to de team;

cain dat spiles de cotton-fiel' will he'p clean and de ditch le oberilow dat kills de crap will make de bottoms rich; pubbins in de pile o' corn will 'zactly suit de

ad de row across de new group's may be shorter dan it 'pears; oak-tree flings a shadder in de hottest sum-

mer noon, de dog dat miss de possum-track may stumble on de coon. stalks o' corn dat grow too thick is mighty

apt to fail; many coon-tracks in de paf will fling vou orf de trail: warm o' flies kin tus de web de cunnin' spider weaves. de backer plant won't come to much dat spreads too many leaves;

crowd in ebery sort o' truck may spile de a sermon wid too many p'ints will hardly little sow wid lots o' pigs is in a sorry fix,

de old hen's got to scuffle hard dat feeds too many chicks: de man dat's gittin' l'arnin' ought to stop wid jes' enough, n nebber cram his head too full wid diffunt

kinds o' stuff. little horn kin make a' awful racket in de minner oftentimes kin sink de cork clean out

o' sight little grabble in your shoe may start your foot An' a flea dat's got a' appetite kin stir up things surprisin'

narrer creek may swell itse'f an' oberflow de

bent pin in a rockin' cheer kin lif' a whoppin' latch. An' a ragged coat-tail's mighty good to hide a'

ugly patch. might rusty;lookin' dog kin take de 'possum-An' de ha'r ou top a nigger's head may kiver up

or 'ill he'p you dodge a mud-hole as you push ziong de way, or lead you froo a thicket whar de safes' walkin' We put some mighty sorry things to hifalutin'

bars heaps of fryin' chickens grabbed from orf a rotten roos Von know much 'bout de pea befo' you bus' de

n' some handy things may float aroun' inside a woolly skull com-cob pipe kin gib you snoke an auswer mighty well: fus'-class man may put up at a second-class

in' a mighty solid thought may sometimes run in out de rain 'n' lodge for jes' a' ebenin' in a common jackass

bimin. "TER-MORRER'S CHRISMUS!"

Way Down in Lonesome Cove.

The old crone in the chimney-corner nod-

many pipes, and at last knocked the cin-

the stones that served as andirons. He be-

reliped to adjust the potato with the end

for her autocratic nod of approval. She

across the puncheon floor to the already

" of you uns hev all hed yer fill o' foolin'

with this hyar fire. I'll kiver it, like I hev

At this moment there was a loud tram-

saip, drawn forward,

the floor, the fust thing ye know.'

to upon the porch without. The bat-

Now." he drawled, in gruff accents,

that the fire might keep till morning.

the shovel in his hands.

with a mutter of apology.

well-filled bed.

the bristles.

started out ter do '

ennybody goin' ter know a man ez lived 'way off down hyar in Lonesome Cove ?" Miss Murfree in December Harper. One memorable night in Lopesome Cove sive. "He never courted me, nohows. the ranger of the county entered upon a momentous crisis in his life. What hour I gin him no less. t was he could hardly have said, for the There was a pause primitive household reckoned time by the un when it shone, by the domestic routine when no better might be. It was late,

together the broken chuncks, and fanned ded over her knitting. In the trundle-bed at the further end of the shadowy room home. were transverse billows under the quilts, The feathery flakes of the ashes flew; which intimated that the small children

'Ye never said nuthin' ter hinder," she

they caught here and there in her brown were numerous enough for the necessity of The blaze flared up, and flickered hair. sleeping crosswise. He had smoked out over her flushed, pensive face and glowed in her large and brilliant eyes.

der from the bowl. The great hickory logs had burned asunder and fallen from "Tobe said 'Howdy," her mother bickered on. "I knowed by that ez he hed the gift o' speech, but he spent no mo' gan to slowly cover the embers with ashes, words on me." Then, suddenly: "I war an essential part of his attire. a fool, though, ter gin my cornsent ter yer His wife, a faded woman, grown early old, was bringing the stone jar of yeast to child I hed, an' I knowed I'd hev ter live place close by the hearth, that it might of the night. It was heavy, and she bent in carrying it. Awkward, and perhaps ver fust ch'ice, an' married Luke Todd." not "take a chill" in some sudden change

nervous, she brought it sharply against frown. "I hev no call to spen' words bout Luke Todd," she said, with dignity. The clash roused the old crone in the "ez me an' him are both married terother corner. She recognized the situation in-

stantly, and the features that sleep had re-"I never said ye hed," hastily replied laxed into inexpressiveness took on a weathe old woman, rebuked and embarrassed. ry apprehension, which they wore like a The man bravely raised his surly tion went recklessly on. "Though ez ter black eyes, but his wife drew back humbly store on sech. The gal he found over thar book," he concluded, inconsequently. The next moment the shovel was almost in Big Fox Valley favors ye ez close ez thrust out of his grasp. A tiny barefooted girl, in a straight unbleached cotton night-gown and a quaint little cotton nightuseter look. An' she laffs the same. An ap, cavalierly pushed him aside, that she I reckon she 'ain't hed no call ter quit ight cover in the hot ashes a burly sweet laffin', 'kase he air a powerful easy-goin' otato, destined to slowly roast before man. Leastwise he useter be when wenorning. A long and careful job she

uns knowed him." made of it, and unconcernedly kept him "That ain't no sign," said Madeline. waiting while she pottered back and forth "A safter-spoken body I never seen than | ders!" about the hearth. She looked up once Tobe war when he fust kem a-courtin' with an authoritative eye, and he hastily round the settlemint."

f the shovel. And then he glanced at er, incongruously enough, as if waiting the chimney-corner.

This might seem rather a reflection upgravely accorded it, and pattered nimbly consciousness lent it point.

"Laws-a-massy," she said, "Tobe ain't so rampagious, nohows, ez folks make Gryce, indignantly. "Ain't nobody seen him out. He air toler'ble peaceable, corn. it?" Then realizing the futility of the wantin' ter hear a word about. Jes persiderin' ez nobody hev ever hed grit question, he yielded to a fresh burst of anceed with yer rat-killin'. I'm with ye." enough ter make a stand agin him, 'thout ger, and turned upon the bereaved regis- And Luke Todd placed his elbows on his 'twar the Cunnel thar."

a door shook violently. The ranger prang up. As he frowned, the hair on and peaceful and infantile as it lay on the

Dat burn that thar fresky filly!" he pillow "Whenst the Cunnel war born," Mad- book in it?" ried, angrily. "Jes brung her noisy eline went on, languidly reminiscent, Half a dozen men spoke up. "The fire ones up on that thar porch agin, an' her outs will bust sprang through the planks The mirrow aperture, as he held the mer ajar, showed outlined against the An' when she tuk sick he 'lowed he seen barkness the graceful head of a young no differ. 'Jes ez well die ez live,' ez be said. An' bein' ailin', the Cunnel tuk it note, and once more hoof-beats resound-Clouds were adrift in the sky. No star group to the wide space high above the chil'ren. The boys war nowhar. But a fust it never 'sturbed Tobe. He jes compassed Lonesome Cove, which seem- yelled out same ez he useter do at the cunning as he cast a glance up at the overto have importunately thrust itself into the darkling solemnities of their intimacy.

What ailed the stray-book ter bide the subject.

Raleigh

Register

"I'd be afraid so if I war ez big a sin-

ner ez you you-uns," he returned.

"They be a-soakin' with las'

the staring women in the doorway.

trophized him, with all the acrimony of

long repression. "Got no mo' politeness

'n a settin' hen," she muttered, as she

The young woman lingered wistfully.

"I wisht he wouldn' go a ridin' off that

he air bound fur, an' when he'll kem back.

thar way 'thout lettin' we-uns know whar

He mought git hurt some ways aroun' that

"Ef he war roasted, 'twould be mighty

Her daughter stood for a moment with

ing out at the flare in the sky. The un-

meek monotony bespeaking a broken spir-

the uncertain flicker of the tallow dip, she

broke out passionately: "Wa'al, Madeli

cake would be all dough? Such a laffin',

plump, spry gal ez ye useter be-fur all

the world like a fresky young deer! An'

peaceful round in Lonesome," the old

thar fire-git overtook by it, mebbe."

rone exclaimed, rancorously.

young-as young as her years.

by its own temerity.

declared, in a shrill voice.

rain," he retorted, gruffly,

turned back into the room.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1885.

NO. 92.

and from their rifts long divergent lines

you-uns sure es they war-folks?"

"I reckon they war," he said, reassuring

That night the wind rose. The stars all

seemed to have burst from their moorings,

beam ends, sometimes half submerged,

monotone. Now and again a leaf went

sibilantly whistling past. The wild com-

motion of the heavens and earth was visi-

ble, for the night was not dark. The

pale were the horizontal bars of gray light

alternating with the black logs of the wall.

he had not brought his lantern, as was his

instead his rifle.

distance.

yer gun go off suddint?"

' Edzactly so," he declared

'Mighty suddint," he replied savagely

as he replaced the rifle in the rack. He

was shaking the other hand which had

been jarred in some way by the hasty dis-

charge of the weapon. "Some dad-burn-

ed horse-thief war arter the mare. Jedg-

in' from the sound o' thar runnin', 'peared

like to me ez thar mought be two o' 'em."

the stable. Yet she could not be far off,

for Tobe was about the house most of the

in-doors in the evening the little girl held

in her hand a half-munched ear of corn,

"Whar be the filly hid, Tobe?" Made-

line asked, curiosity overpowering her.

In the morning there was a fall of snow,

more than this discomfort vexed her.

"The Bible say 'words air foolishness."

and she had some doubt whether her moth-

lies,' he replied gruffly.

As the ranger trotted down the wind- of light slanted down upon the valley, dis-

pressed him.

the great mountain opposite was marvel ed back agin, an she staid shet up. Ef "Ez ter me," resumed that worthy, "by the magistrate an' be advertised by the Tobe Gryce's house, gray, weather-beat- stood and stared futilely at the foot-print. lously distinct against the sky. He saw he sot her down fur a minit, she velled so the law o' the land my books war obli- ranger, an' of they ain't claimed 'fore en, moss-grown, had in comparison an Conjecture had license and limitations too. the naked, gaunt December woods. He | cz ye'd think ye'd be deef far life, an' ye | gated ter be thar." He quoted mournful- twelve months, the taker up kin pay into ephemeral, modern aspect. For a hun- As the hours wore on he became harassed saw the grim gray crags. And yet Lone-'most hoped ye would be. So Tobe war some Cove below and the spurs on the oblegged ter tote her agin tor git shet o' his office." other side were all benighted. A pale the noise. He got started on that that He gathered up his knee again and subflickering light was dawning in the clouds; 'forced march,' ez he calls it, an' he never sided into silence. brightened, faded, glowed again, and could git off n it. Trot he must when their sad gray folds assumed a vivid ver- the Cunnel pleased. He 'lowed she re- a-loose in the wind. In fitful gusts they

milion reflection, for there was a fire in the minded him o' that thar old Cunnel that rushed up the gorge, and suddenly the forest below. Only these reactions of color he sarved under in the wars. Ef it kill-boughs would fall still again, and one could on the clouds betokened its presence and ed the regiment, he got that on time. hear the cerie rout a rioting far off down its progress. Sometimes a fluctuation of Sence then the Cunnel jes gins Tobe her the valley. Now and then the glow of the orange crossed them, then a glancing line orders, an' he moseys ter do 'em quick, fire would deepen, the coals tremble, and of blue, and once more that living red hue jes like he war obleeged to obey. I b'lieve with a gleaming fibrous swirl, like a garwhich only a pulsating flame can bestow. he air, somehows." "Air it the comin' o' the Jedgmint Day, Tobe?" asked his wife, in a meek whis-

wisdom, "Tobe will find a differ. That mark its trail. ain't no man so headin' ez don't git treated with perslimness by somebody some presently. "I don't keer a frog's toe-nail time. I knowed a man wunst ez owned of the whole settlement burns bodaciously "The woods air afire," the old woman fower horses an' cattle-witters quarry- up; 'tain't nuthin' ter me. I hev never spondin', an' he couldn't prove ez he war hankered ter live in towns an' git tuk up too old to be summonsed fer work on the with town ways, an' set an' view the court-The mare was standing near the porch. road, an' war fined by the overseer 'cord- house like the apple o' my eye. We-uns in' ter law. Tobe will git his wheel scotch- don't ketch fire down in the Cove, though Suddenly he mounted her and rode hastied yit, sure ez ye air born. Somebody be- mebbe we ain't so peert ez folks ez herd ly off, without a word of his intention to sides the Cunnel will skeer up grit enough tergether like sheep an' sech. He left freedom of speech behind him. ter make a stand agin him. I don't know how other men kin sleep o' nights, knowin' "Take yer bones along, then, ye tonguetied catamount!" his wife's mother apos-

when it gits ter mournin' 'bout'n the stiffnecked ones. The spirited young mare that the ranger rode strove to assert herself against him now and then, as she went at a breakneck speed along the sandy bridle-path through the woods. How was she to know that the white-wanded young willow by the way-side was not some spiritual manifestation as it suddenly materialized in a broken beam from a rift in the "clouds? But as she reared and plunged, the bar of the door in her hand, still gaz- she felt his heavy hand and his heavy heel, and so forward again at a steady wonted emotion had conjured a change in pace. The forests served to screen the slants high. the stereotyped patience in her face-even strange light in the sky, and the lonely

anxiety, even the acuteness of fear, seem- road was dark, save where the moonbeam ed a less pathetic expression than that was splintered and the mists loitered. Presently there were cinders flying in it. As she lifted her eyes to the mount- the breeze, a smell of smoke pervaded the little thread is strong enough to raise de cabin | ain, one might wonder to see that they | air, and the ranger forgot to curse the were so blue. In the many haggard lines | mare when she stumbled

drawn upon her face, the effect of the straight lineaments were lost; but just no 'count half-livers o' town folks hev hed s'prised none ter hear 'bout Tobe Gryce's now embellished with a flush, she looked the insurance ter let ketch afire thar?" The infirmities of his pronunciation must be duly considered; he was not suf-As she buttoned the door and put up must be duly considered; he was not sufthe bar, her mother's attention was caught ficiently sophisticated to appreciate the ter. "Nuthin' but favoritism in the coun-

and shading her eyes with her hand from catch fire. ny, who would hev ever thought ez yer the sky, and a break in the woods showed ain't 'lected, like the register, by pop'lar the little town-the few log houses, the vote. "gyarden spots" about them, and in the sech a pack o' men ez ye hed the ch'ice coals, a flame flickered here and there, ed her mirth, but the harlequinade of fate ures of the mountaineers. On the porches constrained a laugh for its antics. The of the houses, plainly visible in the unrose visibly before her. She had had and children-here and there a brat in the scant leisure to reflect that her life might scantiest of raiment ran nimbly in and have been ordered differently. In her out. The clouds still borrowed the light widening eyes were new depths, a vague from below, and the solemn leafless woods terror, a wild speculation, all struck aghast on one side were outlined distinctly against the reflection in the sky. The flare showaustere summit-line of the mountain be-"I never knowed Tobe, sca'cely. How's yond, and gave the dark mysteries of the night a sombre revelation, as in visible

her mother retorted, acridly, on the defen- blackness it filled the illimitable space. The little mare was badly blown as the All the word he gin me war, 'Hawdy,' an' ranger sprang to the ground. He himself was panting with amaze and cagerness. Madeline knelt on the hearth. She placed the stray-book ?" One by one the slow group turned, all

kiver the fire yit," she said, thoughtfully. as he loomed distorted through the shim- one looked-wistfully at the group on the "He mought be chilled when he gits mer of the heat above the bed of live coals crag, for it was distinguished by that and the hovering smoke. 'Whar's the stray-book ?"he reitcrated.

imperiously. Whar's the court-house, I reckon ye mean ter say," replied the sheriff-a burly mountaineer in brown jeans and high boots on which the spurs jingled; for in noways. 'Pears not ter me, an' I hev been his excitement he had put them on as mechanically as his clothes, as if they were

up close, with the red glow of the fire on

Luke's marryin', 'tain't wuth while ter set I want ter know whar's that thar strav-"Tobe Gryce, ye air fairly demented,"

two black-eyed peas. That's why he exclaimed the register-a chin-whiskered, married her. She looks precisely like ye grizzled old fellow, sitting on a stump and hugging his knee with a desolate, bereaved look-"talkin' bout the stray-book. do 'bout thar deeds, an' mortgages, an' sech? An' that thar keerful index ez I hed made-ez straight ez a string-all cin-

He shook his head, a forlorn masculine Rachel, mourning alike for the party of "Sech ez that ain't goin' ter last' no- the first part and the party of the second ways," dryly remarked the philosopher of part, and the vestiges of all that they had

agreed together. "An' ye ter kem mopin' hyar this time on the courting gentry in general than a o' night arter the stray-book!" said the personal observation. But Mandeline's sheriff. "Shucks!" And he turned aside and spat disdainfully on the ground. "I want that thar stray-book!" cried

ter. 'An' did ye jes' set that an' say, knees and leaned forward with an air of durned horse-thief of a ranger ez tolled mit, and he went cautiously to the verge An' Tobe-shucks! Wa'al, laws-a-massy, She had not realized how far it had gone She glanced around at the little girl's 'Good Mister Fire, don't burn the records; attention. ace framed in the frill of her night-cap, what'll folks do 'bout thar decds an' sech ?' an' hold them claws o' yourn, an' see the hending this ebullition. It was not what some Cove nestles, sequestered from the only six feet below, and all access court-house burn up, with that that stray- he had expected to elicit. No one laugh- world. Naught emigrates thence except enough to an expert climber. A bush

"Leave Tobe be-let him jaw!" said another, cavalierly. "Tobe 'pears ter berspilin' fur a fight,"

darkling solemnities of their intimacy.
All at once the ranger let the door fly room his hand, and stood gazing in blank room his hand, and stood gazing in the void vectors are in the void vectors as a strange mountain summits, cloud strata, visions.

Tobe Greec's feet showed that for the subject.

Water alled the stray-book ter bide the subject.

Water all the subject.

Water alled the stray-book ter bide the subject.

Water all the stray-book ter bide the stray-book ter bide the stray-book ter bide the subject.

Water all the

" shall at all times be and remain in

All the freakish spirits of the air were

ment of flames, a sudden animation would "Wa'al, some day," said the disaffected sweep over it, as if an apparition had ranger's own house. Now, the p'int o' law old woman, assuming a port of prophetic passed, leaving a line of flying coals to

"I'm goin' home," drawled Tobe Gryce

The footfalls of the little black mare annotated the silence of the place as he rode how he be always darin' folks ter differ away into the darkling woods. The groups with him, an' how brigaty he be. The Bible gradually disappeared from the porches. pears ter me ter hev Tobe in special mind The few voices that sounded at long intervals were low and drowsy. The red fire smouldered in the centre of the place, and sometimes about it appeared so doubtful a and there among the boldly jutting gray shadow that it could hardly argue sub- crags hung an evergreen vine, and from a was still.

Presently the great mountains loom aggressively along the horizon. The black abvsses, the valleys and coves, show duncolored verges, and grow gradually distinct, and on the slopes the ash and the pine and the oak are all lustrous with a a red clay road, running over a hill, was silver rime. The mists are rising, a wind springs up, the clouds set sail, and a beam

"What I want ter know," said a mountaineer newly arrived on the scene, sitting on the verge of the precipice, and Jangling his long legs over the depths beneath, "air how do folks ez live 'way down in Lonesome Cove, an' who nobody knowed nuthin' about, noways, ever git 'lected "I wonder," he muttered, "what them ranger o' the county, ennyhow. I ain't goin's-on hyar las' night. I hev looked

"Wa'al, I'll tell ye," replied the regisby the change. Peering at her critically necessity of insurance before letting things ty court. Ranger air 'lected by the jestices. Ye know," he added, vainglorious As he neared the brink of the mountain of his own tenure of office by the acclaim ranger an' taker up too. But she air the her cheek, and albeit so slight a thing, she sighed. Again the boughs of the chestnuthe saw a dense column of smoke against ing voice of the sovereign people, "ranger peartest little beastis-she war jes bridle

A slow smoke still wreathed upward centre of the Square a great mass of from the charred ruins of the court-house. Gossiping groups stood here and there, amongst! An' ter pick out Tobe Gryce two gaunt and tottering chimneys where mostly the jeans-clad mountaineers, but an' marry him, an' kem 'way down hyar once the court-house had stood. At some there were a few who wore "store clothes," ter live along o' him in Lonesome Cove!" distance-for the heat was still intense- being lawyers from more sophisticated reing in a criminal case-still strictly segrewalking about wearily, waiting with what in the presence o' the ranger." patience they might their formal discharge.

The sheriff's dog-a great yellow curtrotted in the rear. When the officer was put in one of the by standers. first elected, this animal, observing the thenceforward guarded the door with snaps and growls. Being a formidable brute, said Peters, with a malicious grin, pointand getting out of law with abnormal difficulties. Now, as he followed the disconwhich he formerly drove up the cows, and | months.' "The stray-book!" he cried. "Whar's if a juror loitered or stepped aside from the path, the dog made a slow detour as if to round him in, and the melancholy corthe flames with a turkey wing. "I won't looking at him with a peering expression | tege wandered on as before. More than

sprightly interest which scandal excites so "Ter my way of thinkin'," drawled Sam Peters, swinging his feet over the giddy depths of the valley, "Tobe ain't sech ez oughter be set over the county ez a ranger

keepin' my eye on him mighty sharp." A shadow fell among the group, and a man sat down on a bowlder hard by. He, "Naw, I ain't meanin' ter say whar's too, had just arrived, being lured to the marryin' him, bein' ez ye war the only the court-house," said the ranger, coming town by the news of the fire. His slide had been left at the verge of the clearing, with ye 'way down hyar in Lonesome his face, and his eyes flashing under the and one of the oxen had already lain down; broad brim of his wool hat. He had a the other, although hampered by the voke threatening aspect, and his clongated thus diagonally displaced, stood medita-Madeline looked up with a gathering shadow, following him and repeating the tively gazing at the distant blue mountmenace of his attitude, seemed to back him | ains. Their master nodded a slow, grave | she hedn't been fairly bruk ter the plough, anxious lines of her face. "Ye air sech a triffin', slack-twisted salutation to the group, produced a plug war mightily missed. We uns hed ter tribe hyar in town, ez ennybody would of tobacco, gnawed a fragment from it, know ef a spark cotched fire ter suthin' and restored it to his pocket. He had a ye'd set an' suck yer paws, an' eye it till it pensive face, with an expression which, in we war powerful disapp'inted. But we veyed the vacant landscape, and once more evidently abstracted from the mare's supbodaciously burnt up the court house a man of wider culture, we should discrimain't never fund no trace o' the filly sence turned dumbfounded toward her. "What Presently, however, her vagrant specula- sech a dad-burned lazy set o' half-livers ye inate as denoting sensibility. He had long she war tolled off one night las' fall a year men?" he asked. be! I never axed 'bout'n the court-house. | yellow hair that hung down to his shoulders, and a tangled yellow beard. There was something at once wistful and searching in his gray eyes, dull enough, too, at times. He lifted them heavily, and they had a drooping lid and lash. There seemed an odd incongruity between this sensitive

belt girded his brown jeans coat. The ends he asked. of his trousers were stuffed into great cowhide boots. His pose, as he leaned on the rock, had a muscular picturesqueness. "Who be ye a-talkin' about?" drawled.

Peters relished his opportunity. laughed in a distorted fashion, his pipestem held between his teeth. "You-uns nin't wantin' ter swop lies he drawled.

'bout sech ez him, Luke! We war a-talkin' 'bout Tobe Gryce.

"Tobe Gryce air jes the man I'm always | white too."

Peters looked at him, hardly compreed. His fleer was wide of the mark.

sand a third, impersonally, as if to direct twisted round, in some danger of falling

An'the owner can't prove it awayarter that."

"Thanky," said Luke Todd, dryly. S'pose ye teach yer gran'mammy ter suck aigs. I knowed all that afore.' Peters was abashed, and with some dif-

ficulty collected himself. An' I knowed ye knowed it, Luke, he hastily conceded. "But hyar be what I'm a-lookin' at-the law 'ain't got no per- vague, fragmentary ditty, some faintvoic- seen partly above and partly below it, wore vision fur a stray horse ez kem of a dark ed spirit in the rock would sing. Lone- a glamourous purple. There were clouds, night, 'thout nobody's percuremint, ter the some Cove?-home of invisible throngs! ez I wanted ter ax the lawyers 'bout air

taker-up too?" He turned his eyes upon the great landscape lying beneath, flooded with the chill matutinal sunshine, and flecked here and there with the elusive shadows of the fleecy drifting clouds. Far away the long horizontal lines of the wooded spurs, converging on either side of the valley and rising one behind the other, wore a subdued azure, all unlike the burning blue of summer, and lay along the calm, passionless sky, that itself was of a dim, repressed tone. On the slopes nearer, the leafless boughs, massed together, had purplish garnet depths of color wherever the sunshine struck aslant, and showed richly against the faintly tinted horizon. Here

stance. Far away a dog barked, and then gorge on the opposite mountain gleamed a vouchsafed no word of the excitements in and the moon tossed hopelessly among continuous flash, like the waving of a sil- the little town; and he himself was ill at them, a lunar wreck, sometimes on her ver plume, where a cataract sprang down case. the rocks. In the depths of the valley, a field in which crab-grass had grown in the place of the harvested wheat showed a tiny square of palest vellow, and beside it

visible. Above all a hawk was flying. "Afore the winter fairly set in las' year," Peters resumed, presently, "a stray kem ter Tobe's house. He 'lowed ter me ez he fund her a-standin' by the fodder-stack apullin' off'n it. An' he 'quired round, an' he never hearn o' no owner. I reckon he lowering than her father's. It was an innever axed outside o' Lonesome," he added, cynically. He puffed industriously at his pipe for a few moments; then continued: the slight physical force she represented. "Wa'al, he 'lowed he couldn't feed the She wore a blue cotton frock, fastened up critter fur fun. An' he couldn't work her the back with great horn buttons; she had till she war appraised an' sech, that bein' on shoes laced with leather strings; one of took ter be ranger an' taker up too—the bangedest consarn in the kentry! Ef the calves; the other stocking was held in leetle marc hed been wall-eyed, or lame, or place by an unabashed cotton string. She thud. How the gusts outside were swirlennything, he wouldn't hev wanted ter be wise when she fust kem-young an' spry!"

Luke Todd was about to ask a question, but Peters, disregarding him, persisted: "Wa'al, Tobe tuk up the beastis, an' I git back hyar no sooner." reckon he reported her ter hisself, bein' the ranger-the critter makes me laff- cated. She fixed her eyes upon him, but an' he hed that thar old haffen-blind uncle | made no sign. o' his'n an' Perkins Bates, ez be never She chuckled aloud, not that she relish- were grouped the slouching, spiritless fig- gions of the circuit. Court had been in sober, ter appraise the vally o' the mare, hisself, an' I reckon he tuk oath that she the filly ?-ye know ye hanker ter ride the whisper, "Cobe! Cobe! Cobe" With words recalled the past to Madeline; it wonted red glow, were knots of women gated, and in charge of an officer-were kem 'thout his procurement ter his place, filly,

"I reckon thar ain't no law agin the ranger's bein' a ranger an' a taker up too," like a sher'ff's buyin' at his own sale. An' ed, too, the abrupt precipice on the other own conclusions. He seemed to think the side, the abysmal gloom of the valley, the court-house belonged to the sheriff, and ef the owner never proved her away."

If laugher "Thar ain't no sign he ever paid a cent,

his idiosyncrasies invested the getting into ing at the charred remains of the courthouse, "an' the treasurer air jes dead," "Wa'al, Tobe hed ter make a report ter

> "The papers of his office air cinders." retorted Peters. "Wa'al, then," argued the optimist, the stray book will show ez she war re-

ported an' sech.' pains ter hev his stray-book in that thar mount. Tobe patiently led the beast up court-house when 'twar burnt." There was a long pause while the party sat ruminating upon the suspicions thus grown high, and occasionally she was fain

suggested. thrill of satisfaction. He found them easy ventured to seriously remonstrate, and

powerful close ter murder. Folkses lives from his brow with his great brown hand. fairly depend on a horse ter work than corn an' sech, an' make a support fur 'em. | nel air powerful hot work," he declared. I hev knowed folks ter kem mighty close ter starvin' through hevin thar horse stole. make out with the old sorrel, ez air nigh | war them men?" fourteen year old, ter work the crap, an'

The hawk and its winged shadow disappeared together in the dense glooms of a I don't know who they war." deep gorge. Luke Todd watched them as they vanished. Suddenly he lifted his eyes. They were

weary face and his stalwart physique. He flare blazed in them. "What sort'n beastis that thar jagged aidge. An' ef yer back an' all the records gone! What will folks was tall and well-proportioned. A leather is this hyar mare ez the ranger tuk up?" Peters looked at him, hardly compre-

sorter sizable," he replied, sibilantly, suck- holler ter ye, but I war feared ye moughtn't as protection against the snow. The in- mountain, valley, and heaven with mystic ng his pipe-stem. Todd nodded meditatively several times.

He leaning his clbows on his knees, his eyes fixed on the landscape. "Hev she got a fool, Madeliny, an' ye never seen nuthin'. there was a muscular struggle to get them | - She recognized the locality; her breath enny partic'lar marks, ez ye knows on?"

"Wa'al, she be ez black ez a crow, with the nigh fore-foot white. An' she hev got | the sunlight. The golor flared into the new-comer's a white star spang in the middle o' her face. A sudden animation fired his eye. forehead, an' the left side o' her nozzle is He had a vague sense of impending dan-

Todd rose suddenly to his feet, "By gum!" he cried, with a burst of passion, her off!"

the county treasury one-haffen the ap- dred years its inmates had come and gone by the sense of espionage. He was a bold praisement an' hev the critter fur his'n. and lived and died. They took no heed man before the foes he knew, but this idea of the crag, but never a sound was lost of inimical lurking, of furtive scrutiny for upon it. Their drawling iterative speech unknown purposes, preyed upon him. He the iterative echoes conned. The ringing brooded over it as he sat idle by the fire. blast of a horn set astir some phantom Once he went to the door and stared specchase in the air. When the cows came ulatively at the great profile of the cliff. lowing home, there were lowing herds in | The sky above it was all a lustrous amber. viewless company. Even if one of the for the early sunset of the shortest days of children sat on a rotting log crooning a the year was at hand. The mountains.

ing road, the multitudinous hoof-beats, tinct among their shadows. The sun was this-kin the ranger be the ranger an' the as of a troop of cavalry, heralded his ap- not visible-only in the western heavens mought git hurt in the scrimmage?" proach to the little girl who stood on the was a half-veiled effulgence too dazzlingly porch of the log cabin and watched for white to be gazed upon. The ranger 'Hy're, Cunnel!" he cried, cordially, But the little "Colonel" took no heed.

She looked beyond him at the vague blue

mountains, on which the great grim rock was heavily imposed, every ledge, every waving dead crisp weed, distinct. He noticed the smoke curling briskly up in the sunshine from the clay-and-stick chimney. He strode past her into the house, as Madeline, with all semblance of youth faded from her countenance, haggard himself. "The Lord knows I hope they and hollow-eyed in the morning light, was war." hurrying the corn-dodgers and venison

steak on the table. Perhaps he did not appreciate that the and were wildly adrift in the sky. There women were pining with curiosity, for he was a broken tumult of billowy clouds,

"What ails the Cunnel, Madeliny?" he once more gallantly struggling to the surasked presently, glancing up sharply from face, and again sunk. The bare boughs under his hat brim, and speaking with his of the trees beat together in a dirge-like mouth full. "The cat 'pears ter hev got her tongue, said Madeline, intending the "Colonel"

should hear, and perhaps profit. "She ain't able ter talk none this mornin'." The little body cast so frowning a glance upon them as she stood in the doorway that her expression was but slightly less congruous demonstration, with her infantile features, her little yellow head, and her blue woollen stockings fell over her among the glooms. Now and then, as the had a light in her dark eyes and a color in ing up the gorge! The pines swayed and

wielded a strong coercion. "Laws-a-massy, Cunnel!" said Tobe, in a fitful blast stir the door? a harried manner, "couldn't ye find me nowhar? I'm powerful sorry. I couldn't thrill ran through every fibre. For there, But not in this wise was she to be pla-

ly defined. He realized that it was no su-He suddenly rose from his half-finished breakfast. "Look-a-hyar, Cunnel," he session the previous day. The jury, serv- an' I s'pose he delivered thar certifiente ter cried, joyously, "don't ye want ter ride

Even then she tried to frown, but the forward to hold the door. A hand was laid bliss of the prospect overbore her. Her upon it. cheek and chin dimpled, and there was a Tain't gurgling display of two rows of jagged little teeth as the doughty "Colonel" was projected into the darkness, the mare was change in his master's habits, deduced his he hed ter pay haffen her vally into the swung to his shoulder, and he stepped out rearing and plunging violently, the little

He laughed as he stood by the glossy black mare, and lifted the child to the saddle. The animal arched her neck and turned her head and gazed back at him curiously. "Hold on tight, Cunnel," he said as he looked up at her, his face solate jury, he bore the vigilant mien with the jedge o' the county court every six strangely softened almost beyond recognition. And she gurgled and laughed and screamed with delight as he began to slow-

ly lead the mare along. the hili. The "Colonel" had the gift of continuance. Some time clapsed before she exhausted the joys of her exaltation. More "The ranger took mighty partic'lar than once she absolutely refused to disand down, and the "Colonel" rode in state. It was only when the sun had to lift her chubby hands to her eyes, im-Luke Todd heard them, not without a periling her safety on the saddle, that he to adopt. And he, too, had a disposition finally she permitted herself to be assisted to the ground. When, with the little girl "It takes a mighty mean man ter steal | at his heels, he reached the porch, he took

a horse," he said. "Stealin' a horse air off his hat, and wiped the perspiration "I tell ye, jouncin' round arter the Cun-The next moment he paused. His wife had come to the door, and there was a Why, even that leetle filly of our'n, though strange expression of alarm among the

> "Tobe," she said, in a bated voice, "who He stared at her, whirled about, sur-

> Them men ez acted so cur'ous," she "I couldn't see thar faces plain, an'

"Whar war they?" And he looked over his shoulder once more. "Yander along the ledges of the big wide with a new speculation. An angry rock. Thar war two of 'em hidin' ahint war turned they'd peep out at ye an' the unoiled axles heralded the approach of a change; to watch the sky withdraw, seem-Cunnel ridin'. But whenst ye would face | wagon, and soon the old woman, bundled | ing fainter; to see the moon grow filmy, round agin, they'd drap down abint the in shawls, was sitting by the fire. She like some figment of the frost; to mark hending his tremor of excitement. "Seems aidge o' the rock. I 'lowed wunst ez I'd wore heavy woollen socks over her shoes the gray mist steal on apace, swathe

> recatory cadence. He stood in silent perplexity. "Ye air they were somewhat inelastic as well, could creep. Nobody hev got enny call ter spy on me." off only exceeded by the effort which had was short, her step quickened. She apfrom the rack, and went out frowning into her head again and again, with a red face,

The suggestion of mystery angered him.

ger. As he made his way along the slope | awful tale over yander 'mongst them Jentoward the great beetling crag, all his fac- kins folks. Ye oughter hev married Luke like girl she had been! ulties were on the alert. He saw naught Todd, an' so I tole ye an' fairly beset ye "she air my filly! Au' 'twar that thar when he stood upon its dark seamed sum- ter do ten year ago. He keered fur ye. that bright young identity she remembered. and looked down at the many ledges. They child! I hearn a awful tale 'bout Tobe up Deep among the wooded spurs Lone- jutted out at irregular intervals, the first yander at Jenkinses'." an importunate stream that forces its way | grew in a niche. An empty nest, riddled "Wa'al" - he made another effort- through a rocky gap, and so to freedom by the wind, hung dishevelled from a pride. "They be powerful keerful ter do of the milker, who, half kneeling upon the 'Tobe, we war jes sayin', ain't fitten fur beyond. No stranger intrudes; only the twig. Coarse withered grass tufted the it out'n rifle range." a gal. I reckon ye 'members ez how he said he hed no use for sech cattle ez that.

The roaming wind may explore its solitudes, and it he saw the depths of the Cove—the tops

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The roamcattle ez he war in courtin' other folkses' is but the vertical sun that strikes to the sweetheart, an, cf the truth mus' be heart of the little basin, because of the interlacing boughs were piles of rocks, "The Bible say 'words air for knowed, in marryin' her." He suddenly massive mountains that wall it round and the rush of a mountain rill, and a white Ye don' know what ye air talkin' 'bout, serve to isolate it. So nearly do they meet flash as a sunbeam slanted on the foam.

from his perch. "I want ter ax one o' at the gap that one great assertive crag. He was turning away, all incredulous, beetling far above, intercepts the view of when with a sudden start he looked back. The register had an expression of slow on a p'int o' law," he broke off abruptly. the wide landscape beyond, leaving its On one of the ledges was a slight depressubstituted profile jaggedly serrating the sion. It was filled with sand and earth. asked Luke Todd, with eager interest in changing sky. Above it, when the weather Imprinted upon it was the shape of a man's ed into rage, then lapsed into silence. Al- clutched the plaid shawl around her throat. is fair, appear vague blue lines, distant foot. The ranger paused and gazed fixedly though it did not constrain credulity, there Her bright hair was tossed by the rising

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aimin' ter take the mare away 'thout no words an' no lawin', 'kase they didn't view the mare, an' knowed ez she war his'n. An' Tobe war hid in the dark beside the mare, an' fired at 'em, an' the rifle-ball tuk Sam right through the beam o' his arm. I reckon, though, ez that warn't true, else ye would hev knowed it.

She looked up anxiously over her spectacles at her daughter.

"I hearn Tobe shoot," faltered Madeline.

'I seen blood on the leaves.' "Laws-a-massy! "exclaimed the old woman, irritably. "I be fairly feared ter bide hyar; 'twouldn't s'prise me none ef they kem hyar an' hauled Tobe out an' lynched him and sech, an' who knows who

They both fell silent as the ranger strode in. They would need a braver heart than either bore to reveal to him the suspicion shaded his eyes with his hand. No motion, of horse-stealing sown broadcast over the no sound; for the first time in his life the unutterable loneliness of the place immountain. Madeline felt that this in itself was coercive evidence of his innocence. "Madeliny," he said, suddenly, looking Who dared so much as say a word to his face? The weight of the secret asserted itself, over his shoulder within the cabin, "be however. As she went about her accustomed tasks, all bereft of their wonted in-'I don't know what ye mean," she falterest, vapid and burdensome, she carried tered, her eyes dilated. "They looked like

> tention, and he demanded, angrily: "What ails ye ter look so durned peak This did not abide long in his memory,

so woe-begone a face that it caught his at-

however, and it cost her a pang to see him so unconscious. She went out upon the porch late that afternoon to judge of the weather. Snow was falling again. The distant summits had disappeared. The mountains near at hand loomed through the myriads of serried white flakes. A crow flew across the Cove in its midst. It heavily thatched the cabin, and tufts disloged by the opening of the door fell down upon her hair. Drifts lay about the porch. Each rail of the fence was laiden. The ground, the rocks, were deeply covered. She reflectranger, standing within the rude stable of ed with satisfaction that the red splotch unhewn logs, all undaubed, noted how of blood on the dead leaves was no longer visible. Then a sudden idea struck her that took her breath away. She came in, He was giving the mare a feed of corn, but her cheeks flushed, her eyes bright, with an excited dubitation.

custom. That mysterious espionage had Her husband commented on the change. in some sort shaken his courage, and he "Ye air a powerful cur'ous critter, Madefelt the obscurity a shield. He had brought liny," he said: "a while ago ye looked some fower or five hundred year old-The equine form was barely visible now ve favors verself when I a-courtin' round the settlemint."

She hardly knew whether the dull stir in her heart were pleasure or pain. Her eyes filled with tears, and the irradiated iris shone through them with a liquid lustre. She could not speak. oak above the roof crashed together. Did Her mother took ephemeral advantage

of his softening mood. "Ye useter be He lifted his eyes mechanically. A cold mighty perlite and saaft-spoken in them days, Tobe," she ventured. close by the door, somebody-something-"I hed ter be," he admitted, frankly, was peering through the space between the "'kase thar war sech a many o' them logs of the wall. The face was invisible, mealy-mouthed cusses a-waitin' on Madeout the shape of a man's head was distinctliny. The kentry 'peared ter me ter bristle with Luke Todd; he 'minded me o'

pernatural manifestation when a husky brum saidge-everywhar ye seen his valler voice began to call the mare, in a hoarse head, ez homely an' ez onwelcome." "I never wunst gin Luke a thought a galvanic start he was about to spring arter ye tuk ter comin' round the settlemint," Madeline said, softly.

"I wisht I hed knowed that then," he He placed the muzzle of the rifle between replied; "else I wouldn't hev been so allthe logs, a jet of red light was suddenly fired oneasy an' beset. I wasted mo' time a-studyin' 'bout ye an' Luke Todd 'n ye war both wuth, an' went 'thout my vittles shanty was surcharged with roar and rean' sot up a nights. Ef I hed spent that verberations, and far and wide the crags time a-moanin' fur my-sins an' settin' my and chasms echoed the report of the rifle. lour at peace, I'd be 'quirin' roun' the There was a vague clamor outside, an throe o' Grace now! Young folks air oath, a cry of pain. Hasty footfalls sound-

powerful fursaken fools." ed among the dead leaves, and died in the Somehow her heart was warmer for this allusion. She was more hopeful. When the ranger venturned out he saw Her resolve grew stronger and stronger as the door of his house wide open, and the she sat and knitted, and looked at the fire-light flickering out among the leafless fire and saw among the coals all her old bushes. His wife met him half-way down life at the settlement newly aglow. She was remembering now that Luke Todd "Air ye hurt, Tobe?" she cried. "Did had been as wax in her hands. recalled that when she was married there was a gleeful "sayin" going the rounds "Ye didn't fire it a purpose?" she fal of the mountain that he had taken to the woods with grief, and he was heard of no more for days. The gossips relished his 'Ye never hurt nobody, did ye, Tobe?' despair as the corollary of the happy brid-She had turned very pale. "I 'lowed it He had no reproaches for her. He couldn't be the wind ez I hearn a hollerhad only looked the other way when they met, and she had not spoken to him since. "I hopes an' prays I hurt 'em," he said, "He set store by my words in them

days," she said, her lips vaguely moving. I misdoubts ef he hev furgot. All through the long hours of the winter night she silently canvassed her plan. The house was still noiseless and dark when she softly opened the door and soft-

The next day the mare disappeared from | ly closed it behind her. It had ceased to snow and the sky had cleared. The trees, all the limbs's whitentime, and when he and the "Colonel" came ed, were drawn distinctly upon it, and through the boughs overhead a brilliant star, aloof and splendid, looked coldly down. Along the chill east Orion had drawn his glittering blade. Above the snowy mountains a melancholy waning ne asked, curiosity overpowering her. moon was swinging. The valley was full of mists, white and shining where the light fell upon it, a vaporous purple where the shadows held sway. So still it was! the only motion in all the world the throber, who had gone several days before to a bing stars and her pulpitating heart. So neighbor's on the summit of the range, solemnly silent! It was a relief, as she would return; but presently the creak of trudged on and on, to note a gradual keer ter know." Her voice full in its dep- compatibility of the shape of the hose with folds, shut out all vision of things familthe human foot was rather marked, and as | iar. Through it only the sense of dawn

He stepped in doors, took down his rifle | been required to get them on. She shook | peared, like an apparition out of the mists, close to a fence, and peered through the as she bent over the socks, but plainly snow-laden rails. A sudden pang pierced "Laws-a-massy, Madeliny! I hearn a

For there, milking the cow, she saw, all blooming in the snow-herself; the azalea-

She had not known how dear to her was from her. She felt a forlorn changeling looking upon her own estranged estate. A faint cry escaped her.

The cow, with lifted head and a mut-"Folks hed better take keer how they talk 'bout Tobe," she said with a touch of tered low of surprise, moved out of reach ground, stared with wide blue eyes at her

There was a pause. It was only a moment before Madeline spoke; it seemed years, so charged it was with retrospect. "I kem over hvar ter hev a word with

ye," she said. At the sound of a human voice, Luke With this melancholy preamble she detailed the gossip that had arisen at the Todd's wife struggled to her feet. She county town and pervaded the country- held the piggin with one arm encitcled side. Madeline commented, denied, flash- about it, and with the other hand she was something that made her afraid when | wind.

"I 'lowed I'd find ye hyar a-milkin' 'bout "Ye hed better not be talkin' 'bout now.' rifle range so brash, Madeliny, nohows. The homely allusion reassured the young-

(Continued on fourth page.)

rom his hand, and stood gazing in blank To the same was a strange mo to in the void vastnesses of the wilder mess. They were creeping into view.

How, he could not say, but the summit of low in the void not say, but the summit of low in the void not say, but the summit of low in the void vastnesses of the wilder mess. They were creeping into view. If the range of the winder into the void vastnesses of the wilder warn't so mewlin' lookin' an' peakèd. Tobe Gryce's face showed that for once hat day he went up to the crag and once that day he went up to the crag and lock of the winder into once that day he went up to the crag and once the crag and once the crag and once that day he went up to the crag and once that the day he went up to the crag and once the crag and on