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NEMAHA CITY ADS.

TITUS BRO'S A GOOD INVESTMENT.

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A GOOD INVESTMENT. A STORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

CHAPTER XVIII. (Continued.)

"But, Miss Bella! Miss Bella! where will you go, and what will you do? What will become of you? Oh dear!" cried Robert, in hopeless distress, as he too clearly saw her will was rising, as a western cloud, flashing with the electric power of her spirit and her pride.

"My destiny concerns myself," answered her spirit and her pride. Then, as if suddenly remembering she had no longer any right to possess either, all signs of them vanished from her manner, leaving only sadness and humility, as she said, "Robert, good Robert, I thank you for all you have done for me—carry also my thanks to the others. Of what I have just been saying, remember only the reasons I gave for having left them in the way I did. Be sure to tell them those reasons; and tell them, also, that I have a well considered purpose and a firm resolution. Please remember my words." And she repeated them to Robert, who heard, but could make no reply for his tears.

"And say," she continued, "I at last know all I owe to them, however ignorant of it I may formerly have been. I know, too, I can never repay it in any measure. Say I beg of them not to be anxious for my welfare; that I am sure I shall be able to provide for and take care of myself; and that no honest labor, however humble it may be, or however low it may be called, could demean Bella Johnston so much as to have remained a day longer under their roof. You will tell them all this: be sure to tell them."

"Miss Bella, I will not tell them any such thing. You do very wrong to go away. You know very well that all your love you give to each other, and would do any thing in the world rather than lose you. It is cruel in you to act toward them as they were enemies instead of friends. You talk as if they had no feeling, and yourself had none either, and had lost your senses besides, and acted on down to perdition. Oh, Miss Bella, do as you ought to do, and go straight back with me. Think how they are feeling at this very moment; and just for a moment look at this business as you know they do. Oh, go back; do go right back with me—won't you, now?"

"Do not distress me, my good friend. What you say is well said, but words cannot change my purpose. Let us say no more, except to bid each other good by, as old and true friends should. Yes, there is one thing more" (glancing toward the bundle): "can you carry back, on your horse, something Hector has brought away?"

"No," he interrupted, "I am not going back. If your resolution is taken, so is mine. I shall not return to Stone House unless you do. I will attend you on the journey you have undertaken, wherever you may lead. When it comes to an end, you may dismiss me if you will, and I must submit. But you shall never travel on foot over these hills while I own a horse. You can ride on Major, and Hector, and I will walk. Am I not right, Hector?"

"Yes, Miss Robert; do zackly right," said Hector, whose practical mind saw at once how easily Major could carry Bella, and the bundle of provisions too.

"But, Robert, you do not know what a long journey mine will be" expostulated Bella.

"If you are going to your home in the south, it will be a long journey, I know. But that would make it all the more necessary you should not attempt it on foot, and that I should go to help protect you."

Bella's entreaties as well as her commands all failed to shake Robert's purpose. He insisted, despite her threatened anger even, that if not allowed to accompany her, he would follow her. And Hector seconding him in the argument, she finally gave way. The heavy bundle was unpacked then, and its contents, after the saddle-bags had been stuffed with all they would hold, were bestowed in two sacks, which were tied together by their necks, and swung upon Major's back close in front of the saddle. This last the horse strongly objected to; but he was a reasonable animal, and when the contents of the sacks had been made known and explained to him through sight and smell, he consented. This arrangement supplied in some measure the want of a pommel, so that Bella, when mounted found her seat very comfortable. And when, finally, all was ready for the start, and the party turned their faces southward, Robert walking at the horse's head and prudently holding by the rein, while Hector, grasping his quarterstaff, trudged along on the opposite side, relieved of all his burden and half his load of care, they all felt cheered, at least invigorated and encouraged by the sensations which ever attend on and bless enterprise, endeavor, progress. They were accompanied besides by the exhilarating morning air, and the sheen of the hoar-frost that everywhere around reflected the early sunlight, and gave

enough to go over the hills into the valley of the Kinnlecock; where, by following the course of that stream, they would come into the Greenburg road, which was the best and shortest route to the Sandy.

"Then let us set out at once," she exclaimed, with agitation her companions could not understand, and with her own hands aided in preparing for the start. Robert, leading Major unmounted, clambered rapidly to the top of the nearest hill, which was a spur of the main ridge; but when they had achieved the steep ascent she was already there, having outstripped both. Hardly would she wait for the horse to breathe before she mounted and was urgent to press on. And yet, while her outward purpose was apparently so fixed, all was doubt and confusion within. She knew not what she really wished, nor what she ought to do. One thing, however, was certain: the pursuit she was by so well-devised and bold a movement escaping from had actually given her a thrill of joy, felt thro' all her sadness and shame. She wished, or thought she wished, to escape, yet felt it was delightful to be followed.

After going some ten miles the travelers descended into the romantic valley of the river Kinnlecock. Among the settlers whose its cheap yet fertile soil, healthy air, and beautiful scenery have tempted there are some persons of more intelligence and refinement than one would look for in so inaccessible a place. The house of one of these, who was agent for the owners of a tract of forty thousand acres of land, was the first dwelling the travelers came to. Though the sun was yet two hours high, Robert insisted on stopping and asking for hospitality—which he did in a peculiar way that left the host at liberty to receive from the guests, when the time for parting should come, either money or thanks, and entitled the guests while they staid to make themselves as much at home as if they expected to pay money.

In the room where they were received Robert was glad to find a large map hanging up, from which and from information the host gave he learned that by going by the route they had chosen about two hundred miles, they would strike a railroad at Abingdon, in Virginia. Two hundred miles on Major's spry back was not too much for Bella to endure; and for herself, Robert, two hundred thousand walked by her side would have been too little.

Mr. Mariner, the host, was making sundry improvements upon the property in his charge, one of which was the planting of an orchard, in a large field of newly cleared ground. Robert and Hector, strolling about, stopped to observe the progress of the work on this field, which, being too full of roots for deep plowing, the ground had to be prepared for setting out the trees by digging a deep hole for each one, and then filling it again with the same soil which came out, reversed and loosely flung in. The backwoodsman employed to do this were making but sorry progress, and Mr. Mariner was complaining that not half the orchard would be ready for planting before cold weather. An idea struck Robert. "Hector and I understand something of this kind of work," he said to Mr. Mariner. "If you think you can afford to pay us fifteen cents for every hole we dig, we might stop here a week and finish the job for you."

The bargain was gladly agreed to on the other side. But Bella objected to anything like delay, until, with the aid of the map, Robert explained to her that by remaining where she was while they could earn money enough to pay the railroad fares, she would be able to reach her destination some ten days earlier than if the whole journey were made in their present style of traveling.

To the great surprise of their employer, the two new hands dug, each, three times as many holes as any of the backwoodsman did, and by the end of the week the job was finished and cheerfully paid for, and the travelers went on their way with resources more than doubled.

"I really think you ought to have paid that girl two dollars," said Mrs. Mariner to her husband. "I certainly never saw a woman do as much work by half as she did, nor with half so little clatter or fuss."

The travelers went on their way, and one of them went rejoicing. He well enough knew his portion of that way must come to an end at Abingdon, for he was sure Bella would not consent to his accompanying her beyond there, and the thought of the parting that must come recurred now and then as a lacerating pang; but to say that pang allayed the delight he felt in being with her would be wrong. For the joy of love is too pure to mix with any thing that can alloy. Pain or sorrow, past or future, only heighten it by their contrast. Happy in the fullness of the days that were his own, he rejoiced in them as he journeyed, and in all their hours and minutes.

From the beginning to the end of that journey, it should here be mentioned, not a word was spoken concerning Stone House, or its people, or anything that ever happened there. There were stories told of Smoky Creek and Waccamaw Neck; but the history of the years spent in that mansion by the Ohio remained a closed and sealed volume. Sometimes Bella would sing a hymn—the only

music she knew—in a voice that filled the valley. A sweet voice, too, it was—although quite untaught since the time when she was captured—and aided by a charming education that was the gift of early breeding and her own good taste. Sometimes not her song, but her laugh, made music for the valley, when the old negro's oddities or humor provoked her mirth. Sometimes she would keep silence for hours, her busy thoughts devising plans for the future. Then, rousing herself from reverie, she would apply herself to entertaining Robert with long stories of what happened in her childhood, with ghost stories too, such as the black nurses used to frighten her with, and even told all the fables she learned from the same source concerning the wise "Bro' Rabbit," the ferocious but simple "Bro' Wolf," and all the other brethren of the fields and the woods whom the African imagination had taught how to discourse in gibberish to excellent moral purpose.

One day, after she had been telling him about her parents' household and the neighbors who used to enjoy the hospitalities of "Multiflora," Robert remarked, "It seems to me that those planters must have been very great and rich folks, just like the lords and ladies the old novels tell about."

"They were all of them rich people," she replied; "how many of them were great depends upon how they now bear the loss of their riches. Those who succumb to poverty can't be said to have ever been great. I have faith, however, that most of the members of our old families will meet adversity with courage and endurance, and through it work their way to prosperity again, as the founders of them worked theirs. The spirit of a gentleman is not easily crushed—no, while I live I will strive, and I think I shall live to plant and reap the fields of my inheritance, as prosperously as any of my forefathers did."

"If you only had two or three thousand dollars to begin with," suggested Robert, with a slight quiver in his voice, and with a glance toward Major, "that being out of the question, I shall begin the earliest moment that is nearest to my hand; and that finished, reach out for the next, trusting in God and my own energies for what man can do of it."

Hard was the parting on the platform of the station at Abingdon, and it needed all Bella's tact to avoid an avowal and a scene that it was best should not occur.

"Good-by, my good, dear friend," she said, from the window of the car, as it began slowly to move. "We shall never meet again; but we shall never forget each other, shall we?" And, Robert, should any thought, any recollection of the past, remain to give you pain or disturb your peace—pray, for my sake, do as I have done—bury the past; turn your back on it, and look only to the future, where there is always hope for the young, the honest, and the strong. Good-by, dear Robert!"

When Robert removed his gaze from the direction in which the train had disappeared, dancing from earth to heaven in a sea of water that filled his eyes, only one person lingered about the station. Of him he enquired what road he should take to reach Cumberland Gap, and having got the information, mounted his horse, and was soon beyond the limits of the little town.

CHAPTER XX.

Our story is drifting toward the unequalled rice district of the Waccamaw. Through our country has the honor of producing the best rice of the region where it is grown—rare to ignorant, too inexact, too careless and unfaithful, to follow the few and easy yet indispensable rules for properly boiling it. Pearl of grains it is, and it is said one-half the inhabitants of the globe make it their daily food—barley, manna and ambrosia; but they cook it as it should be, those Chinese and Hindoos, and other advanced peoples; they could not live on the tasteless, trashy mess we make of it.

From motives of economy Bella and Hector left the railroad at Chew, on the Great Pedee, and took passage in a corn-bow bound for Georgetown. The second day of the voyage brought their sluggish craft to where the river flowed through swamps famous for being the refuge of Marion's men in the revolution, and of runaway negroes in later times.

It was, indeed, a strange and dismal region, that of the swamps of the Great Pedee. On both sides the river seemed to widen indefinitely far into a dense forest, whose borderings of heavy timber formed the only boundaries of the turbid stream that flowed sluggishly between them. When, for the first time after many years, Bella's eye penetrated the dim vistas and chambers of the swamp, though she remembered them well, their gloom appalled her, and well it might, though seen for the hundredth time. As the day drew to a close that gloom deepened into darkness almost impenetrable, and from out the darkness came all the sounds of the night, though early twilight still prevailed elsewhere. The evil-omened whippoor-will wailed; the night hawk stooped with whir of wing; monstrous frogs, named "blood-nounds," from the sounds they utter,

had not been cultivated at all during the last few years; and Hector pronounced the ditches, banks, and "trunks" to be decayed and injured to such an extent that to repair them would cost a "heap of money." "An' we no got no money, missis," he added. "Now we's yer, de Lord know wot we's gwine for do."

"You are right, Hector," said Bella, to whom the want of money was not a new idea. "And He it will tell us what to do. We have come all the way here, my friend, on purpose to ask Him."

As they approached the further end of the bank the rank with growths of various kinds closed in and interlaced across the path, rendering progress so difficult that Hector had to go in advance and break the way. At length the entrance to the avenue was reached, and, standing under its high-roofed evergreen arch, Bella looked toward the opposite end. She saw two chimneys standing, and that was all! Without word or cry she pressed forward to the gate of the garden, forced it open, and entered. The garden had been a paradise once; it had become a thicket and a field of thorns. Arrived at the site of the house, she found a heap of ashes, at either end of which a brick column stood like head-stone and foot-stone marking the grave of a once living home.

She knelt upon that grave, and with clasped hands and writhing brow, there uttered her question and her prayer: "O my God, what shall I do?"

Hector groaned, then stood silently apart.

When Bella rose up from the ashes and looked about, she found herself surrounded, at a respectful distance, by the negroes, who had gathered there from their quarters on hearing the wailing cry that the young missis had thought to be dead, was alive, and had returned to them. As soon as they felt permitted to speak they overwhelmed her with greeting and blessing, manifold and vociferous, hearty and loving. Those of them, especially, who had been house servants, and known, and handled, and loved in her infancy the idol of the house, seemed ready to worship her now as a full-grown divinity. The feeling of such for such an object is but little understood. It can hardly be explained. But it is beautiful, though, and is, or rather it was, of redeeming power over many things needing redemption.

They put their all at her disposal; they offered to work for her, to obey her; they pressed near and kissed her hands; they kissed her mantle. Some of them knelt and embraced her knees; some on their knees prayed for her; some laughed for joy that she had come back to them at last; some wept that she had come to a desolation.

In greeting them all and making inquiries concerning their welfare, in receiving accounts of the dead and absent, in being presented with the numerous children, half of them wholly naked, that had come into life since she was last there, and in going through the quarters to visit the bedridden and crippled, Bella, for the first time, forgot both herself and her circumstances. She was recalled, however, when one of the women, Psyche, her mother's seamstress, suddenly remarked, "Why, missis, dey was a gentleman yer 'oder day 'quirlin' for you—a young mossa, and handsome, and a true and true gentleman."

"Him wasn't no gentleman, nudder, interrupted one of them. "Him was a Yankee."

"No Yankee 'tall," added a third. "E come from Kentucky, way all de dogs grow. Dey's as good gentlemen grows in Kentucky as dey does in dis yer country."

By much questioning Bella was able to learn that a person, whom from the description given she knew must be William Damarin, had come to Multiflora in search of her, and remained several days in the neighborhood, during which time he had visited all the plantations near, and that he had taken his departure on the steamboat for Charleston only three days before her arrival. To this information a good deal more was added by numerous, conflicting, and disputatious informants, which, however, she did not heed, as she walked back and forth absorbed in thought. Presently, turning toward Psyche, she asked: "Is the house at the sea-shore standing?"

"Yes, missis," was the reply. "Is any body there?"

"Yes, missis—Westa; she stay dere eber since mossa him go 'way. She no will come 'way. Last yer de stable him wash away in a big gale, an' de year befo' de serban's hall him go too. I spee de house him go next, an' Westa wid it."

"Hector! Hector!" Bella called. Hector came.

"We will go to the sea shore," she said.

"Better go right 'way dis minute, den; it fo' mile to walk, an' de sun no berry high."

But before Bella could get away from her crowd of votaries she had to accept their numerous offerings. They brought her chickens, ducks, eggs, persimmons, strings of dried herbs, sweet potatoes, ground nuts (pea nuts), rice, corn meal—in short, each of the poor, generous creatures gave something, and, after the manner all had been strictly taught from their infancy, thanked her for accepting it.

General Sherman defines his religious position. "I believe," he says, "if people will act only half as well as the know how in this world they will be all right in the next."

A man whose appearance indicated that he had had a glass too much, being asked if he was a Son of Temperance, replied—"No—no relation (hie)—not even an acquaintance!"

The French make out of chicken feathers a kind of down which sells for \$2 a pound.

HOW TO EXTINGUISH LAMPS WITH CHIMNEYS.—A correspondent of the English Mechanic says: "Turn the flame up to full power; then blow a sharp puff horizontally across the top of the funnel, when the light will not only be extinguished, but there will be no after smoke—the formerly ignited wick will be extinguished by its own carbonic acid gas. On leaving my office at night I thus turn up the flaming wick, and with a grateful gladness that the desk laborers of the day (and night) are over, give a side wave of the hat past the chimney, which draws up the flame from contact with the wick, and the light is gone, and with no after smell. This cannot be too widely circulated, as I read in the Times the other day that a lady lost her life by blowing down the chimney, and thus causing an explosion."

THE LAST SLAVE DEAD.—The last slave in the State of New Jersey is dead. His name was John Jackson, and he resided on the estate of Mr. Able I. Smith, at Secaucus. Jack was 87 years old. He refused to accept his freedom. His former master, Mr. A. I. Smith, since deceased, manumitted his slaves nearly fifty years ago. Jack would not be emancipated. From boyhood he was the companion of his late master, who directed that he should be buried beside him in his own graveyard. Jack survived his master nearly years, but continued to receive the same kindness and care from his master's children that he had received from childhood.