

hasten home to tell pa and ma. They seldom ever got any sympathy and in some cases it was the rule that if a boy got a licking at school, he got another when he got home.

### THIS SYSTEM EVALUATED

To modern minds this seems a harsh, cruel system of child training and discipline. It is entirely outmoded in this day (1953) and is looked upon by many as a relic of heathendom.

Be that as it may, it didn't read that way in Pa's Book. He believed the Bible way was the right way and, as nearly as he could, he put it into practice.

Pa had pretty fair success too, in spite of his antiquated methods. He, himself a poor tenant farmer, raised 13 children to maturity. None of these were ever charged with any crime. Of these one became a lawyer, one a doctor, eight of the tribe taught school at some period of their lives and three became ministers. Of the last three mentioned, I confess I am the least.

### A TRIBUTE TO MY PARENTS

Just here I wish to pay tribute to my departed father and mother. The strict discipline and seemingly harsh chastening we were subjected to in our childhood did indeed seem grievous to us at the time, but now that we have grown up and can see more clearly the purpose of it all, makes us to love and reverence all the more our parents and to give thanks to God for parents who loved us and tried to bring us up in the way of righteousness.

### STRICT DISCIPLINE NEEDED

Since I have grown up and have come to understand depraved human nature better and to see that the natural man is constantly inclined to evil I am all the more grateful that I was brought up under strict discipline.

From what I have heard of my forebears I must have "bad" blood in my veins. I am told that one of my ancestors ate a peach in his prison cell and pitching the seed out at his window, remained in that cell long enough to reach out his hand and pluck peaches from a tree that grew from that seed.

When I study my own self and can still see traces of a tendency to evil, I am sure I was not born an angel.

And had it not been for the firm, guiding hand of a Godly father and mother and the saving Grace of God I myself might be familiar with prison cells.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE YEARS AT OLD BIRDSTON

In the winter before I was eight years old the following March my father moved from the place where I was born to an adjoining county some forty miles to the west. This was in the year 1896. The school and church community into which we moved was called Birdston. Forty miles was a long way in those days. We spoke of this new place to which we had moved as "out west."

The three common modes of travel were: footback, horseback and in a wagon. Moving was done in wagons. Some were drawn by oxen, some by horses and mules. My father had horses as I have already mentioned.

We lived the first year on "Widow Clark's place," and worked her land "on the shares." This means we gave her one fourth of the cotton we raised and one third of the corn and other feed crops as rent for the place.

On the 31st of March that year I was eight years old. Boys of that age were considered old enough to work in the field. At least my father held to this view. Hence this was my first year to make a regular hand in the field. The younger children did the work with the hoes (chopping cotton and hoeing corn) while the older boys did the plowing. When it rained and was too wet to plow all of us with hoes on our shoulders marched off to the fields to hoe. It looked like a battalion of soldiers when Pa, the Commander-in-chief, and all the boys marched off to do battle with "old king crab." (grass)

Crab grass and cockle burs were extra bad that year. It must have been an extra wet year. I recall how the crab grass and cockle burs choked out the little cotton and corn before we could get it hoed out. Day after day we toiled long hours trying to destroy the grass and weeds so the cotton and corn might have a chance to grow. In my childish mind I wondered how it was that the grass and weeds would grow without being planted and cultivated, while the cotton and corn had to be planted