

thing compelled me to stop. Not one sound could I hear. The soft breeze had stopped, the leaves had stopped scraping. A deathlike atmosphere prevailed.

The heavy silence was broken by a loud shriek, which came from me. A black cat had stolen up behind me and was rubbing against my ankles. I stooped to pick him up. He meowed a raspy cry and as I let him go he ran through the open door. I followed him. As I started to call for the cook, I glanced over the room and the call stuck in my throat. Terror seized every part of my body. I wanted to run but my legs were like jelly. My eyes were arrested by the ghastly scene before me. On the sofa in front of the window lay the caretaker. Most of his body was on the sofa—his head was on the floor. His eyes were staring at me upside down. Yesterday he had had gray hair on his partially bald head. Now it was completely bare.

The persistent laughing motions—those of a woman gone mad. Sewing? No. One by one she had plucked every hair from his severed head.

## Old Jim Norton

George A. Olinick

**O**LD JIM NORTON is a character. He is a wizened little man with skin like leather from thirty-odd years of working out-of-doors. His reddish-brown hair belies his sixty-five years, but he can remember when mules pulled the rail-cars on the street which was named for Butler College. Jim's nose resembles a rooster's bill, and in the midst of a heated discussion he reminds one of a bantam-rooster.

Jim is proud of his trade, and rightly so, for he is one of the most skillful carpenters in his community. "Old Man Norton" is the personification of independence. And how he will argue—why, if someone said black was white, old Jim would say it was red, just for the sake of argument! Honesty is Jim's middle name, although sometimes, when too deep in his cups, he may forget the terms of a wager or confuse an issue to favor his side of an argument.

He is often caught between two forces. On one hand, he will want a drink, but on the other he will be loath to part with his money. The result is a bartender's dilemma. If, when he orders a drink, payment isn't immediately forthcoming and the barkeeper waits with hand outstretched, Jim is insulted. If the bartender goes on to other customers, Old Jim may forget he hasn't paid, so patience and sagacity are necessary in dealing with the old fellow. Jim's friends are legion, and in spite of all his little idiosyncrasies, everyone likes him, for underneath that leather-like skin is a heart that has room for compassion for his fellow-men.