

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK

RECOLLECTIONS - 1857 - 1938

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CHAPTER I

MY START IN LIFE

If it had not been for the Panic of 1857 and the long Depression which followed it I should have been born in Taylor County, Iowa. That was what my father and mother had planned. In fact, however, I was born in a log house in Erie County, Pennsylvania, on November 5th, 1857. It was the home of my pioneering maternal grandfather Walter Raleigh McCullough. No home in which I have ever lived has left me with pleasanter memories of itself. It was a Cape Cod house, a story and a half high, built of matched hewn logs, its floors of narrow fitted oak planks, its walls ceiled, its "up stairs" finished, a big fireplace in its living room. There were spreading frame out-buildings to accommodate the multiple activities of a farm which was in my time a going concern. I remember best the big cool milk room with its dozens of filled pans on the racks, its huge wooden bowl heaped with yellow butter on its way to the firkin, its baskets piled with eggs, its plump dressed poultry ready for market.

Like all young married people of pioneer ancestry and experience having their way to make my parents wanted land. Land of their own combined with what my father could earn at his profession as a teacher and his trade as a joiner, meant future security. It was the proved way of the early American.

After much looking about in Northeastern ^(?) Pennsylvania where the families of both of them were settled, they had decided that the West offered greater opportunity and so in the Spring of 1857, a year after his marriage, my father, Franklin Sumner Tarbell by name, started out to find a farm. He had but little money in his pocket and the last one hundred fifty miles of his search were made on foot. How enthusiastic he was over the claim he at last secured! His letters tell of the splendid dome of sky which covered it, of the far view over the prairie, of marvellous flowers and birds, of the daily passing along the horizon of a stream of covered wagons, settlers bound for California, Pikes Peak, Kansas, Nebraska and some of them he found were earlier ^{Iowa} settlers, leaving the very state ~~of Iowa~~ which for the moment seemed to him the gate to Paradise.

He set himself gaily at breaking land, building the house for mother, working in a saw mill to pay for the lumber. He did it alone, even to the making of window frames and doors. I know how he did it - whistling from morning 'til

night, mischief and tenderness chasing each other across his blue eyes as he thought of my mother's coming, their future together.

The plan they had made provided for her going west with their household goods in August. The money was arranged for, so they thought, but before it was taken from the bank the panic came and every county bank in Pennsylvania was closed. There was no money anywhere, nothing to do but my mother to stay where she was while my father struggled to earn by teaching and carpenter work the money which would bring us on. But the panic reached Iowa, dried up its money supply. People were living by barter, my father reported. What a heart-breaking waiting it was for them coming as it did after an engagement of six years every week of which they had both found long.

The fall and winter of 1857, the spring and summer of 1858 passed. Still there was no money to be had and then in the Fall of 1858 father started out to teach his way to us. Before he found a school he had walked one hundred and eighty miles - walked until his shoes and clothes were worn and tattered. It was "shabby and broke," as he had written it would be that he finally in the Spring of 1859 when I was a year and a half old made his way back to my mother still living in the log house in Erie County.

According to the family annals I deeply resented the intimacy between the strange man and my mother

4

so far my exclusive possession. Flinging my arms about my mother, so the story went, I cried, "Go away bad man."

The problem for my father now was to earn money to take us back to Iowa, for my mother to continue her patient waiting. For a dozen years before her marriage she had taught in district schools in Erie County, as well as in a private school of an Aunt in Poughkeepsie, New York. She was a good teacher but she was married! She must stay with her family then until her husband had a home ready for her, so ruled my grandmother chock-full as she was of the best and severest New England rules for training girls to be ladies. You might live in a log house. You were reminded loftily that many of the "best families" had done that while "settling the country" but you must "never forget who you are!" "Remember that your father is a McCullough of an ancient and honored Scotch clan, his mother a Raleigh of Sir Walter's family, that I am a Seabury, my great uncle the first Episcopal Bishop in the United States, my mother a Welles, her father on Washington's staff." It was a litany her four daughters all had to learn!

Exciting employment waited my father. For six or seven years before his marriage when he was earning his way through the Academy of Jamestown, New York, he spent his summers running a fleet of three or more flatboats of merchandise to be delivered at trading points on the Allegheny and the Ohio Rivers - always as far South as Louisville -

1

sometimes even up the Mississippi. "Captain Tarbell", his small and jolly crew called him. The River was the chief highway of a great country. To its waters came the pioneer and trader, the teacher, the preacher, the scientist, the prophet, as well as every species of gambler, charlatan, speculator, swindler, cut-throat. My father's stories of what he saw were among the joys of my childhood;- a great fleet of steam-boats burning at Pittsburgh, a hanging, river churches and preachers and show boats, children who never knew other homes than a boat, towns, cities and what he loved best of all - nights floating quietly down the great Ohio, the moon above. Not strange that after those cruel months of working his way back to us he should have seized this opportunity again to take charge of his Jamestown friend's river enterprise.

The trip went well and at the end of August 1859 he turned back, money in his pocket to take us to Iowa. But as he journeyed Eastward he was met everywhere by excitement. A man had drilled a well near a lumber settlement in Northwestern Pennsylvania, Titusville it was called, drilled for oil and found it, quantities of it. My father, like most men who travelled up and down the Allegheny and Ohio in those days, was familiar with crude petroleum. He had used it to grease creaking machinery and, too, as a medicine - a general cure all - Seneca oil, used it for the colds, the fever and ague, the weak lungs which had afflicted him from

boyhood. He knew, too, that there were those who believed that if rock-oil, as it was called, could be found in sufficient quantities it would make a better light than the coal and whale oils then in common use. The well near Titusville producing ^{twenty} ~~five~~ to one hundred barrels a day, nobody knew how much, proved that if other reservoirs or veins could be opened by such drilling there would be oil to light the world.

Rumors were exciting and grew in the telling. The nearer he came to Erie County the bigger the well. He met men on foot and horseback making their way in. Something to look into before he started back to Iowa. He looked into it, not merely at Titusville with its first well, but he went down the stream on which the first well stood and where other wells were already drilling. Oil Creek it was called. What if they continued to get oil, my father asked himself, where would they put it? They would need tanks, tanks in numbers. He believed he could build one that would hold five hundred or more barrels. He said as much to the owner of a well drilling down the creek near the mouth of a tributary called Cherry Run. "Show me a model that won't leak and I'll give you an order." He lost no time in making his model and got his order.

Here was a chance for a business if oil continued to be found, a business with more money in it than he had ever dreamed of making. Moreover, he knew all the elements of that business, had had experience in handling them. Tank building called for his trade, that of the joiner. Iowa could wait.

By the summer of 1860 he had his shop going at the mouth of Cherry Run near the well for which he had received his first order. The shop running, he built what was to be my mother's first home of her own, the one for which with infinite confidence and infinite pain she had been waiting since her marriage four years and a half before.

It was in October of 1860 that my father drove his little family over the Allegheny foothills some forty miles. There were two of us children now for in July of 1860 my brother William Walter Tarbell, named from his two grandfathers had been born. Close beside his shop father had built a shanty. It had a living room with an alcove, ^afamily bedroom with trundle beds for us children and a kitchen. A covered passage led into the shop which was soon to be the joy of my life for here were great piles of long odorous curly pine shavings into which to roll, to take naps, to trim my gown and in which to search day in and day out for the longest, the curliest.

But these shavings and my delight in them were a later discovery. My first reaction to my new surroundings was one of acute dislike. It aroused me to a revolt which is the first thing I am sure I remember about my life - the birth in me of conscious experience. This revolt did not come from natural depravity, on the contrary it was a natural and righteous protest against having the life and home

I had known and which I loved taken away without explanation and a new scene, a new set of rules which I did not like suddenly imposed.

My life in the log house had been full of joyous interests. There were turkeys and ducks and chickens, lambs and colts and calves, kittens and puppies - never could I be without playmates. There were trees and woods and flowers in summer - a great fireplace with pop corn and maple candy in winter and I an only grandchild the center of it all. But what had I come to? As mother realized a place of perils, a creek rushing wildly at the side of the house, great oil pits sunken in the earth not far away, a derrick inviting to adventurous climbing at the door. No wonder that warnings and scoldings and occasional switchings dogged my steps. Moreover, I was no longer the center of the circle, a baby filled her arms - "my" arms! A man still strange gave me orders and claimed her - "my" mother.

It was not to be endured and so one November day just after my third birthday I announced I was going to leave. "Going back to grandma." "Very well," my mother said. I knew the way the men went when they walked away from the shop and I followed it, but not far. Across the valley in which we lived ran an embankment. To my young eyes it was as high as a mountain and the nearer I came the higher it looked, the higher and blacker. And then suddenly as I came to its foot I realized that I had never been on the other side, that I did not know the

way to grandma's. I knew I was beaten and sat down to think it over. Never in all these years since have I faced defeat, known that I must retreat that I have not been again that little figure with the black mountain in front of it, a little figure looking longingly at a shanty dim in the growing night but showing a light in the window.

Finally I turned slowly back to the house and sat down on the steps. It seemed a long time before the door opened and my mother in a surprised voice said:

"Why, Ida, I thought you had gone to Grandma's."

"I don't know the way," I said humbly.

"Very well, come in and get your supper."

Respect for my mother, her wisdom in dealing with hard situations was born then. I was not to be punished; I was not to be laughed at; I was to be accepted. Years later she told me of the unhappy hour she spent watching me go off so sturdily, to come back so droopingly, watching with tears running down her cheeks, but determined I must learn my lesson. It was a bit of wisdom she never ceased to practice. My mother always let me carry out my revolts, return when I would and no questions asked.

In the three years we spent in the shanty on the flats there is but one other episode that had for me the same self-revealing quality as this revolt. It was my first attempt to test by experiment. The brook which ran beside the house was rapid, noisy, in times of high water dangerous for

children. Watching it, fascinated, I observed that some things floated on the surface, others dropped to the bottom. It set me to wondering what would happen to my little brother, then in dresses, if dropped in. I had to find out. There was a foot bridge near the house and one day when I supposed I was unobserved I led him onto it and dropped him in. His little skirts spread out and held him up. Fortunately at that moment his screams brought a near-by workman and he was rescued. I suppose I was spanked, of that I remember nothing, only the peace of satisfied curiosity in the certainty that my brother belonged to the category of things which floated.

What I really remember of these early days concerns only my personal discoveries, discoveries of the kind of person I was, of the nature of things around me which stirred my curiosity. Whether or not a childish experience was deep enough to etch itself on my memory or if I only knew of it from hearing it told and retold I always decide by this test: if I really remember it the happening is set in a scene, a scene with a background, exits, entrances and properties. I know I remember my revolt and defeat because I always see it as an act on a stage, every detail, every line clear.

Of the pregnant, bizarre and often tragic development going on about me I remember nothing, yet the uncertainties and dangers of it were part of our daily fare.

Whether there was oil in the ground in sufficient quantities to justify the prodigious effort being made to find it nobody could know. If not the shop and shanty were a dead loss - another long delay on the road to Iowa. All that winter of 1860 and 1861 my father was asking himself that question, but in 1861 it was answered when up and down Oil Creek a succession of flowing wells came in, wells producing from three hundred to three thousand barrels a day - "fountain wells" - "Spouters" - they called them from the great streams which rose straight into the air, one to two hundred feet to fall in a oily green-black spray over the surrounding landscape.

Deadly, dangerous, too, as the Oil Region learned to its sorrow by a disaster almost at the door steps of our Cherry Run home. It was the evening of April 17, 1861. The news of the Fall of Sumter had just reached the settlement, remote as it was from rail and telegraph connections, and all the men of the town had gathered after supper at one place or another to discuss the situation. What did it mean? What would the President do? My father was sitting on a cracker barrel in the one general store. As he and his friends talked a man ran in to tell the company that a fresh vein of oil had been struck in a well on the edge of the town. Its owner Henry Rouse had been drilling it deeper, the oil was spouting over the derrick. Great news for the community still uncertain

as to the extent of its field. Great news for my father. It meant tanks. Everybody jumped to run to the well when the earth was rocked by a mighty explosion. A careless light had ignited the gas which had spread from the flowing oil until it had enveloped everything in the vicinity. Before my father reached the place nineteen men, among them his friend the well-owner Henry Rouse had been burned to death. How many had escaped and in what condition nobody knew.

Late that night as my father and mother grieved they heard outside their door a stumbling something. Looking out they saw before them a terrible sight, a man burned and swollen beyond recognition and yet alive, alive enough to give his name - one of their friends. My mother took him in - the alcove became a hospital. For weeks she nursed him - the task of the woman in a pioneer community, a task which she accepted as her part. Thanks to her care the man lived. The relics of that tragedy were long about our household - comforts and bedquilts she had pieced and quilted for Iowa stained with linseed oil, but too precious to be thrown away.

But all this is as something read in a book, something which has become more poignant as the years have gone by and I am able to feel what those long weeks of care over that broken man meant to my mother.

The business prospered, the shop grew. Little do I remember of all this, not the increased comforts of life nor moving into the new home on the hillside above the town by this time known as Rouseville. But the change in the outlook on the world about me I do remember. We had lived on the edge of an active oil farm and oil town. No industry of man in its early days has ever been more destructive of beauty, order, decency, than the production of petroleum. All about us rose derricks, squatted engine houses and tanks; the earth about them was streaked and damp with the dumpings of the pumps which brought up regularly the sand and clay and rock through which the drill had made its way. If oil was found, if the well flowed, every tree, every shrub, every bit of grass in the vicinity was coated with black grease and left to die. Tar and oil stained everything. If the well was dry a rickety derrick, piles of debris, oily holes were left, for nobody ever cleaned up in those days.

But we left the center of this disorder, went to the hillside, looked down on it and as for me I no longer saw it for opposite us was a hillside so steep it had never been drilled. It was clothed with the always changing beauty of trees and shrubs, the white shad flowers and the red maples, the long garlands of laurel and azalea in the Spring, the green of every shade through the summer, the crimson and gold, russets and tans of the Fall, the frost and snow draped trees of the Winter. I did not see the derricks for the trees.

The hillside above our house and the paths which led around it became a play ground in which I revelled. I was not the only one about to forget the ugliness of the Valley and remember through life the beauty of those hillsides. Years later I was to know fairly well one of the great figures in the development of oil, Henry H. Rogers, when I knew him the active head of the Standard Oil Company. We discovered in talking over the early days of the industry that at the very moment I was beginning to run the hills above Rouseville he was running a small refinery on the Creek and living on a hillside just below ours, separated only by a narrow ravine along each side of which ran a path. "Up that path," Mr. Rogers told me, "I used to carry our washing every Monday morning, go for it every Saturday night. Probably I've seen you hunting flowers on your side of the ravine. How beautiful it was; I was never happier." That reminiscence of Henry H. Rogers is only one of several reasons I have for heartily liking as fine a pirate as ever flew his flag in Wall Street.

Soon after we went to the home on the hill the oil country at that moment ~~xxx~~ suffering a depression was stirred by the news that a great well had been struck ten miles from Rouseville at Pithole, an isolated territory to which the veteran in the business had never given a thought. The news caused wild scramble. A motley procession of men

with and without money, with and without decency seeking leases, jobs, opportunity for adventure, excitement and swindling travelled on foot or horseback up the Valley of Cherry Run in full view from our house.

Father was one of the first to take advantage of the Pithole discovery, putting up his tank shops there and doing a smashing business during the short life of the field. Its "bottom fell out" in 1869. He rode back and forth from his shop on a little saddle horse - Flora - beautiful creature - usually with considerable sums of money in his pocket. The country was full of ruffians and stories of robbery were common. When he was very late in returning mother would walk the floor wringing her hands. I could never go to bed those nights until he had returned, not because I felt her anxiety but because of the excitement and mystery of it. I carried a dramatic picture of him in mind, a kind of Paul Revere dashing along the lonely road, the rain on Flora's neck, his pistol in hand. But he always came home, always brought the money he had collected which he must keep in the tiny iron safe in his office annexed to the house until he could carry it to Oil City where he banked.

My life became rapidly more conscious now that I had left the flats behind, experience deeper. Here was my first realization of tragedy. It was the Spring of 1868. Father was coming up the hill, mother and I were watching for

him. Usually he walked with a brisk step, head up, but now his step was slow, his head dropped. Mother ran to meet him crying, "Frank, Frank, what is it?" I did not hear the answer but I shall always see my mother turning at his words, burying her face in her apron, running into her room sobbing as if her heart would break. And then the house was shut up and crepe was put on all the doors and I was told that Lincoln was dead.

From that time the name spelt tragedy and mystery. Why all this sorrow over a man we had never seen, who did not belong to our world - my world? Was there something beyond the circle of hills within which I lived that concerned me? Why, and in what way did this mysterious outside concern me?

I was soon to learn that tragedy did not come always from a mysterious beyond. What a chain of catastrophes it took to teach the man and women who were developing the new industry, the constant risk they ran in handling either crude or refined oil. They came to our very door. When a neighboring woman hurrying to build a fire in her cook stove poured oil on the wood before she had made sure there was no live coals in the fire box. An awful explosion occurred and she and two women who ran to her assistance were burned to a crisp. I heard horrified whisperings about me. The refusal to tell me what had happened aroused a terrible

curiosity. I gathered that the bodies were laid out in a house not far away and when nobody was looking stole in to look at them. Unbroken sleep for me for nights.

The mystery of death finally came into our household. There had been a fourth child born in the house on the hill - "little Frankie" we always called him - blue-eyed like my father, the sunniest of us all. For weeks one season he lay in the parlor fighting for life - scarlet fever - a disease more dreaded by mothers in those days than even small pox. Daily I stood helpless, agonized, outside the door behind which little Frankie lay screaming and fighting the Doctor. I remember even today how long the white marks lasted on the knuckles of my hands after the agony behind the closed door had died down and my clinched fists relaxed.

Little Frankie died, became a pathetic and beloved tradition in the household. My little sister who had made a terrible and successful fight against the disease told me how she could not understand why father and mother cried when they talked of Frankie.

"If they want to see him," she thought, "why do they not put a ladder from the top of the hill up to the sky into Heaven and climb up. If Frankie is there God would let them see him."

I have said that my first recollections of Lincoln was the impression made by the tragedy of his death.

That this was so was not for the lack of material on him in our household. My father was an ardent Republican. Back in '56 he had written from his river trip, "Hurrah for Fremont and Dayton." As soon as he had had more money than the actual needs of the family required he had subscribed to Harpers Weekly, Harpers Monthly, the New York Tribune, began to buy books. Of all of these I remember only the Weekly and Monthly. My brother and I used to lie by the hour flat on our stomachs, heels in the air, turning over the exciting pages of the War numbers, but none of it went behind my eyes - none concerned me. Only now when I go back to the files of those old papers there is a whispering of something once familiar.

Of the Monthly I have more distinct recollections. It was in these that I first began to read freely. Many a private picnic did I have with the Monthly under the thorn bushes on the hillside above Oil Creek, a lunch basket at my side. There are still in the family store room copies of Harpers Monthly stained with lemon pie dropped when I was too deep into a story to be careful. Here I read my first Dickens, my first Thackeray, my first Marian C. Evans, as George Eliot then signed herself. My first Wilkie Collins came to me in the Weekly. Great literature - all pirated I was to learn long later. My friend Viola Roseboro tells me that at this time she was reading Harper's pirated paper-bound copies of Dickens. It was much later that they came my way.

However, all the reading I was doing was not so respectable. On the sly I was devouring a sheet forbidden to the household - the Police Gazette - the property of the men around the house, for we had men around the house, men of various degrees of acceptability to my mother, but all necessary to my father's enterprises. The business had grown; it meant a clerk, bosses, workmen. In a pioneer community like ours it was hard to find comfortable living quarters for single men. My father and mother both brought up on farms accepted as a matter of course the housing and feeding of hired men. So it was in line with their experience as well as with the necessities of the case that our household was arranged to take care of a certain number of men connected with my father's business. For sleeping quarters a bunk house was built on the hillside; mornings and evenings they sat at the family table. This accepting men of whose manners and ways she often heartily disapproved was distasteful to my mother, but she had not been a school teacher for nothing and she applied her notions of discipline. She would not have swearing, drinking, rough manners and certainly she would not have had the Police Gazette in the house. But the men had it and now and then when my brother and I played about the bunk house it was easy for me to pick up a copy and slip it away where my dearest girl friend and I looked unashamed and entirely unknowing on its rough and brutal pictures. If they were

obscene we certainly never knew it. There was a wanton gaiety about the women, a violent rakishness about the men, wicked we supposed, but not the less interesting for that.

One reason the Police Gazette fascinated me was that it pictured a kind of life I knew to be flourishing in a neighboring settlement, a settlement where my father had shops run by a boss who with his sister were family friends and where I was often allowed to visit. This settlement, Petroleum Center, had by something like general consent become Oil Creek's "sink of inequity."

The discovery of oil, the growing certainty that it was the beginning of a new industry, that money was flowing into the Oil Regions quickly brought an invading host of men and women seeking fortunes. It was a new and rich field for tricksters, swindlers, exploiters of vice in every known form. They were soon setting up shops in every settlement and to the credit of the manhood of the Oil Regions ^{usually} being driven out by self-directed vigilantes.

At Rouseville a "joy boat" which made its way up the Creek that first winter and tied up near my father's shop was cut loose in the middle of the night after its arrival. Its visitors found themselves floating down the Allegheny River the next morning and obliged to walk back. From that time open vice shunned the town. But when wealth poured out of the ground at Petroleum Center there was too great excitement

to think of order, decency. Before it was realized the town was alive with every known form of wantonness and wickedness. By the time I was allowed to visit our friends there I saw from the corner of my eye as I walked sedately the length of the street saloons, dance halls, brothels and I noted many curious things. The house where I visited stood on a slope over-looking one of the most notorious dance halls of the Oil Regions - Gus Reil's. Often I left my bed at night and watched that long low building from which rose loud laughter, ribald songs, shouts, curses. Later horror was added to Gus Reil's fascination for here a Rouseville boy was shot one night.

If Petroleum Center was giving me an opportunity to feed my curiosity about things in the world of which I was not supposed to know it happened also to be the indirect means of awaking my interest in the stars, one of the most beautiful interests of my youth. My father had seen the early passing of the wooden oil tank, the coming of the iron tank and had used his capital to become an oil producer. One of his first investments had been in an oil farm on the hills above the wicked town which so excited my curiosity. His partner in this venture, E. M. Hess, lived on this farm with his family. In that family was a daughter about my age and bearing my name - Ida. We became friends and visited back and forth as chance offered. My chance came often when

Mr. Hess riding with a companion over the hills to Rouseville to consult with father dropped his companion and took me back with him usually at night. A fine pair of saddle horses he had - "High Fly" and "Shoe Fly." My first experiences in horse-back riding was following him on "Shoe Fly" over the hills after dark.

Mr. Hess was an altogether unusual man, educated, with a vein of poetry in him. As we rode he would stop every now and then to name the stars, trace the constellations, repeat the legends. My first consciousness of space, its beauty, its something more than beauty, came then.

Not a bad counter-balance for what I was gathering in the town below the farm on the hill and seeing reproduced in the Police Gazette which so perfectly pictured its activities.

But there were other correcting forces at work on me. The men who made up the vigilantee committee to make Rouseville difficult for commercialized vice - my father one of them - set themselves early to establishing civilizing agencies - first a church.

It was decided by the men and women who were to build and support this church that it should be of the denomination of which there were the largest number in the community. The Methodists had the numbers and so my father

and mother who were Congregationalists became and remained Methodists. Their support was active. We did not merely go to church; we stayed to class meeting; we went to Sunday School where both father and mother had classes; we went to Wednesday night, or was it Thursday night Prayer Meeting. And when there was a revival we went every night. In my tenth or eleventh year I "went forward" not from a sense of guilt but because everybody else was doing it. My sense of sin came after it was all over and I was tucked away in bed at night. I had been keenly conscious as I knelt at the Mourners' bench that the long crimson ribbons which hung from my hat must look beautiful on my cream colored coat. The realization of that hypocrisy cut me to the heart. I knew myself a sinner then and the relief I sought in prayer was genuine. I never confessed. It wasn't the kind of sin other converts talked about. But it aroused self-observation; I learned that often when I was saying the polite or proper thing I was thinking quite differently. For a long time it made me secretly unhappy thinking that in me alone ran an underground river of thought. Later I began to suspect that other people were like this, that always there flowed a stream of unspoken thought under the spoken thought. It made me wary of strangers.

A side of my life which moves me deeply now, as I think back, was the continuous effort of my father and mother to give me what were called advantages, to use their increasing income to awaken and develop in me a taste for things which they had always been denied. They wanted music in the household and our grandest possession became a splendid Bradbury square piano - a really noble instrument - with one of the finest, mellowest tones that I have ever heard in a piano.

A music teacher turned up in the community and I was at once set at five finger exercises, and I was kept at them and all that follows them for many years, but I found no joy in what I was doing. It is possible that with different teachers from those available there might have been a spring touched for untrained as I am I am not without a certain appreciation of music.

I mastered the mechanics of piano playing well enough, however, to become later one of the regular performers in the High School in the town to which we were to move - Titusville, Pennsylvania. I remembered nothing of this until two of my old friends in Titusville, school chums, told me that I was one of the three or four who played the piano for the morning exercises, that I sometimes played my show pieces, and that on one occasion I was an actor in a scene which they recall with glee. They tell me I was playing a duet

with a classmate. We either lost our place or did not agree as to time - stopped entirely - argued the matter out - began over and this time went through without dissension but I have only this second-hand memory of my contribution to the musical life of the Titusville High School.

I do remember, however, the rebuke of the Superintendent of our Schools, Professor Bosley, who sensing my indifference to music said to me one day, "Ida, a woman without music is like a flower without perfume."

I remember the efforts of my father and mother to show me something of the outside world much more clearer than I do those to awaken my interest in books and music. There were little trips, once as far as Cleveland, the whole family - the marvel of the "best hotel" - of new hats and coats and armfuls of toys. There were summers at the farm, only thirty miles away. Best remembered and most enjoyed were the all day excursion picnics. No one can understand the social life of a great body of the American people in the latter part of the 19th Century without understanding the hold the picnic had on them. The Tarbell household took the picnic so seriously that it had a special equipment of stout market baskets, tin cups and plates, steel knives and forks, tin spoons, worn napkins (the paper ones were then unheard of.) Their menus were as fixed as that for a Thanksgiving dinner: - veal loaf, cold tongue, hard boiled eggs - "two apiece" - buttered rusks, spiced peaches, jelly, cucumber pickles, chow

chow, cookies, doughnuts (we called them fried cakes) and a special family cake. And you ate until you were full.

Our grandest picnic excursions in those days were to Chautauqua Lake, a charming sheet of water only some fifty miles from home. Near the head of the Lake lay an old Chautauqua County town, Mayville; at its foot Jamestown where my father for several years had been a student in the Academy and from which in vacations he had gone on his annual trips down the Ohio. Loaded with big baskets of lunch we took an early train to Mayville, changed there to a little white steamer: zig-zagged the length of the lake, twenty or so miles, stopping at Point after Point. We ate our lunch en route and at Jamestown went up town to drink a bottle of "pop." And then came the slow return home, where we arrived after dark exhausted by pleasure.

Three or four miles from Mayville on the West side of the Lake jutted a wooden promontory - Fair Point - the site in those days of a Methodist camp meeting, and here we sometimes stopped for the day. We never liked it so well as going to Jamestown, neither did Father.