

**THE HOOSIER
SCHOOL-MASTER:
A NOVEL**

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The Hoosier school-master: a novel by Edward Eggleston

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EDWARD EGGLESTON

**THE HOOSIER
SCHOOL-MASTER:
A NOVEL**



STANDING GUARD OVER HIMSELF. See page 131.

THE
Hoosier School-Master.

A NOVEL.

BY
EDWARD EGGLESTON.

WITH TWENTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE.

I MAY as well confess, what it would be affectation to conceal, that I am more than pleased with the generous reception accorded to this story as a serial in the columns of *Hearth and Home*. It has been in my mind since I was a Hoosier boy to do something toward describing life in the back-country districts of the Western States. It used to be a matter of no little jealousy with us, I remember, that the manners, customs, thoughts, and feelings of New England country people filled so large a place in books, while our life, not less interesting, not less romantic, and certainly not less filled with humorous and grotesque material, had no place in literature. It was as though we were shut out of good society. And, with the single exception of Alice Cary, perhaps, our Western writers did not dare speak of the West otherwise than as the unreal world to which Cooper's lively imagination had given birth.

I had some anxiety lest Western readers should take offense at my selecting what must always seem an exceptional phase of life to those who have grown up in the more refined regions of the West. But nowhere has the School-master been received more kindly than in his own country and among his own people.

Some of those who have spoken kindly of the School-master and his friends, have suggested that the story is an autobi-

ography. But it is not, save in the sense in which every work of art is an autobiography, in that it is the result of the experience and observation of the writer. Readers will therefore bear in mind that not Ralph nor Bud nor Brother Sodom nor Dr. Small represents the writer, nor do I appear, as Talleyrand said of Madame de Staël, "disguised as a woman," in the person of Hannah or Mirandy. Some of the incidents have been drawn from life; none of them, I believe, from my own. I should like to be considered a member of the Church of the Best Licks, however.

It has been in my mind to append some remarks, philological and otherwise, upon the dialect, but Professor Lowell's admirable and erudite preface to the Biglow Papers must be the despair of every one who aspires to write on Americanisms. To Mr. Lowell belongs the distinction of being the only one of our most eminent authors and the only one of our most eminent scholars who has given careful attention to American dialects. But while I have not ventured to discuss the provincialisms of the Indiana backwoods, I have been careful to preserve the true *usus loquendi* of each locution, and I trust my little story may afford material for some one better qualified than I to criticise the dialect.

I wish to dedicate this book to Rev. Williamson Terrell, D.D., of Columbus, Indiana, the Hoosier that I know best, and the best Hoosier that I know. This is not the place to express the reverence and filial affection I feel for him, but I am glad of the opportunity of saying that there is no one to whom Southern Indiana owes a larger debt. Perhaps my dedication to so orthodox a man may atone for any heresies in the book.

BROOKLYN, December, 1871.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	I.—A Private Lesson from a Bull-dog.....	11
CHAPTER	II.—A Spell Coming.....	23
CHAPTER	III.—Mirandy, Hank, and Shocky.....	36
CHAPTER	IV.—Spelling down the Master.....	39
CHAPTER	V.—The Walk Home.....	56
CHAPTER	VI.—A Night at Pete Jones's.....	66
CHAPTER	VII.—Ominous Remarks of Mr. Jones.....	74
CHAPTER	VIII.—The Struggle to the Dark.....	77
CHAPTER	IX.—Has God Forgotten Shocky?.....	81
CHAPTER	X.—The Devil of Silence.....	85
CHAPTER	XI.—Miss Martha Hawkins.....	92
CHAPTER	XII.—The Hard-shell Preacher.....	101
CHAPTER	XIII.—A Struggle for the Mastery.....	109
CHAPTER	XIV.—A Criele with Bud.....	115
CHAPTER	XV.—The Church of the Best Licks.....	121
CHAPTER	XVI.—The Church Militant.....	126
CHAPTER	XVII.—A Council of War.....	133
CHAPTER	XVIII.—Odds and Ends.....	137
CHAPTER	XIX.—Face to Face.....	141
CHAPTER	XX.—God Remembers Shocky.....	145
CHAPTER	XXI.—Miss Nancy Sawyer.....	151
CHAPTER	XXII.—Pancakes.....	156
CHAPTER	XXIII.—A Charitable Institution.....	163
CHAPTER	XXIV.—The Good Samaritan.....	170
CHAPTER	XXV.—Bad Wooing.....	173
CHAPTER	XXVI.—A Letter and its Consequences.....	178
CHAPTER	XXVII.—A Loss and a Gain.....	181
CHAPTER	XXVIII.—The Flight.....	184
CHAPTER	XXIX.—The Trial.....	191

CHAPTER XXX.—"Brother Sodom".....	202
CHAPTER XXXI.—The Trial Concluded.....	206
CHAPTER XXXII.—After the Battle.....	217
CHAPTER XXXIII.—Into the Light.....	221
CHAPTER XXXIV.—"How it Came Out".....	224

ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY FRANK BEARD.

Standing Guard over Himself. (Page).....	(Frontispiece)
First Acquaintance with Flat Creek. (Page).....	10
Old Jack Means, the School Trustee. (Page).....	13
Mirandy Means.....	27
"'Gt a Plenty while you're a Gittin', ' says I'.....	29
Hank Banta's Improved Plunge-bach. (Page).....	36
Squire Hawkins.....	44
Jeems Phillips.....	48
"Next." (Page).....	54
Hannah. (Page).....	58
"You're a purty Gal, a'n't you? You air!" (Page).....	62
Pete Jones. (Page).....	68
Bull.....	75
Shocky.....	82
Dr. Small and Granny Sanders. (Page).....	89
Miss Martha Hawkins.....	93
"We're all Selfish akordin' to my Tell." (Page).....	97
"Come, Buck-ah!".....	106
Fire and Brimstone.....	113
Bud.....	117
The Church of the Best Licks.....	124
"Come on!" cried Bud.....	129
The Roan Colt's Best Licks. (Page).....	150
Miss Nancy Sawyer.....	154
Potato on One Side.....	165
"God ha'n't Forgot us, Mother!".....	168
Bud Wooling.....	175
Hannah with a White, White Face. (Page).....	186
Walter Johnson.....	204

