

I received my orders from Morgan about the 23d of January, and prepared to return with other letters. We started up one branch of the Chicago river, and after leaving this we followed the Des Plaines, taking pretty much the same way we had come; meeting with Indians and incidents, all of which were interesting, but only one of which I'll tell you now.

It happened that after sun-down one day, as the twilight was coming on, we had arranged our camp for the night in the edge of a grove, and the cheerful camp-fire was casting its rays upon the trunks of the neighboring trees, when Boiseley seemed attracted by something to a large oak, that stood in the light of the fire. "What's there, Boiseley?" said I. "Come and see," said he. "Bear sign, by thunder!" I exclaimed, approaching the tree that bore marks of having been frequently climbed by that animal. "He must have been here often, and not long since, either, judging from the recent scratches." "Yes," said Boiseley, "but he has not been here to-day, for the little snow that fell last night is not tracked near the tree." "Well, that's plain, but why does he climb this tree so much?" "To get the honey, of course." "Sure enough." Knowing now that we had found a bee tree, we naturally wanted a taste of its contents. Setting to work with our axes, we commenced hacking around the roots, and the tree being hollow and quite decayed it soon cracked, tottered, and came down with a crash across our fire. Luckily our guns and packs were leaning against a tree a short distance off, and escaped damage. The tree broke near its top, the smaller part split open by the fall, disclosing a store of honey that was tempting to us two hungry men. We filled the camp kettle with choice pieces of the comb, and as Boiseley was preparing a couple of grouse, (prairie-hens) for supper, I "dipped in" to the honey—slightly. I have always been blessed with a good appetite, but on that occasion it must have been a little better than usual, for after eating my bird, and discussing a fair ration of dried meat and parched corn, I thought it better to fill the kettle again with honey, by way of dessert. That evening I got honey enough for a life-time. The sweet extract of a thousand prairie flow-