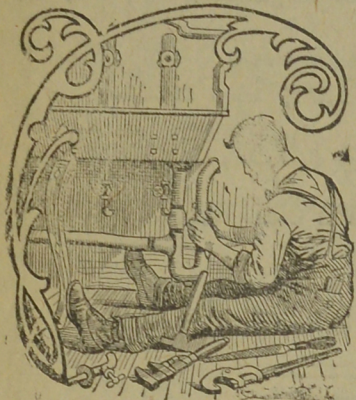


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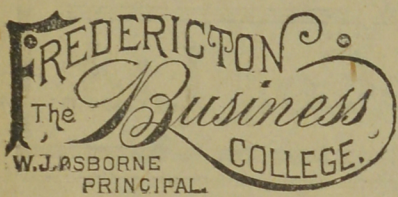
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supremacy in this delightful ro-
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a son of Cape Cod's own sandy
soil. Read of the old sea cap-
tain who has returned to spend
the remainder of his days among
his boyhood friends; read of
the quaint little waif who came
to him unbidden and of the place
she won in his heart; read of the
pretty schoolteacher, the sancti-
monious congressman, the grown-
up boys Asaph Tidditt and Ba-
iley Bangs; read of Keturah and
Cap'n Josiah Dimick and Lem
Myrick and all the other quaint
folk of Bayport and you will
find entertainment a-plenty.
There was only one Charles
Dickens, but in character de-
lineation Joseph C. Lincoln has
a touch worthy of the master.

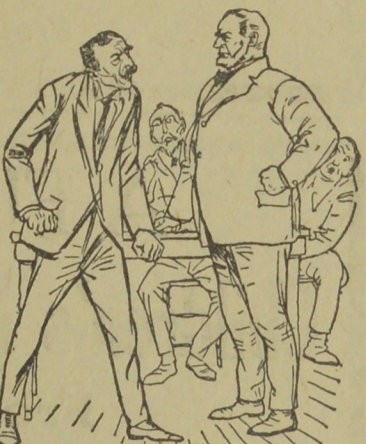
"Feller Bayporters," went on Tad,
"there's one thing we've all agree on,
no matter who we've meant to vote
for—that is, that a member of our
school committee should be an up-
right, honest man, one fit morally to
look out for our dear children. Ain't
that so? Well, then, I ask you this:
Would you consider a man fit for that
job who deliberately came between a
father and his child, who plzened the
mind of that child against his own
parent and when that parent come to
claim that child first tried to buy him
off and then turned him out of the
house? Yes, and offered violence to
him and done it! Is that the kind of
man we want to honor or to look
out for our own children's schoolin'?"

Mr. Simpson undoubtedly meant to
cause a sensation by his opening re-
marks. He certainly did so. The cap-
tain rose to his feet, then sank back
again.

"Gentlemen," continued the speaker,
"last night I had an experience that I
shan't forget as long as I live. I met
a poor man, a poor, lame man who'd
been away out west and got hurt bad.
Folks thought he was dead. His wife
thought so and died grieve'n for him.
She left a little baby girl, only seven
or eight year old. When this man
come back, well again, but poor, to look
up his family he found his wife had
passed away and the child had been
sent off, just to get rid of her, to a
stranger in another town. That
stranger fully meant to send her off,
too; he said so dozens of times. A
good many of you folks right here
heard him say it. But he never sent
her. He kept her. Why? Well, that's
the question. I shan't answer it. I
ain't accusin' nobody. All I say is,
what's easy enough for any of you to
prove, and that is that it come to light
the child had property belongin' to her
—property, land, wuth money!"

He paused once more and drew his
sleeve across his forehead. Most of
his hearers were silent now, on tiptoe
of expectation.

"This man," he proclaimed, "this
father, mournin' for his dead wife and
longin' for his child, comes to the
town where he was to find and take



"YOU'VE SAID ENOUGH! NOW LET ME SAY
A WORD!"

her. And when he meets the man
that's got her what does this rich
man—do? Why, fust of all, he's sweet-
er'n sirup to him, takes him in, keeps
him overnight, and the next day he
says to him: 'You just be quiet and
say nothin' to nobody that she's your
little girl. I'll make it wuth your
while.' All right so fur maybe, but
wait! Then it turns out that the
father knows about this land, this
property. And then the kind, chari-
table man—this rich man with lots of
money of his own—turns the poor
father out, tellin' him to get the girl
and the land if he can, knowin'—
knowin', mind you—that the father
ain't got a cent to hire lawyers nor
even to pay for his next meal. And
when the father says he won't go, but

wants his dear one that belongs to
him, the rich feller abuses him, knocks
him down with his fist—knocks down
a poor, weak, lame invalid just off a
sickbed! Is that the kind of a man we
want on our school committee?"

The meeting was in an uproar.
"No need for me to tell you who I
mean!" shouted Tad, waving his arms.
"You know who as well as I do. You
have just heard him praised as bein'
all that's good and great. But I say"—
"You've said enough! Now let me
say a word!"

It was Captain Cy who interrupted.
He had pushed his way through the
crowd.

"Knowles," said Captain Cy, turning
to the moderator, "let me speak, will
you? I won't be but a minute." Briefly
he told the true facts.

"As for the property," he concluded,
fiercely, "why, darn the property, I
say! It ain't wuth much anyhow, and
if 'twas anybody else's he should have
it and welcome. But it's Bos'n's, and
bein' what he is, he shan't have it.
And he shan't have her to cruelize,
neither—by the A'mighty, he shan't,
so long as I've a dollar to fight him
with! I say that to you, Tad Simpson,
and to the man—whoever put you
up to this. There! I've said my say.
Now, gentlemen, you can choose your
side."

He strode back to his seat. There
was silence for a moment. Then Jo-
siah Dimick sprang up and waved his
hat.

"That's the way to talk!" he shouted.
That's a man! Three cheers for Cap'n
Whittaker! Come on, everybody!"

But everybody did not "come on."
The cheers were feeble. It was evi-
dent that the majority of those present
did not know how to meet this unex-
pected contingency. It had taken them
by surprise, and they were undecided.
The uproar of argument and question
began again, louder than ever. The
bewildered moderator thumped his
desk and shouted feebly for order.
Tad Simpson took the floor and in a
few words and at the top of his lungs
nominated Alonzo Snow. Abel Leon-
ard seconded the nomination. There
were yells of "Question! Question!"
and "Vote! Vote!"

Eben Salters was recognized by the
chair. Captain Salters made few
speeches, and when he did make one
it was because he had something to
say.

"Mr. Moderator," he said, "I, for
one, hate to vote just now. It isn't
that the school committee is so im-
portant of itself. But I do think that
the rights of a father with his child is
pretty important, and our vote for
Cap'n Whittaker—and most of you
know I intended votin' for him and
have been workin' for him—might
seem like an indorsement of his posi-
tion. This whole thing is a big sur-
prise to me. I don't feel yet that we
know enough of the inside facts to
give such an indorsement. I'd like to
see this Thomas man before I decide
to give it—or not to give it, either.
It's a queer thing to come up at town
meetin', but it's up. Hadn't we better
adjourn until next week?"

He sat down. The meeting was
demoralized. Some were shouting for
adjournment, others to vote it out.
A straw would turn the scale, and the
straw was forthcoming. While Cap-
tain Cy was speaking the door had si-
lently opened and two men entered the
hall and sought seclusion in a corner.
Now one of these men came forward—
the Hon. Heman Atkins.

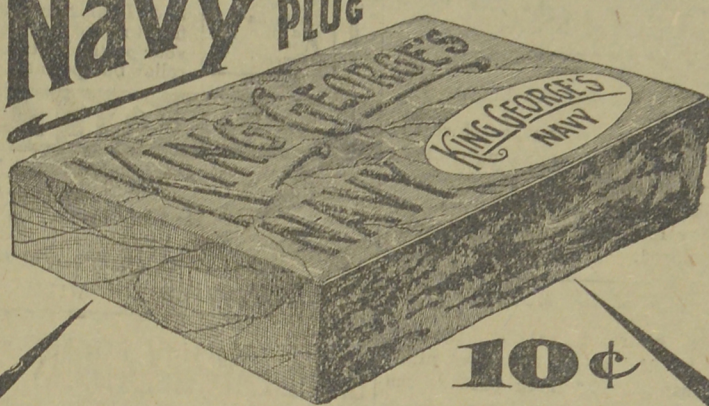
Mr. Atkins walked solemnly to the
front.

The moderator's gavel descended.
"Order!" he roared. "Order, I say!
Congressman Atkins is goin' to talk
to us."

The Honorable Heman faced the ex-
cited crowd. One hand was in the
breast of his frock coat; the other was
clenched in his fist.

(To be Continued)

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