

NEMAHA CITY ADS. TITUS BRO'S DEALERS IN GENERAL MERCHANDISE SUCH AS DRY GOODS CLOTHING, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps and Notions.

COUNTRY PRODUCE HIDES, FURS, Etc.

THE SHERMAN HOUSE BILLIARD HALL

READING ROOM, THE COSIEST

CITY BAKERY. GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERS, CANNED FRUITS, FRESH BREAD, CAKES & PIES.

A. W. NICKEL, DRUGGIST AND BOOK SELLER

Plott's Star Organs

John McPherson, MANUFACTURER OF CIGARS

TOBACCOS, PIPES, AND SMOKER'S ARTICLES, BROWNVILLE, NEB.

Two Weeks

FRANZ HELMER, WAGON & BLACKSMITH SHOP

Plott's Star Organs

J. & E. HUDDART'S Peace and Quiet Saloon!

Plott's Star Organs

Clocks, Watches, Jewelry JOSEPH SHUTZ, No. 59 Main Street Brownville.

Plott's Star Organs

A GOOD INVESTMENT. A STORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

CHAPTER XXIV. "The world is full of fools; And he who none would view Must shut himself within a cave, And break his mirror too."

ed about the rough table of Hagan's cabin four persons were on business. On a long bench that was at one side of the table sat the proprietor and his son; on the opposite bench sat Mr. Gassaway; while Squire Slossure, retired lawyer and acting justice of the peace, who had been brought from Portsmouth to draw up the papers and take the acknowledgments, occupied a stool at the head, holding a position midway between both parties, as his custom was, and sitting with neither. On a block stool by the fire-place, and back of Hagan and Robert, Betsey sat apart smoking her pipe, with dilated nostrils, as though she scented something more than tobacco vapors. When Mr. Gassaway had announced to the old couple that he had come to count down the money and take his deed, the news did not, as Robert feared it would, startle either of them into showing signs of satisfaction which might have encouraged the proposed purchaser to attempt making a fresh bargain on better terms for himself. Hagan heard without stirring from his seat on the stump outside the door, or moving a facial muscle from its stoical repose; while Betsey only scowled, which rather helped on the affair.

First, Gassaway exhibited the package of money he had brought, which Robert, being called on, declared he had found to contain the proper sum, by actual count. Secondly, the squire wrote a receipt, affixed to it a stamp, duly canceled, presented it to Hagan, who affixed the stamp, and then placed it on the table, where it was held firmly beneath his elbow. Thirdly, a deed was written, which was twice carefully read over and compared, as to the description of the premises, with the original government patent in parchment, and then executed by Mr. Hagan. "And now, Mistress Hagan," said Squire Slossure, with deliberate emphasis, "your signature, I believe, comes next in order. Please draw up to the table and set your mark in form of a cross, or in any other form you prefer, right where I now put my finger, after the word 'Betsey,' before the word 'Hagan,' under the word 'her,' and above the word 'mark.'"

"Do you hear, Betsey?" he said. "You are to sign now." "Am I?" said she. "Mother," whispered Robert in her ear, "why don't you sign it? It will make you rich. The money will buy you a hundred farms better than this one." His mother flung him from her in that kind of rage a person feels who knows he understands his own business best, and is interfered with by a meddling—flung him from her in a manner that was definitive and conclusive, but without removing her pipe or uttering a word. A pause ensued. "Do I understand Mistress Hagan to refuse to execute the deed?" inquired the methodical squire. "In case she does," he added, addressing Robert, "we may as well return to accept the conveyance without any release of power." But the speculator's arrangement with the capitalists who were at his back stipulated for a perfect title, so that release of power could not, by any means be dispensed with, and he rather imprudently declared that the deed would be of no use to him without it. "But I don't understand Mrs. Hagan as absolutely refusing her signature," he said. "There's a calico dress stipulated for in the instrument which she wishes to see produced, perhaps; and unfolding the dress so as to show all its splendor, he went and held it up before her eyes as one would tempt a child with a toy. Betsey looked at it gravely for a minute or two, as if she would like to remember its pattern and colors another time, then seized and flung it into the fire, where it was quickly burned up. The astonished Gassaway, as soon as he could collect his senses and consider the legal bearings of the act, exclaimed, with an effort to be calm, "I call on Squire Slossure to take notice of this. I request that he make a minute of it. She accepted the tender, and I am entitled to a decree for specific performance of the contract before any court in Christendom." "You dry up!" screamed the lady, taking the pipe from her mouth and standing up. "A calico dress for me, and sixty thousand dollars for him; that's the odds, is it, between a woman and a man in this do-dorred world? Them's woman's rights, is it? For a dress pattern you want me to sell myself out of house and home—to be tarred loose with nowhere to tie to—sent adrift with just one blue and yellow gown with my back, while he lays round and gets

drunk sixty thousand dollars' worth. More'n forty years I've worked for that man. I've brought him ten children, and raised half of 'em on prett'n' much nothing, what's about as good as most women on the creek kin do; and if Lincoln did take four of 'em and get 'em shot for me, that ain't my fault. More'n forty year I've taken his knock-downs, and kept his dog-ened disagreeable company, and I ain't a-going to sign away all the rights I've got in God's creation for nothing. I'll see him an' you in a far kettle first!"

"She came to a full stop and sat down again, replaced her pipe, and pressing down the ashes in the bowl with her thumb, sucked strongly, with drawn-in cheeks and smacking lips, till she rekindled its fires; then puffing away in resolute silence, which astonished her husband and son, who had never before known her to use so few words to express her ideas, or wind up so soon an oration so well begun. For several moments all remained silent as she. Squire Slossure spoke first. "Perhaps, Mr. Hagan," he said, "the lady would be satisfied to sign the deed in consideration of a moderate proportion of the purchase-money being guaranteed to her sole and separate use."

Hagan, though not understanding very well the squire's language, and though he had been thinking out the problem in very different words, had drifted toward the same solution, and turning round to the fuming virago with more kindness of manner than he had shown since the last time they buried one of their boys, said, "Bets, what the devil do you want?" But Betsey's time for telling what she wanted had not yet come, and she held her peace, while one after another many different arrangements for her advantage were suggested by the voluble Gassaway or the deliberate Slossure, all of them, of course, subject to the approval of her husband. Each proposal was better than the last, but she let them go on until she knew by their eager words and Hagan's silence her power was felt and acknowledged, and then she spoke. Taking the pipe from her lips, and pointing its stem toward her husband she said to the others, "What are you jawing about? Why can't you hold your tongues like him?"

"None of them took her meaning," said Hagan. With that delicate perception of his spouse's thoughts, feelings, meanings, and her ways of concealing or revealing them, which comes only of long tribulation in the holy state of matrimony, he knew just what she meant. "Bets," he said, "if you don't like my way of drawing up writings, suppose you take hold and try yourself." "I ain't no sech durned fool as you be to conceal 'em a justice of peace," she said; "but if that one there will do the writin' I'll tell him what I want, in short order." Slossure took the pen and made ready. "You put into writin' the sense of this yer," said Betsey. "Nary one of us two old fools ain't fit to be trusted with no big pile of money; but we've got a boy that's got learning, and only one on 'em, and he must take the money and keep it for us to use on so long as we live, and have it all for himself after we'm gone."

"All right," said her husband, apparently or really satisfied. "Why the devil didn't you say so before? You don't suppose I'm fool enough to trouble myself with money business in my old age when I've raised and educated a boy to do it for me?" So the squire drew up sundry documents, which were then executed, and whose effect was as follows: First, two thousand dollars was to be deposited in a bank, subject to Hagan's own control, to meet current expenses during the ten months yet to elapse before Robert would be of age. (The squire was too rusty to decide, in the absence of his books, if by the laws of Ohio a minor could act as trustee.) Secondly, the remainder was conveyed to Robert in trust to invest it so as to produce an income, except so much as might be needed to purchase a farm for the couple to occupy. Thirdly, of the net income the husband was to receive one-third, the wife one-third, and the son, for his own use, the remaining third. He was also to have to himself such portion of the shares of his parents as they might in any one year omit to call for, and on the death of either one the entire share of such one was to be his. On the death of both parents the whole was to be held by him absolutely, and the trust discharged. Then Betsey signed the deed, and the money was counted and delivered simultaneously with the deed. After which Robert returned with Gassaway and the squire to Portsmouth, where banks—those real blessings to the weary and heavy-laden with money—abound, among those of the surest of which he distributed his load, stipulating in each case for six per cent interest. Soon after this another farm was bought for the old couple lying a little further up the creek than the other. It contained fifty acres, and after being newly fenced, abundantly stocked, and provided with a new house and out-buildings of hewn logs, afforded as comfortable a home as creeker's heart could wish. Creeker's heart was easily contented. The philosophy of his tribe teaches moderation in re-

wants, to the end that leisure may be obtained for enjoying life, and in this philosophy the habits of Bill and Betsey were fixed. As a consequence Robert was called on for only a small portion yearly of the income from the trust funds, and he thus became to all intents and purposes a rich man. Both parents grew very fond of their boy, though a good while passed before their intercourse with each other was confidential enough to permit them to mutually confess it. But time, prosperity, and the frequent visits of Robert gradually softened, and to some degree improved, both of them; and before the close of their lives they will get to be tolerably cozy terms.

After having deposited his money, as has been mentioned, Robert went on board the Big Sandy packet, from which he was put on shore at Damaris's landing at half past seven o'clock of a disagreeable evening—so disagreeable that the brightness which beamed from the windows of the parlor of Stone House, and which he knew came more from hickory that blazed on the hearth than from the kerosene lamp that stood on the table, kindled a glow in his breast that warmed him to invoke a blessing on all who were within that house. The whole weight and blessing fell upon Polly's head, for it so happened that she was the only inhabitant at that time, and therefore it was that she waited within, cautiously avoiding to unlock the door until Robert's step had been near enough for her to know it was his; and then, with a bumping, thumping, but wildly happy bosom, she hastened to let him in, and, as he entered, received him with both hands extended, which caused the arms to extend also; and so it fell out—or fell in—that instead of taking the hands in both of his and shaking them cordially, he pressed both his lips against both of hers, while the arms went round his neck. "Oh, Polly!" he exclaimed; "ain't I glad to see you, though?" "Why, Rob—Mr. Hagan?" said she. "You never did this before." "I know I never did," he said, a little confused, and slightly at a loss for words. "The more's the pity," thought Polly, who was not confused at all. Now return we to the sea-shore and to Bella, leaving Robert and Polly to keep house together, as they will have to do for two or three weeks, all alone by themselves, with none to molest or make them afraid.

But is not that dangerous? Yes, in one sense, though in no evil one, there is certainly danger to one of them. No doubt but the soft-eyed charmer with whom Robert is secluded will take pitiless advantage of his unprotected condition to kindle his love with hers as fire kindles fire. Be sure she will bring against him the whole array of her fascinations, and launch at him all her power. From morning till evening, at the board or by the hearth, she will hold him at disadvantage. She will spread the meal, fill his cup, and serve his plate, mingling and mixing the while, even as a sorceress would concoct a philter, a sweet yet maidenly coquetry in every cup and dish. As often as they shall meet during the day time he will come off the worse—or the better—for the encounter with the softening power of a lovely and lovable being whose every feeling, thought, and action are instinct with emotion toward him must needs exert. And when evening shall come, and in a parlor arranged by her own hands for one special effect, herself dressed and adorned for the same effect, will contrive that the many hours shall pass so comfortably and pleasantly that comfort and pleasure shall in his mind associate themselves with her. With so many subjects of mutual interest growing out of late events, the conversation need never flag, though it will be very like to break into pauses by no means unpropitious to the end in view. In the stillness of such pauses, all disturbing causes barred out, each wave of influence emanating from its destination, and beat upon the shores of his being as vibrations from one star upon the surface of another. When she speaks, her voice, emotional and soft, will invade his ear and play upon his sensorium with a cadence of love, while her eyes emit rays that shall pierce to the inner chambers of his own to illuminate upon its mirrors her own beautiful image. But more potent still than sound of voice or light of eye, all passively to herself, her very presence and proximity will cause to circle about him that strange, nameless, electric sphere that subdues intellect, enchains sense, and bathes both intellect and sense in a soft attraction which it is pain to resist and delight to obey, and which is the ethereal matrix wherein human love has its beginning.

All lying in the way of Robert's being completely subjected by such influences, and easily within the time limited, is, of course, his love for Bella. But his sentiment for his idol is a kind of adoration that continually lifts her up toward the skies, where dwell the unimpassioned angels, and still tends, by virtue of its very strength, to lift her higher and higher, even as the Romanians, through the excess of their adoration for the Judean virgin, have at last exalted her quite out of reach of their comprehension and intimate love, so Robert Hagan's Bella-worship labors to exalt his Carolinian maid to realms far beyond reasonable hug-

ging and kissing distance, while at the same time the warm-hearted and lovable Polly remains conveniently and temptingly near, ready to fill the void that may very well exist in the breast of a man whose love for a woman, however intense and exclusive it may have been, has become etherealized beyond the reason of dear, voluptuous tangibility. CHAPTER XXV. In the sea-shore house Bella and Vesta, with the help of Hector, were assorting, counting, and tying up bundles convenient for shipment—their first "venture" of baskets, mats, and hats, destined to test the Charleston market. All being arranged for an early start on the following morning, the two women sat down to spend the remainder of the evening in conversation. Bella read over the Invoice she had made out, and which gave the quantity, quality, sorts and sizes of the important shipment, and indulged in as many estimates and anticipations as the milkmaid of the fable, though Vesta gave her credit for keeping within reasonable bounds regarding the return she expected to realize. "If I can only get fifty dollars for the lot," said Bella, "I shall feel sure we can realize as much as eight or nine hundred dollars before another year is gone, and then we'll begin rice planting. Won't that be glorious! There's one thing I mean to do: I'll put a fence round that old field that has lain fallow so long, and on it I'll raise all the corn we need, even if we work a dozen hands. I know all about corn raising."

cles trouble you, making you to imagine you see the future (a thing possible to God alone), never do you dare mention them to me."

"'Tis 'ha! ha! ha!' laughed Vesta, in a way that turned Bella's emotion to terror. "Possible to God alone—to your God, you mean. You don't know that my gods—the gods of my country and my people, have power and goodness to open the eyes of those who serve them, and strengthen their hands to work good and evil to the good or evil men, according to their deserts." "Oh, Vesta! Vesta! cease all this; the days of miracles are gone, and prophecy is a miracle that is no longer wrought in this world. Those of ancient times, recorded in the Bible, are sufficient for our needs." "Miracle and prophecy, the power to bless and to curse, may be impossible to white people and Christians, and their parsons and ministers," said Vesta, drawing herself up; "but by those of our race who faithfully hold to the worship of their fathers, and call, in their need, upon the gods of Africa, and have been accepted as I have, into the inner circle of the priesthood, the future can be searched and spells be made to work as easily in these days as in ancient times."

"But this is paganism and idolatry, which the Bible forbids and God punishes." "Your Bible again, and your God—how do you know them? How is your religion proved?" "By miracles—miracles wrought by the founders of it." "Ever so long ago," said Vesta, scornfully; "but mine proves itself. It is proved by miracles I myself am able to work—miracles of yesterday, to-day, and every day." "If so, they come of the evil one!" "And how do you know that yours do not?" Bella was too much shocked to make any reply, and seeing this, Vesta held her peace, but had to rock in her chair back and fourth for a good while before she could calm herself. At length she resumed, in a natural manner: "Forgive me, honey; I won't talk any more of such things. Only if what I have to-night predicted concerning yourself comes true, you will remember the prediction, won't you? And will you promise in that case to take me with you wherever you go? Pray do."

Bella promised. That night she could get no sleep until after she had said her prayers thrice and sung several hymns. In the morning her two guardians, attended by two others who carried the bundles of merchandise, escorted her over the river, where she was to take the boat to Charleston. When she went on board, Fortunatus, son of Ben, received as strict a charge from Hector and Vesta that he should "mind" (that is, protect and serve) Miss Bella as if she were an infant or a princess. Among other instructions he was directed to conduct her as soon as her business should be accomplished, to the house of Ann Gingereake, with request that she be entertained there until the next day, when the boat would leave on its return trip. "Say to Ann," added Vesta, "that if she has a patient in the house, I beg she will look up lodgings for Miss Bella in that of some one of her friends. Ask her to do all this for the lady's mother's sake and for mine, and I'm sure she will not fail."

Bella's courage and perseverance were sorely tried, after she arrived in Charleston, with going from place to place in search of a purchaser. How much more would they have been tried, if, instead of being a beautiful woman, she had been an ugly one, or worse still, a man! At length she found a business concern, a branch of a New York house, willing to buy and sell anything money could be made of, that bought her whole consignment. When she left the store, to the door of which the admiring clerk conducted her, there was a sum of sixty dollars in her pocket, with a large order for more work. Making a discount of ten dollars for the effect of youth and beauty, her expectations were realized, and fortune was within her grasp! Poorly dressed as she was, she walked the street after that with the air of a queen, as, under guidance of the attentive Fortunatus, she took the way toward Archdale Street and the residence of Ann Gingereake, most skillful, kind, attentive, and noble of all the free mulatto nurses of Charleston. CHAPTER XXVI. The house of Mrs. Ann Gingereake which Bella reached late in the afternoon, was a small one, of brick, two stories high, situated far back from the street. It was well whitewashed, as were also the fences of the front yard, the trunks of the pride-of-India trees that shaded the yard, the eaves of the doorsteps, and the brick curbs of the one flower bed, and the little walk that led up from the gate. In short, everything that would take whitewash and hold it. The house was the property of its occupant. Ann was born free. Her mother, once a slave of the Johnston family, who permitted her to "hire her own time," had availed herself of the quasi freedom so obtained to go to Charleston and set up a stand in the uncovered space that used to be at the corner of Market and Meeting streets, where she long carried on a very profitable business, being widely cele-