

You Can Sure Depend on DENTON, NORTH CAROLINA

The development of Denton, N. C., offers the very safest and most profitable field of investment. Located in the heart of America's richest timber and farming land, it forms the centre of the Piedmont section of North Carolina. The recent completion of the Carolina Valley Railway puts Denton in communication with the markets of the world. This road now joins the Southern Railway and will soon make connections with the Seaboard Air Line, the Atlantic Coast Line and the Norfolk and Western. This means certain advances in land values.

Real Estate Now Rules Investment World

Town lots like those now offered at Denton are as rare as they are gilt-edged. Immediate action on your part means the securing of choicest residence and business lots from \$37.50 to \$175. Terms are within reach of every wage earner, \$1 down and \$1 a week, 5 per cent. off for cash. The majority of lots sold so far have been purchased by persons living in the immediate vicinity of Denton who know a good thing when they see it. Other purchasers include citizens from New York to Alabama who know a good thing when they hear of it.

Right Now is the Right Buying Time

This immediate present is the logical moment to get in on the ground floor of Denton, N. C. To delay means to lose the best opportunities. Buy and then wait. Later will be all right for selling at big profits. Five stores, five wood-working factories, a \$25,000 bank and many homes is the record for the past few weeks. Watch Denton grow and benefit by its rapid development. Full information with map and price-list on request.

The Hub Land Company,

H. B. VARNER, President,
Lexington North Carolina.

HERMIT OF THE BALSAMS

(Continued From Page Twelve)

own reflections. Presently I observed a dull red stain at my feet enclosed in the gaiters of my companion.

"Would it scare you, Talcott?" asked Abe, "if I were to tell you that the red stain you are observing, marks the spot where a tragedy was enacted in days gone by?"

"Not in the least," I replied, shuddering in spite of my reassuring words, for I was anxious to draw out the interesting character who sat by my side.

"Well," drawled the man, "when I bought this shack of a house people said it was bad luck to any one who owned the place, since it had been the scene of a bitter feud between some mountaineers—"

I was glad to find that a talkativeness was taking the place of the former reticence.

"Well," continued Abe, "I did not take the advice of those who had constituted themselves counselors and advisers, for as a young man, I purchased this God-forsaken spot for a hunting lodge. Many gay occasions have passed beneath this roof—and man—"

A sardonic laugh was the only completion of the sentence. Again I thought I heard footsteps overseas—I stirred uneasily.

"It is an old place," explained Abe, noticing my discomfiture, "the boards creak—"

Settling easily in my chair, I felt disgusted at my apprehensions, smiling at the strange appearance I presented in the swallow-tails. Gaining more courage I besought Abe that he would continue the narrative concerning the dull red spot at my feet. Accordingly my companion launched out to tell the story of hatred and malice, which had resulted in bloodshed. I watched the narrator closely as he opened his vivid account of one of those mountain feuds of which we read. The deep-set and glittering eyes—bloodshot though they were—held me spellbound and I sympathized with the guest of the "Ancient Mariner," as never before. "Yes," I concluded, "this man has dashed brilliant talents to the ground, but was it his influence that had wrecked a career?"

"In this very house," I heard Abe talking as in a dream, "there occurred a tragedy in the winter of '83 at the fested Christmas time. Old man Hastings and his wife lived in this house at that time, and were dispensing hospitality to their sons and daughters and their corresponding 'in-laws.' Corn juice and apple brandy flowed freely, firing the passions and kindling smouldering feelings of bitter rancor, which were only awaiting a slight provocation to fan them into a mighty conflagration. Now, John and Eva Hastings had formed a matrimonial alliance with the Chester clan, who live on the other side of the Balsams—John Hastings had married Jane Chester, and his sister was the wife of Luke Chester, a brother of John's wife. Between John Hastings and Luke Chester bad feelings had arisen—the green-eyed monster had come between the brothers-in-law. John claimed that old man Hastings had shown partiality to his sister Eva, and her husband Luke Chester, since \$100 in cash had been given the couple by the wife's father. Old Hastings had really only made a loan of the money, with the understanding that his son-in-law should repay the borrowed sum of money by working at the still. Hastings was a moonshiner of desperate character. John knew nothing of the arrangement, consequently the \$100 assumed greater pro-

portions to the eyes of the jealous son, than the entire fortune of Pierpont Morgan appears to its owners. The wife of John Hastings was as close fist as you make them, had she not goaded her husband to madness, the quarrel which followed might have been averted.

On that Christmas eve in '83 John Hastings had come to his father's house intent upon raising a row. Into each of the young homes, a little child had come, John's kid was a strapping boy, while Eva furnished a granddaughter for her rough moonshiner father. On that memorable evening of '83, after a bountiful repast had been served, old Hastings and his wife sat around the hearth with the family group. John, always looking for grievances, imagined his father took more notice of Eva's daughter, than of his own boy—for some time the morose son sat in moody silence. In the meantime the wee girl on its grandmamma's knee prattled, and cooed in baby fashion—here Abe Cowles paused in his narrative to enquire if the story of the Hastings family was becoming wearisome.

"Not in the least, Mr. Cowles," said I, for these family feuds of the mountaineers had always been interesting to me on account of the strength of feeling these people possess. Please proceed with the facts concerning the tragedy," I therefore requested.

"Well, finally John's baby toddled to his grandfather's knee, pulling at his trousers, endeavoring to climb beside his cousin who held sway with the old man that night. Thus the chubby little fellow was unnoticed as he sought to gain the notice of the rough mountaineer.

"I ain't a-gwine to stand this treatment no more," said John, jumping from his chair and glaring furiously at his parent. Then old Mrs. Hastings came over to her son, placing her hand on his shoulder and endeavoring to soothe the fierce passions—her only thanks being a muttered curse. Old Hastings gave his granddaughter to his wife, requesting John to explain himself. The son ranked up a long list of old grievances, the climax being the \$100.

"Guess the money belonged to me," retorted the irate father, snatching up a revolver that lay on the mantle above the hearth. John's hand immediately sought his hip pocket, and there was a glitter of steel. The son's aim was true, and so was the father's. Both men toppled to the floor with a heavy thud at the first shot. The stain at your feet marks the spot where the two men fell, and no matter how often the planks are scoured, nothing will erase the mark dyed indelibly into the floor."

I shivered as I drew away from the uncanny stain that marked the result of a family feud in the Balsams.

"Well, father and son were buried in the graveyard back of the house, where several other members of the family were interred—"

"Ugh!" groaned I, not relishing the thought of being in such close proximity with the murdered Hastings.

"They don't talk much any more," added Abe, as he yawned, running his fingers through the tangled masses of hair.

This exciting recital had caused me to forget my horse, which had been left to face the power of the angry elements. I alluded to the plight of the poor beast to Abe.

"We must see how the poor creature is faring," said my host.

The storm had spent its fury by this time, though a few belated raindrops pattered against the window pane in a desultory way. Jephtha came into the

room perceiving that some project was on hand. On ascertaining that "Mas' Abe" was determined to venture out into the blackness, the faithful creature promptly overruled her employer's plans.

"Tae a-gwine teh go myself," insisted the negress. Seizing a lantern, she bade me follow. Gum Drop begged to be a member of the party, but was forbidden the pleasure.

"Look atter Mas' Abe," commanded Jephtha, and Gum Drop dropped on the floor at the feet of the singular man, with the air of a pet watch dog.

With Jephtha for guide, I started on my tour up the mountain, hoping that my horse had sustained no bad effects from its exposure during the violence of the storm. Further up the swollen stream, we crossed a footlog, striking a trail that had been frequently traveled by the old negress, who moved as nimbly as a squirrel over the perilous rocky path; sometimes I was warned of the besetting dangers of the steep ascent which the dim light of the lantern but faintly revealed. The road gained at last, where I had tied my horse, I walked swiftly towards the tree to which the animal had been fastened, Jephtha following at my heels. No welcoming neigh greeted me, and on going closer, imagine my horror on finding the creature, stretched dead on the ground between the shafts of the buggy, the harness broken by the fall. Evidently the lightning had done its work, for the bark from the tree was skinned off. I remember the deafening crash of thunder that resounded so angrily after I had commenced my descent—it was then that the victim was sacrificed to the howling-rentless storm—had I remained five minutes longer beneath that tree—it would have been over with me, and Esteele would have never seen me alive. There was nothing for my guide and me to do, but turn our faces towards Abe's home, where I hoped to be able to lay aside the startling experiences of the day.

When I again entered the rough structure of Abe Cowles', I felt dazed. The woman in the portrait seemed to be coming towards me. It was with difficulty that I repressed an exclamation of surprised amazement. By the dim glare of the firelight I observed the dull red stain—it grew redder and redder, until it fairly glared. It had actually changed color, being now of the most brilliant hue—even of the color of blood fresh spilt.

These impressions were so real, I could not ascribe them to the uncanny draught of liquor Abe had regaled me with before supper, nor could I term them optical delusions.

Abe sat in a chair snoring heavily, his head sunk on his breast, while Gum Drop slept at the feet of her friend wrapped in an untroubled child's slumber. But the lady on the wall grew more and more real. She was no longer to me the creation of an artist's brush, but a live, breathing woman. The incarnation of my "Lady Gracious," as I had termed her, "was a gradual process—first one feature and then another would become animated; a drooping of the eyelid attracted me first, soon the arched brows were slowly raised, and a smile played about the well-formed mouth. By and by the bosom heaved, the rose fluttered against my lady's throbbing heart. As the beautiful creature was raising a jeweled hand imploringly towards me, ere she left the embossed frame against the wall, Jephtha's substantial form appeared at the door, inviting me to my room upstairs. I felt a sudden quiver numbing my limbs when I found that I was to spend the night in the upper half-story of the house whose the "hyant" might be en-

throned. Following my guide I could not refrain from casting a lingering glance at the lady—she was coming on behind me. However, Jephtha cruelly insulted the timid creature by unbolting the door that led upstairs and quickly securing it from our side—the lady had been imprisoned below, without so much as an apology.

"Here be's yoh room," said the negress, opening a door to more comfortable quarters than I had expected, "now I sleeps in tuthah room," explained Jephtha, preparing to leave me for the night, "so don' yoh git skeert if yoh should heah me amovin' 'bout a bit—sometimes walks in my sleep—"

I assured Jephtha that I would soon be lost in my dreams, and nothing would disturb me. Before leaving me for the night Jephtha gave me a key to my door, explaining that I might rest better, and adding that she anticipated my finally locking up for the night. The events of the afternoon, my narrow escape from the jaws of death, the fatal disaster to my horse, the exciting story told by Abe concerning the Hastings family, and finally the strange effects which the portrait to which the lock in my door, by whizzing through my brain with lightning velocity, I felt there was something uncanny about my surroundings, and for a long time I stayed awake after I had retired. Finally nature triumphed, and I dozed off, forgetting to turn the lock in my door. Several times during the night I awoke with a start, but always went to sleep again. Once, as I lay awake for a few minutes, I imagined I heard a muffled footstep on the creaky stairs—someone was fumbling with the bolt. Then for some seconds everything was perfectly quiet, the stillness of the night broken anon by a measured tread up and down the stairs—ever up and down with spooky distinctness. In his room on the first floor Abe was snoring away, unmolested by sound or noise of any description. From the room across the narrow little hall I could distinguish the heavy breathing of Jephtha, who seemed at peace with the world—but still that weird footfall smote my troubled ear. Again I fell asleep, only to dream of the lady in the picture, who seemed to be in some distress of mind—I saw her extend her jeweled hand imploringly, but in my slumbers I felt powerless to act.

I tried to open my eyes—was I dreaming that an icy hand was pressed against my throbbing brow? For an indefinite length of time I lay thus, unable to move. Finally my eyelids raised—towering above me was a tall woman robed in white, holding a cocked revolver close to my heart! I sprang out of bed, uttering a blood curdling shriek, which the apparition echoed as it vanished away. I knew not where.

Jephtha was by my side instantly. "Yoh mus' been a-dreamin'," said the old colored woman as she lighted a candle.

"Dreams nothin'!" I exclaimed, relating my gruesome experiences, giving an account of the footsteps on the stairs, and my narrow escape from death.

"O yoh has been a-dreamin'," laughed Jephtha. "Yoh dead horse come back an' made yoh ride him too far! Then I hearn Mas' Abe a-tellin' 'bout them Hastings—"

"You can't change my opinions," I replied stolidly, inquiring why my host had not come to my rescue when I had screamed in my agonized terror.

"La, Mas' Talcott," answered Jephtha, between yawns, "Mas' Abe, he's uster—"

But the old woman's mouth snapped shut ere she had told me what appalling scenes Mas' Abe "was uster." I did not have the courage to pry into the history of this hermit of the Balsams, therefore his singular life remained a closed book.

As Jephtha made her exit, she dropped a random hint that there was a key in "de dook"—the use of the same was immediately called into service, all precautions being observed to prevent another visitation from the mysterious woman. To make the door more secure I even rolled my bed before the door, and lighting the lamp I sat up in bed with eyes stretched wide open, determined not to be killed by the hand of an unknown assassin, without at least making some effort to preserve life. Nor did I woo Morpheus until the dawn came smiling over the Balsams, although there had been no further disturbance to thwart the slumbers that tired nature required.

(CONCLUDED NEXT SUNDAY).

The Southern has obtained at this term of court. Judge Purdy will leave for his home to-day. Before the adjournment of court to-day the following resolutions, which had been passed by the Bar Association, were read by J. B. Bell, of the local bar. Remarks were made by various members of the bar which were fittingly responded to by Judge Purdy, who seemed much affected by the manifestations of regard expressed by the resolutions and remarks of the lawyers.

"Whereas, Hon. R. O. Purdy, the presiding judge, has resigned the office of circuit judge, which resignation becomes effective September 1, 1907; and whereas, this is the last term of this court over which Judge Purdy will preside; therefore, Be It Resolved, 1. That the Bar Association of Cherokee county deeply regrets the fact that Judge Purdy's retirement from the bench and wish for him success in his future field of labor.

2. That by his ability, uniform courtesy, diligence and attention to the duties of his office, he has greatly endeared himself not alone to the members of the bar, but to the court and county officials, and to all with whom he has come in contact.

3. That a copy of these resolutions be presented to Judge Purdy, and that they be inscribed upon the minutes of the court.

J. E. WEBSTER,
President.

W. S. HALL, JR.,
Secretary.

During the trial of William H. Mills, a small unassuming stranger, apparently about 55 or 60 years of age, was noticed well up to the front during the trial of the case and seemed to be deeply interested in the testimony and arguments of counsel. No one knew who this stranger was, but it now transpires that he was the father of the defendant, and that he resides in Georgia, and came to South Carolina to be present at his son's trial. When your correspondent asked for an explanation of the fact that Mills' mother is now living as Mrs. Busbee, he was informed that Mills and Mrs. Busbee were married many years ago and that he went West some time after his marriage and for a time he corresponded with his wife; but later his letters ceased, and after a long time the present Mrs. Busbee, thinking that Mills was dead, married Mr. Busbee.

Although nothing has been said recently in the papers about the Ross tin mine, it is not to be understood that operations have ceased, because such is not the case. Captain Ross has a car of ore ready for shipment now, and has another car in sight. Mr. J. C. Ross will leave Gaffney Tuesday so as to be in New York when the car arrives. When it is considered that a car of tin ore is worth from \$12,000 to \$15,000, it will account for the fact that Mr. Ross will be on hand to give the mine's personal attention.

Get a sample of Dr. Shoop's "Health Coffee" at our store. If real coffee disturbs your stomach, your heart or kidneys, then try this clever-coffee imitation. Dr. Shoop has closely matched Old Java and Mocha coffee in flavor and taste, yet it has not a single grain of real coffee in it. Dr. Shoop's Health Coffee imitation is made from pure toasted grains or cereals, with Milk, Nuts, etc. Made in a minute. No tedious wait. You will surely like it. Sold by Miller-Van Ness Co.

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