

## The Compromises of Life

brimstone an' trim'd with blue an' red flames. Then he opened. He commenced onto the sinners. He threatened 'em orful, tried to skeer 'em with the wust varmints he could think of, an' arter a while, he got onto the subject of hell-sarpints, an' he dwelt on it. He tole 'em how the ole hell-sarpints 'd sarve 'em ef they didn't repent; how both hot an' cold they'd crawl over their naked bodies; how they'd 'rap their tails roun' their necks, poke their tongues down their throats, an' hiss in their ears. I seed thet my time had come. I had cotched seven or eight pot-bellied lizzards, an' had 'em in a narrer bag thet I had made a purpose. So, when he war a rarin' an' a tearin' an' a ravin' onto his tip-toes, an' a-poundin' ov the pulpit, onbeknowns to anybody I ontied my bag ov reptiles, put the mouf ov hit onto the bottom ov his briches-leg, an' begun a pinchin' ov their tails. Quick as gunpowder they all took up his leg, makin' a noise like squirrels climbin' a shell-bark hickory, or a sycamin'. He stopt rite in the middle of the word 'damnation.' He looked for an instant like he were listenin' for somethin'. His terrific features stopped the shoutin'. You could 'a' hearn a cricket jump. Jess about this time one ov my lizzards pops his head out'n the parson's shirt-collar, waggin' his ole brown neck an' surveyin' of the congregashun. The parson seed it, an' it war too much for him. He got his tongue, the old varmint, an' he cries: 'Pray for me, brethren! pray for me, sisteren! I is 'rastlin' with the arch enemy, rite now! Pray for me an' save yerselves! For the hell-sarpints hav' got me!' "

I have abridged the details, which, though very comic, are, it must be owned, very coarse. The book abounds with similar burlesque. It is not real life,