



ONE evening after supper I sat down to enjoy a quiet hour or two, and, in some unaccountable way, I began to think. I soon realized the dangers of such a proceeding—brain fever, fits, loss of hair, and the like—and immediately concluded that if I wished to maintain my dignified appearance and thus establish a credit for wisdom and profundity, I must quit. I, therefore, concluded to let my massive intellect have a mental picnic—to gambol and frolic on the green swards of the future, and wander pensively over the close-cropped meadows of the past.

It looked pretty green ahead—rather brown behind. I began to wonder how it would be ten years from now. In my mental wanderings I soon found myself sitting in a comfortable parlor reading the evening paper. A little fellow comes and leans on my knee.

"Daddy! What's 'lectricity?"

"Electricity! Oh, that's—why, why that's—eh; ask your mother over there."

Mother extends a vote of thanks, and displays a discretion in attempting the definition that would have been very acceptable in a good many writers on the subject.

I forgot to take up my paper. The child's question had started me to wondering what had become of that class of young men who, in '93, had started in at Armour Institute on a four years' course in order that they might be able to answer that very question. It called to mind a remark that was made during the first month of that course:

"Young men, when you are asked, 'What is electricity?' you can very properly answer, 'I don't know.' But before this course is ended we hope you may be able to add, 'But I do know some of the things that it does.'" Thus I found myself wandering over the past. I thought of the goats that got in among the sheep, and I wondered if I was a goat or a sheep.

I wondered what had become of that bright galaxy of stars that constituted the first class—a galaxy like most galaxies, that has had hard work to muster up even a twinkle since.

I began to browse over the brown meadows of the past—here and there finding a spot untouched—an opportunity missed.

"Why," I thought to myself, "even a goat could have seen that."

But hind sight is much clearer than foresight. Opportunities missed stand out very prominently when the rest have been taken.

Here and there I saw a hole in the fence where some member had gone through and wandered off—into matrimony, green fields, tall clover. I ran across a big examination rock that a goat once butted up against and then died. Poor fellow! Peace be to his papers. I found the place where the whole flock took a run and jumped over the fence one day. I saw the tall grass in which we frisked and gamboled for a few days just before being led out through the big gate into the woods and told to scatter. Scatter we did—briars, bushes and tall trees. Here and there you could hear a plaintive bleat that came from farther and farther on, and finally ceased.

At this juncture I was called back "to earth" by the heroic struggle of my room-mate with what seemed imminent death by strangulation, caused by the sticking of an unusually large snore. My reverie made me feel sheepish. I concluded to retire, and went to sleep, wondering if it were possible for a goat to feel sheepish.