

HOW I WENT TO CHICAGO

I had been given permission to make a great journey in the fall if I could earn and save the necessary money. Captain Finch sailed a schooner on Lake Michigan and he was a friend of the family and competent to handle a ship on the great storm-swept lake. It was a bright prospect to sail right across the awful expanse, all by myself, to Milwaukee in another state - the experience of seeing a new state would of itself be a momentous event. Once there, I would visit my cousins and I would see many wonderful things.

All summer long the pennies were earned and saved by all the means a boy of thirteen could command in a newly settled country among the woods. Garden stuff was grown and sold; pelts were collected by trapping; probably there were odd jobs to do for neighbors now and then. And finally the great day arrived when the long plan was to come to fulfillment, and my father drove me in the lumber wagon to Ludwig's pier some miles away where the schooner was loading with firewood and lumber. I can never forget the strange surroundings in that ship, the bright green paint, the odd gangway stairs, and the funny furniture and accessories; nor am I allowed to forget the two or three bitter days that followed in a whipping storm with the ship rolling and tacking, no comfortable place to sit or lie, and the awful sickness consuming me. To this day that journey from shore to shore remains one of my terrible experiences.

But I am not now to detail this journey to Milwaukee, but introduce it only as it was a preparation for this momentous expedition that Fate had decreed for a year later.

While in Wisconsin I had ridden on a railway train; and I must have absorbed much from this wonderful experience and tired myself out in the amazement of it for in the early evening when the train drew into the station the conductor rudely awakened me and pulled me out from under the seats saying the journey was ended and I must get off. I came home to Michigan by a wonderful complicated round-about way that increased my rapidly accumulating fund of knowledge of the then known world. I actually went by steamer to Chicago, a distance of some eighty miles and there I saw the still hot ruins of the great Chicago fire, all my myself; I had the thrilling experience of riding on a street-car (drawn of course by horses) and had stoop up most of the way not to miss any of the sights; and thence by boat again home to South Haven, about another eighty miles. These experiences were more than had befallen any of my companions, and I was properly consulted on travel and asked to describe the wonders I had seen. Many must have been the spell-bound audiences around the corners of the schoolhouse that fall and winter; and these dutiful listeners would themselves go a-travelling, and I should lead them.

It was in the autumn of 1871 that Chicago burned. The smoke from that holocaust had drifted across Lake Michigan in the October days and, combined with the forest fires of the region, had covered the country with haze until the sun was only a rayless dull red disc. Tidings of disaster, ruin and suffering also had drifted into the Michigan frontier, and the settlers, farmers and few townspeople were absorbed in the accounts. Everybody wanted to see the devastation, but few could gratify their curiosity for money was scarce in those days and the journey across the lake in the lumbering side-wheelers was likely to be tempestuous and fearsome. Only hardy

young adventurers led by one who had seen the world and who could avoid all pitfalls were proper candidates for this experience. The pitfalls were many. Suave confidence men were on every corner; you must not venture in shadowy places for they were there waiting for just such people as you and they would get everything you had in your pockets. Stragg painted women would beguile you. The horse-cars would run over you. Persons all dressed up in fine clothes would speak to you without an introduction and they might do awful things to you. Old Mr. Tomlinson had been in Chicago year before last and had actually been chased by a man in the tunnel. Hotel men would lock you in a room and steal your clothes. You must always keep your satchel locked for someone was sure to come in when you were gone and take out your very best things; and you must always carry the key to your room with you so that nobody could get in. When you went to buy anything you must have the exact amount of money ready, for if you gave them more than that they would go out the back door and never come back again; and you must keep your coat buttoned up all the time or they would take away your pocket-book.

It was no wonder, therefore, that there were few serious aspirants for a journey the coming fall to see the ruins of Chicago, although all of the scholars were captivated by the descriptions I gave them and their parents might have been assured that no harm could come to them under my guidance. The number who would surely go dwindled from a dozen or so to eight or nine, to six or seven, and finally to three, - myself of course, and Lucien and Ed. No small part of the reason for the defection of the remaining nine or ten was the fact that money was difficult to get, and this would be an expensive journey. After the most careful figuring it was estimated

that a week's trip could not be made for much less than twenty dollars, - at least one should have that much (part of it sewed into the shirt) in case there should be any slip in the plans or one of the party should get lost in the big city by not doing as I advised.

Lucien and I lived on adjoining farms. We knew the woods and were not afraid of them and we knew how to get pelts and how to prepare them. Our farms had land enough to allow us to grow things for sale to the few people who did not grow their own garden stuff. There would be odd lots of apples and other things for us to sell. And our parents, seeing we were diligent, might now and then slip something into the box for us. But Ed was a "townie". If he set traps or made garden, we did not know it, for he was usually "dressed up" and he wore a collar. Where Ed got his money or how much he had I never knew; but his father kept a store and of course such people have all the money they want.

Then came the great day in late September when the farm work was "caught up", the twenty dollars was saved, and we were ready. Every contingency had been foreseen. I had purchased a paper collar and had extra ones in the satchel; and of course I did not forget the butterfly necktie so popular in those days, the kind that hung on the collar-button by an elastic loop, and that would so well comport with the dignity of a freckled young man of fourteen and experienced in travel who was going out to show his companions "the sights". Ed's parents and mine knew a man who kept a boarding-house on the North Side in Chicago and there it had been arranged we were to stay; and that location had the great advantage of being near the water-works with its wonderful tower that we could climb; I had been to the top of that tower and all winter I had explained the wonders that could be seen from that dizzy height.

The old side-wheel steamer Huron was to sail for Chicago on Sunday night, and we all bought return tickets, ^{to} to come back on the second trip, which would be on Saturday night; and therefore the wonderful journey would last from Sunday until Sunday.

It was a rough and rolling night, but tomorrow would be glorious. We were docked by break of day. The great city was scarcely awake before we were up, our satchels locked and ready. I took the boys out, and up on the bridge near which the steamer had berthed. I told them about all the wonderful craft, and there was the Virginia in which I had come down from Milwaukee a year before and I told Lucien and Ed all about the beautiful furniture and curtains that were inside. The tall buildings stretched away to the south and the north, no end of them, - was ever a city so big and wonderful? And street-cars were running; Lucien was duly impressed, and he saw the iron rails laid down through the middle of the street. Great trucks were rolling by, and the horses hoofs struck fire as they strained up the grade to the bridge. We saw the draw-bridge open and a ship go through. In the distance was the haze of early morning, into which the hurrying wagons vanished. But I told the boys not to be afraid and we would get on the street-car. I signalled the car, and it stopped obedient to my command. I walked right on and told them to follow me. We all sat down, keeping our hands on our satchels, but were soon standing up to see the sights. I told the conductor where I wanted to get off. All too short seemed that journey, when the car stopped and I led the boys to the side-walk. Holding our satchels, we waited to see the car start. The horses strained on their traces, getting their foothold by veering to the side, the great car started, the driver clanged a bell, and we watched it disappear in the distance. Then I led them to ^{the right} through. I showed

them the signs bearing the names of the streets, told them the even numbers of houses were on the one side and the odd numbers on the other; and I led them straight to the proper number although I had never seen the place before!

One of our parents had written long before that we were coming, and the landlord was ready for us. We had breakfast, and although the feeling of the boat was in our stomachs we did full justice to the meal for there was a great day ahead of us. Then we were shown to two rooms, and were assured very positively that our satchels would be perfectly safe. Then I told the boys to sit down on the bed and I would tell them what sights we should see on that day, Monday. First we would walk to the water-works and climb the tower; I knew the way perfectly well, and then -. But Ed demurred. He said he didn't want to climb any water-tower and he guessed he had traveled some and he knew a thing or two and he proposed to do it. This was rank insubordination. I warned him that he might get into trouble, and Lucien thought so too. But Ed was stubborn; he was going alone and he guessed he knew just as much as some other folks. He ~~xxxx~~ would not even tell what he was going to do. He was going to start right out and come back when he wanted to. Then Lucien began to falter. He didn't know as he wanted to climb the water-tower stairs. If Ed was going alone perhaps he would go alone, too. And of course I knew just what to do and I would go alone, also. And so it was agreed that each would start out alone, and get something to eat just where he wanted to, and when we all came back to supper we should tell all the wonderful things we had seen. But I cautioned the boys to be very careful of their money and to keep a hand on the pocket or they might lose the money or be swindled.

So I gave up the water-tower and took a street-car south for the heart of the city. I would go right into the center of things,

and surely I would see something "grand". The car waited for open bridge, and then it crossed to the South Side, that wonderland of store windows and brilliant turnouts and hundreds of men and women all "dressed up". It was Randolph Street. I headed westward, determined to miss nothing. And here the first thing by the corner was a window with the most wonderful things; and in particular there were red and purple butterfly neckties. Nothing was ever so alluring as those purple ornaments; surely I could afford one of them; I would go without anything to eat till supper time for one of those ties; and how envious Lucien would be that night! So in I went. No person was in the front part of the long narrow store, but persons were standing down at the rear. And there was a show-case with a curved glass front, such a case as no one had ever seen before, and inside were more of those purple beauties. But I would not tell them at once just what I wanted, for if I made my wants known too quickly they might charge me more and they might also think that I came from the backwoods somewhere. So I would be perfectly at ease and unconcerned. I leaned against the marvellous case in the most abstracted manner, and threw one foot over the other to prove my familiarity with such scenes, - and crash I went through the show-case!

"That's right, young man, that won't cost you much", called a harsh voice from the depths of the store.

The sun went out of the sky, and the people vanished from the street, the color departed from the neckties, and a cold hard light pervaded the store.

The man came up with a sardonic grin. "About twenty dollars, young man", he said.

I told him I did not have so much money. He grinned again and looked at me with cat-like eyes. I knew that he saw my paper collar and my new necktie and that he looked at my boots - I did not have shoes then - and my clothes, and that he thought I was from the backwoods. He would take every cent I had; but there was nothing else for him to take, no watch, no jewelry, nothing but my money and my jack-knife.

Then the sun glimmered out again, two or three people passed the door, - I would not pay him money, I would buy a new glass! This was consoling; but the neckties were poor colorless rags in the broken case. The man grinned; he guessed not; he would have his money and there was no use in waiting any longer. But the fact that he talked led me to talking too; and I guessed I knew that I had something to say about it. And finally he was willing to make a bargain. I would give him what money I had and then go out and buy a glass, and when the glass was in place he would pay for it and give me back whatever money might be left; and he showed the gold filling in his teeth.

No! I would go out and find a glass front and see that it was put in place; or if he did not agree I would stand right there. He countered by saying that he would send for a man who make show-cases and I would wait till he came. Agreed. I stood by the doorway. I knew that the man's grin was fastened on me. The gold fillings shone brightly. One by one the people passed. A handsome turnout rolled by. Trucks with strange high-piled loads went through the crowds. The things in the store windows began to look good again, - all but the neckties. But there was something heavy in my stomach, something heavy and vacant at the same time; and the buildings were not so tall as they were or the street cries so amusing. Hours and

days and weeks went by, and in an hour or so the man came. The gold teeth shone and the store man grinned as he explained to the show-case man and made frequent nods toward me. The show-case man came to me. Yes, he could repair it; he had a front that would fit; it would cost about eighteen dollars; he would get it and put it in right away. I agreed. By noon the case was as good as ever, the tawdry faded neckties were replaced. I paid the man - nearly eighteen dollars - the store man grinned and said in a taunting way, "Good-by, young man".

Now it was known that I had saved twenty dollars for the journey to Chicago; out of that I had purchased a return ticket on the steamboat. But in fact I had a little extra money sewed in my shirt that no one knew anything about, so that I was not yet dead beat. But I did not want any dinner, and surely I did not want another necktie, nor did I care to ride on the street-cars. I would never tell Ed, but I would tell Lucien and I knew he had a few cents more than a twenty dollar bill left; Lucien and I would "go snucks" and nobody should know.

So I resumed my journey, now past noon. I stopped at the brilliant windows but did not go inside. I watched the crowds, and noted the funny pedlers. Where were Lucien and Ed?

Street by street I went. I turned a corner to Canal Street. There on the curb stood Lucien, the picture of despair, looking as if he had no friend in all the world.

"Hello, Lucien, what's the matter?", I said jauntily.

Without a smile and hardly a look of recognition he replied, pointing backward over his shoulder, "They have got all my money".

I looked, and saw a beautiful jewelry store with three shining golden balls over the doorway. A man stood on something behind the counter and was vehemently selling watches, - solid gold, twenty

jewels, eighteen karats, guaranteed time-keepers, worth twice the money. Another man was showing the watches to the crowd gathered there, some of them the newest style with open face and stem-winder. Lucien had long wanted a watch, and here was his chance. He had bid two dollars and some one then bid more; then he bid again but how much I could not find out for by this time Lucien was confused. It must have been three or four dollars. The man told him to pass up the money. Lucien handed in the twenty dollar bill and the man went on selling watches. Lucien said he asked him for the watch and the change but the man had ordered him out of the store; and there I had found him.

"Never mind, Lucien", I said, "I will make him give it back to you. Come right along with me".

So in I went, with Lucien following. In a stern voice, I said to the man behind the counter, "This is my friend and you have stolen his money. I want you to give it right back to him".

The man paused in his auctioneering, looked at me sidewise while an amused expression came over his red face, then said quietly "Step out of the store, young man, step out". I withdrew to the stone step and paused there, Lucien following. "Get off the step, young man, get off; you must not get in people's way". "I'll have you arrested", I cried, and stepped to the edge of the sidewalk.

"Come on, Lucien", I said, "we will get him arrested. We will find a policeman".

And we found the policeman. He was polite. He would go back with us. He asked the red-faced man what was the trouble. The man was surprised and knew nothing about it whatever. The policeman said we might report the case to headquarters. So we did; and we went from one to another but never got any nearer the money, all the long afternoon.

The autumn day was drawing to a close. We went back to the jewelry store to make a final effort. The man and the buyers were gone, and another man stood quietly in the store; this man knew nothing about it. We realized that the money was lost, and Lucien had only a few cents left and would not be comforted. I tried to cheer him by telling him I had some money left and we also had our tickets home and perhaps we would better go on the Wednesday night boat. We walked to the boarding-house. It was some miles. Our feet began to hurt; we were not used to pavements. We decided on the way to tell Ed. He must have much money, and we would borrow of him.

There were no sights on the way. Everything had become ordinary and noisy and dirty. The buildings did not seem very tall after all. The street-cars jangled and screeched as they went by us, and yet we thought it would be a great relief to ride on one. Wearily and with little conversation we trudged to the boarding-house. We would first find Ed. We went upstairs and there sat Ed, the picture of despair. No, he had not had a good time. He was ready to go home. Then he confessed that he had lost all his money, but he would not tell us how he had lost it.

Three boys sat on the bed and pondered on the miseries of man and imagined that greater horrors were awaiting us. But we would go home on the Wednesday night boat, and our parents would be glad to see us anyway. Yet we had board to pay and two more days ahead of us. What was to be done? The only recourse was the landlord. He knew our parents and he would trust us. We must explain that we had been unfortunate and that we found we needed more money than we had provided. I proposed that Ed make the speech, but Ed retorted that I was the leader of the party. Then I thought that Lucien

would make a first-rate presentation of the case and he had not had much to say anyway, but he was in no mood for the suggesting. They both insisted that I should tell the landlord. We were to ask the landlord up to the room. We were all to sit on the bed and the landlord was to occupy the chair. We rehearsed what should be said to him, and if he gave signs of objecting, the others were to say something at two or three appointed places.

It was a long time before the case was ready. Then I combed my hair, looked in the glass to see that my necktie was on straight, buttoned up my coat and went down stairs to find Mr. Earle the landlord. He greeted me pleasantly; I told him we would be pleased to have him come up stairs for we had some few matters to talk over with him. He would come right away; and his cheery friendly manner made me feel that perhaps the world was not all lost after all.

When he came, three boys sat very prim and erect on the edge of the bed. Would he please take the chair. He hoped we had had a pleasant day. Of course it is hard work to see the sights and young men naturally get tired at night, but we would be ready for another day after a good night's rest. Three boys were silent. Ed shifted nervously, Lucien coughed. I cleared my throat, but no words came. I tried again; something was in my throat that kept the words back; but finally I said slowly,

"Mr. Earle, we have been unfortunate and - and -"

"Yes, yes, I understand", cheerily broke in the landlord.

"Young men are likely to have troubles the first time they come to the city. I know; you have lost your money. Never mind. You will get over it. I am acquainted with your parents and you may stay as long as you like and send me the pay when you get home".

Ed and Lucien relaxed and one of them cackled. Perhaps I thanked Mr. Earle, but probably not; there are times when gratitudes are too deep for thanksgiving. "Come on down stairs, boys", he said; "I know you are hungry". And suddenly we discovered that we were indeed very hungry, and the odor that seemed unpleasant to us a few moments ago all at once turned into the fragrance of potatoes and fried eggs and all their accompaniments. Then three tired boys went to bed without any plans for tomorrow but happy in the thought that they would go home Wednesday night. There was something very comforting about the thought of home; and Chicago, the streets, the people, the turnouts, even the water-tower, were cold and heartless and altogether unlovely. All of them together could not compare with the old cow out there in the barn at home; and she would ask no questions.

Tuesday we were up late. The city looked drab and cold. There was nothing we wanted to see. We walked the streets most of the day, each by himself, and came back at night tired and with sore feet. We had no experiences to relate. We had had no money to lose. I ~~have~~ had given Lucien a few cents, but Ed did not want any. We enjoyed our suppers and the boarding-house was warm.

But Wednesday we were in good spirits for tonight we were going home. Today we would see the big buildings, the city hall, the post office, the Palmer House greatest of hotels, and we would all walk through the tunnels. It was altogether a good day, but tomorrow! How glorious would be the sight of home and how surprised they would be to see us! The boat was to sail at eleven o'clock that night, but we could go on board about nine or ten. We would go directly to bed and be ready to land at daybreak. We packed our satchels, being sure that every article was accounted for.

Early in the evening, with relief in every action, we bid goodby to Mr. Earle, assured him that we would send him the money as soon as we reached home, and started for the long street-car ride to the river. The city looked very strange at night, and also very gay with the brilliant gas lights, some of them with colored globes. Gaily we went to the dock, but what was that? - the dock was bare and dark and empty. No one was about. We found a loafer near by, and he replied that the Huron did not come in this morning, - no, he did not know why.

We walked the docks in the hope of finding someone who could give us any word of comfort; we went up the street and opened the door at two or three places where men were smoking and drinking. Finally a man behind a counter in white jacket and with a beery face told us to go home for no boat had come in and of course none would go out. No, he didn't know why - probably had missed a trip - would be in again on her regular trip Saturday morning.

The great black docks were cold and dreary and the night was dull and the place was damp with bad and homesick smells. There was nothing to do but to go back to Mr. Earle's, and we could not wait to save our few remaining coins by walking for Mr. Earle would be in bed. Our satchels had grown very heavy. The street-cars would never never come. The gaudy lights did not look cheerful. But there was a light in the front hall at the Earle's and he had not gone to bed. He assured us that that was nothing - boats often missed a trip; and he reminded us that we had our return tickets which would be just as good on Saturday night, and that was the time we had planned to go home anyway. It was better it had turned out so, he said, for now we would go to the park and to the end of the car line on the South Side and we could go to Barnum's Museum again -

he would lend us the money for it. We declined the offer of money, however, for we would already be so much in debt that it would take all the next year to repay it; but we were agreed, after all, that there were lots of sights we had not seen; we had not yet been to the slaughter-house or the gas-works, and somewhere there was a foundry where they made things out of red-hot iron.

Thursday and Friday and Saturday were days of weary miles, sore feet, sparkling things in windows we were very sure we did not want, as luscious big cookies and jellyrolls that would have tasted awfully good. But we had watched the great printing-presses from the street where the evening papers were being manufactured, and had gone through the tunnels from the other end, had laughed at the merry-go-rounds in the park, and had seen men asleep in the sun on the benches for the days were now getting cold, so we had much to tell the boys when we got home. We had gone to the lake shore and imagined that when we found a stone or piece of iron to throw we were sending it away out into Lake Michigan directly toward home; and Saturday the Huron would be in for sure.

Early Saturday night the stanchels were locked again, the last goodbys had been said and we were off for the steamer. The wind was high and sharp that night and we could hear the familiar roar when there was "a sea on". We had some feeling of dread and apprehension of the passage that night, but home was across the lashing water and in the morning early we would be there!

We stepped gaily from the street-car, but as we turned the corner toward the dock our hearts sank - no steamboat was there! But she was probably up the river loading and would be down very soon. We could see a light in the office and it would be warm there and we would wait.

We entered the office with spirits high. "When will she be down?", snapped the man at the window, and turned to his desk. We waited, then inquired again. "Laid up; season's over; no more trips this year", he said with a grin. Three stunned boys dropped on the wooden seat. The single lamp was ghastly dim. The place was getting cold. But we had return tickets: she must make another trip. The man grinned; sorry. But, would he give us the money back? No, of course not; he had nothing to do about it. We would have to see "The Company" for that. But who was the "Company," and where did it live, and what could it do for tired homesick boys late on a Saturday night? We suspected that when ~~ziz~~ we were in Chicago the "Company" would be in South Haven, and when we were in South Haven it would be in Chicago. Faith had fallen in everything, and the coming day would be but an extension of the night.

We were at the end of the road. We would not go back to Mr. Earle's; no, we would sleep on the seats just where we were before we would do that; and then the man began to shut up his desk and to make preparations to close the place. The blank dead night was before us. I had a little money, but how would that get us home?

A brilliant idea struck one of us. We would take the train around the lake to St. Joe and then walk the twenty-five miles home. We counted our money - all but Ed and he thought he had enough. When did the train go? We asked the man; he did not know but he was sure it had gone, for it was now late. Why not take the boat across to Benton Harbor and St. Joe: the Messenger went late on Saturday night? We accepted the suggestion. We went to the Messenger wharf; yes, she would sail soon; there might not be available cabins, but cabins did not matter to us even if we could afford them. When the tickets were purchased I had about fifty cents

left. With this we purchased some crackers and cookies at a little stand that remained open for the accomodation of dock-hands and stay-by-nights: we might be hungry in the morning.

It was a rough and cold and sousing night. We were sick and slept only by snatches. Our spirits were chill and low. The hours dragged miserably. It was a dreadful experience.

The early morning brought white seasick banks and bluffs of sand in the chill drear dying autumn; but at least they represented land. We were relieved to quit the ship although we knew not what might be before us. We wanted no breakfast, and had no money to buy it. But I held fast to the paper bag of crackers and cookies.

The nearest way home was along the Lake, on the beach. This was twenty-five miles. But fishermen and others said there were long stretches where the beach was washed away and the water lapped the cliffs and that there was no possibility of walking home by such a route at that time of year. There was no direct highway; the country was new then, and much of it a wilderness.

Only one route remained. We would walk the railway to Bangor, some thirty miles; then take the highway through the new country and the woods ten miles to South Haven. Each with a satchel in his hand, tired, nauseated from the effects of the surging night, we set out to cover the forty miles between ourselves and home.

It was a new railroad and had not been ballasted or filled between the ties. The step from tie to tie was too short and to the second tie was too long, and there were few places at which it was possible to walk outside the ties along the roadbed. So all Sunday long we measured our steps over the weary thirty miles, with feet becoming sore, with nothing in the dull landscape to cheer, with only the endless rails and ties ahead of us like some gargantuan

ladder that had been laid directly in front of us for our ceaseless torment. We were hungry and thirsty, yet had nothing to eat and little inclination for it.

We passed through little villages, drab scattered places that had no comfort for us. It was nearly dusk when we came to Bangor, and the thought of leaving the railroad track forever was a thrilling prospect. Here Ed announced that he had friends in the town and that he would go no further. But Lucien and I were set for home, yet ten miles away. It was good to be on soft ground again, to be able to pick one's way from side to side of the veering rutted roadway, to feel the relief on our blistered feet. The darkness came, the early deep October night with the threat of winter in it, and two weary boys trudged on, changing satchels from hand to hand as one hand was even more tired than the other. Soon we could not see our footing, but there were no gruelling ties over which we must measure our steps, against which we might stub our toes, from which we might skip and sprawl on all fours. We went through forests that still stood for the primeval order of the world, before the settlers had intruded into the place. About half way home we knew we should pass Lucien's uncle's place, a bold farm settled in the wilderness, and there we would find something good to eat. In due time the neighborhood signs indicated that we were approaching it; then appeared the great opening through the trees, and then the outline of the buildings and the light in the windows! It was a cheering reassuring sight.

How we enjoyed the surprise of the folks and how eagerly and even proudly we answered the questions that tumbled over each other from every member of the family! And how soon the table was spread with milk and bread and cold meat and apple pie! Never was such a

feast, in the cool of the autumn night, with the wood fire snapping in the stove! It seemed good, after all, to have been so far from home, to have had unexpected experiences; and the story lost no glory in the telling.

Of course we were to stay all night. The spare room would be ready as soon as we wanted it, for certainly we must be very tired, and we would not be called in the morning; and all the members of the family would be waiting to hear more about our adventures. No! were we not set for home? And six miles would now be but a trifle.

Refreshed and buoyant we swung again into the highway and the darkness. Soon we entered "The Hemlocks", that heavily wooded ridge of sand across which the road wound as if looking for a means of escape. Even in the day time it was an experience to thread these gloomy woods behind the steady tread of oxen's feet, but to pick one's route through them unaided in the dead of night was a wierd adventure. Even to boys who knew the great forests and had slept together in them, and who had roamed miles away into deep places like venturesome hunters of old, these hemlocks held strange shapes and shuddering surprises. We kept close together and silent lest any lurking being might be disturbed and make so much as a shadow of a noise to affright us. Then patches of skylight began to appear through the fearful canopy, and soon we were escaped. How joyously we bounded on, peering at every barn and dark farmhouse as we passed for some mark that would indicate our position!

It was approaching midnight. Yes, there was "The Grove" and behind it the white of Lucien's house. At last! At last! We parted at the corner, I heard Lucien trying to wake up the folks and I went on in the lonely friendless night. Yes, yes, there was the tip of the fir-tree, and beyond it the white gleam of the house,

for Lucien's father and mine had come from the back country of Vermont and had brought their traditions with them, even to the clean white paint of the living-house.

It was no gentle hésitant tapping that awoke the folks that night. The door rattled with the bang, and probably the window too. A response, "Who's there?" completed the ceremonies and the door was opened. No, nobody had worried; boys in those days, like the animals of farms and woods, knew what to do with themselves. "How did you get here?", "Hungry?", then to bed in the old room I had left so long ago (now a week away!) At daylight the familiar call to be up and doing, for there was farm work to be done and the trip to Chicago was ended. A year's saving was ahead, to pay the extra costs of the great journey. There was no time or occasion for a holiday or even a lull in the plan of the days, for all experiences were part of the day's work and should incorporate themselves with it. But all through the corn-husking, the threshing, the gathering of the last crops, the cutting of the wood for the oncoming winter, there were memories running through the mind that lent a new flavor to the work-a-day world; and the boys were always anxious to hear, although the stories were probably not so grand and enthusiastic as those of the preceding winter.

There have been many journeys since then. Strange lands have been covered and geographies have come true. But this was the journey of the journies. It deflated the expanding mind, set the realities of the life in the foreground, disciplined the emotions. Only one such experience does a man have in a lifetime. My companions have departed on the long journey, and so far have they gone that I may never overtake them.