrs. Jones, who sits watching while she smokes her pipe, or by the children. Down the soft tar runs through the hole in the bottom of the kiln, down through the gutter, down into the receiver a few feet away; and there it remains and accumulates until there is enough of it to be dipped out and poured into the barrels. Within twenty-four hours after its first appearance the stream is in full flow, and the flow continues for about three weeks.

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There is very little guesswork about the quality of tar to be obtained. Mr. Jones very likely does not know the name of the country he lives in, but he can tell to a fraction how many cords of wood he has piled in the kiln, and from the condition of the wood he can judge closely whether he may expect only forty gallons of tar to the cord, which is about the best. That a cord of this wood will yield fifty gallons of liquid is the strongest evidence of the large percentage of resin it contains.

At the beginning this operation is conducted near the cabin, or so near that it is within walking distance for meals and sleep. But one kiln is only a drop in the bucket of the winter's work, and each succeeding one must be a little further away. No matter how near the house, a small shelter is built for the watcher, for the fire must be watched by night as well as by day; and as the distance from the cabin increases, the shelter is made larger, and becomes for the time the headquarters of the family. Two forked sticks are set in the ground and a crosspiece is laid in the forks, and upon this long sticks are laid, with the lower end resting upon the ground, and the whole is covered with bows, or sometimes with clay, till it is waterproof. The frying pan and the moss beds are carried over, and the Jones family occupy a new and thoroughly ventilated residence for a few weeks. When there are animals to be taken care of, or more especially a smokehouse to be watched, some of the family must remain at home but this is easily managed in a country where the children number anywhere from twelve to eighteen. There is no hesitation about leaving two or three little girls alone at home, for as soon as a girl is big enough to walk and eat fat pork she is capable of telling any unwelcome stranger:

"You g'long outen this; g'long, or I'll git dad's gun."

The watching of a cabin is almost wholly on account of the adjacent smokehouse. In the cabin there is nothing to steal and often there is nobody within five miles to take what little there is. But let a smokehouse stand unguarded over night, and prowlers drop down from the trees, or come up from the ground, and the precious pork disappears.

While one kiln is burning another may be building, or if there are enough adults in the family a series of kilns may be kept going simultaneously, There is no hurry about the work, but it requires constant vigilance. If the wood is not distilled this winter, the remainder can stand till next winter without injury. After Mr. Jones has first turpentined his pine trees, and then converted their hearts into tar, he has the satisfaction of knowing that he has extracted every possible cent from them. It is not worth while to tell him that with the same amount of labor on somebody's plantation, he and his boys would have made out of the resin and tar.

He knows that very well; but he knows, too, that he has been his own boss the while, to work when it suited him or to go fishing if the spirit so moved. He knows also that he has brought his land into what he considers tiliable condition, though a Northern farmer would hardly think it so. The trees are gone, but the stumps remain; and no aching tooth-stump holds on more persistently than a pine tree stump in a Georgia field.

It is entirely out of the question for a man of Mr Jone's financial calibre to remove the stumps by any mechanical process. He could not afford to buy or rent a stump-extractor, and he has neither the skill nor the inclination to make one. The very best he can do is to save the brushwood and build fires over the stumps, by which they are eventually lowered to the level of the ground and the appearance of the field is improved, although the roots will still last for years, as he finds out when he tries to run the plough through them.

The cord of lightwood yields from a barrel to a barrel and a half of tar, and getting the tar to market is not always an easy matter. An industrious family may distil 200 barrels in the course of a winter, and if the 200 barrels yield $100 after freights and commissions are paid, it is a good clean job. In this slow and unprofitable way much of the tar of commerce has been made, and many thousands of acres of Georgia forest have been cleared.

Stopped the Row.

'What kind of cheese is this, waiter?' asked the late caller at a restaurant.

'It's sweitzer.'

'What! you impudent rascal! I ask what kind of cheese it is and you tell me 'it's white sir.' Why, I'll break every bone in your—'

And a prompt explanation from the proprietor at this point was all that prevented a fight.

TO CURE HEADACHE.

Simple Remedies That Will Bring Speedy Relief to Sufferers.

'A hot bath, a stroll in the fresh air, shampooning the head in weak sodawater, or a timely nap in a cool, quiet room will sometimes stop a nervous headache,' writes Dr. B. F. Herrick in August Ladies' Home Journal. 'When overfatigued from shopping or sightseeing a sponge dipped in very hot water and pressed repeatedly over the back of the neck between the ears will be found exceedingly refreshing, especially if the face and temples are afterward subjected to the same treatment. Neuralagia is caused not only by cold air but acidity of the stomach, starved nerves imperfect teeth, or by indolence combined with a too generous diet. Heat is the best and quickest cure for this distressing pain. A hot flatiron, passed rapidly and deftly over several folds of flannel laid on the affected spot, will often give relief in less than ten minutes, without the aid of medicine. Hot fomentations are of equal value; though when the skin is very tender it is more advisable to use dry heat, nothing being better for the purpose than bags of heated salt, flour or sand, which retain warmth for a long time. Cold water, applied by the finger tips to the nerves in front of the ear, has been known to dispel neuralgic pains like magic. When caused by acidity a dose of charcoal or soda will usually act as a corrective. Sick headache is accompanied by billious symptons, and attacks usually come on when the person is overtired or below par physically. This is a disease of the first half of life, and often stops of its own accord after middle age. A careful diet is imperative in every case, sweetmeats and pastry being especially pernicious.

'Eating heartily when very tired, late dinners, eating irregularly, insufficient mastication or too much animal food, especially in the spring or during the hot weather, are frequent causes of indigestion, causing headaches by reflex action.'

LEW WALLACE'S IDEAL.

His Stepmother is the Original of a Character in Ben Hur.

One of the greatest of America's women orators is Mrs. Zeralda Wallace, the stepmother of Gen. Lew Wallace, and the original of one of the most beautiful characters in "Ben Hur", says the New York Mail and express.

Mrs. Wallace has been a temperance worker and a woman suffragist for many years. She thus relates the circumstrnces of her conversion to the cause of woman's rights:

'After I had been in religious retorm work for a little while I took up the cause of woman suffrage. It happened this way. A number of us women went to Indianapolis to work for the retention of the Baxter local option law when the question of its repeal was up before the Indiana legislature. During the vote on the question a Dr. Thompson, an elder in the Presbyterion church and a member of the Senate, rose in his place to explain his vote. He said that, although personally opposed to the liquor traffic, he must, as the representative of his constituency and the taxpayers cast his ballot in favor of the repeal of the local option law.

"Then I thought to myself, who compose his constituency and the taxpayers whom he represents? I was then a widow with six little children, and I had my taxes to pay, and we all had to obey the laws. A light broke over me, and I came to the conclusion that I was a part of that constituency of which the Senator spoke, and so was every other woman in the district. After the session I went up to Senator Thompson, and, shaking hands with him, thanked him for that speech, and told him that his speech had made a woman suffragist of me."

THE EDISON HOME.

The Lighting Arrangements Make It a Fairy Palace of Beauty.

Glenmont, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edison at Llewellyn Park, N. J., is a fairy palace as regards the lighting of the house. Pressing a button in the hall lights up the place from basement to turret, says the New York Journal. Aside from its electrical novelties and conveniences, Glenmont is a most charming place. The drawing room, in crimson and gold, has many pictures by celebrated artists and several pieces of marble statuary; the two rooms are separated by an arch, supported by onyx pillars; a conservatory filled with choice flowers opens from one room The dining room has a highly polished floor, nearly covered with a Persian rug; the furniture is massive and sombre, as befits a dining room, with a wainscoting of oak and a handsome frieze.

A large screen, with Japanese figures, stands before the door leading into the billiard room, billiards being the only game Mr. Edison is ever known to indulge in, and that only upon rare occasions. Mrs. Edisson' boudoir, on the second floor, is a pretty room, with a view from the windows of the Orange Mountains in a distance. All the beds are the double French beds, with draperies at the head of fine muslin or dimity. Altogether, Glenmont is an ideal home, presided over by an agreeable and beautiful mistress.

EFFECTIVE MATCHMAKING.

The Simple Method Employed by the Nez Perces Indians.

An old custom was revived by the Nez Perces Indians and their visitors during the celebration on the last Fourth of July. The natives of the local tribe are very wealthy people, and there are designing mothers among the aborignes as well as in the different classes of civilized society. The young bucks of the Nez Perces tribe are regarded somewhat like the scions of royalty in matrimonial circles, The maidens from all visiting tribes were brought to Lapwai to find husbands. The customs of the tribes, which were revived for the occasion, were more effective than the Boston man's way.

The marriageable maidens were by common accord quartered in a selected spot in the valley of the Lapwai. At an appointed hour the young men who wanted wives to share their annuities, their homesteads, and the affections of their hearts appeared in procession on the hallowed campground The hour was midnight, and the scene was in a grove of trees made fragrant by the wild flowers, and every heart danced to the music of the rippling waters. The young men marched forth, and none but candidates for matrimony joined the march They were dressed in their brightest colors, and each carried a white willow cane. As they approached the tents they chanted an Indian chorus that was doleful as the song of the owl, and kept time by beating upon the tents with their canes. The drumming was deafening to the distant spectator and must have been distracting to the waiting maidens in the tents. At last the singing and the drumming had the desired effect.

The maidens came forth, after a delay just long enough to satisfy that universal passion of the mind of a woman to drive a lover mad with doubt. There were more men than maidens. The former kept up the march and the music without. The march countermarched on the line of the same circle, each selecting a husband from the line. The chosen ones hastened to follow their brides away into the darkness. The unfortunes suitors were left to despair.—Oregonian.

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