

IRENE, THE FOUNDLING;

Or, The Slave's Revenge.

By the Author of "The Banter of Bedford."

CHAPTER XVII.—Continued.

Mr. Diggs had found his company the day after...

The day after the battle, the body of Willie Thorbridge...

Colonel Holdfast's regiment was falling back toward the Junction...

One evening Corporal Grimm suggested to Sergeant Swords...

Great caution and secrecy were necessary, for, if knowledge of their project...

The door of the barn was locked, but this slight obstacle was soon overcome.

In a moment, in spite of Tom's efforts, the door was pushed open...

"Good evening, sir," said Swords. "What are you doing up there, you scamp?"

"Oh, no! don't, grandpa," said the sergeant. "Oh, Lordy! I'll be killed!"

"Bang! bang! bang!" went a dozen shots, their blaze lighting up the interior darkness.

"Who are you?" asked Seth, peering into the face of his victim, who stood digging his fate into his eyes.

"I am no slave, I am free, and free by my own exertions."

"Who are you?" he asked, the little superstition he had in his nature aroused.

CHAPTER XVIII. MR. TOMPKINS RECEIVES STRANGE NEWS. The war cloud grew darker day by day.

and law-abiding, seemed suddenly inspired with a mania for the murder, plunder and destruction of all who did not adhere to their opinions.

"The harmony of the household had been disturbed, never again to be restored. The war which had lasted for years was broken, so were the ties of love, which had defied the ravages of time, and the thousand petty variations of domestic life were sadly strained."

Communication north and south was out of, and it was almost impossible for any letter to cross the line.

It was evening, three or four weeks after the battle of Bull Run. Mr. Tompkins had, as usual, been to Snagtown and returned; the summer sun was sinking, battling in golden glory, a thick, dark bank of clouds gathering in the northwest.

"That's my name. What is your business with me?" returned the planter, sharply.

"I want to see you," replied the mulatto, coolly, to-kick, unbidden, a seat on the bench beneath the tree.

"Yes, there was a time when I was human, when I had human desires and human feelings, but all that is changed."

will unlock one of the darkest secrets that has clouded your life, a secret that has ever been a puzzle and a torment to you.

CHAPTER XIX. IRENE'S DILEMMA—THE BROTHERS MEET. To Irene the varied and startling changes that had lately taken place, brought perplexity and grief.

The regiment of which Abner Tompkins was a member had returned to the Junction, and the regiment which Colonel Scabble commanded was again in the neighborhood of Snagtown.

It was the third day after the retirement of the Confederates that a single horseman, a cavalry officer, galloped down the long hill on the road leading from Snagtown to Mr. Tompkins' residence.

"Irene's cheeks glowed with pleasure at sight of Abner, when she had so long believed to be her brother. She gave him a sister's welcome, as it was.

"It will have to be managed carefully," said the father, "for should he be so inclined, this man, perhaps, might destroy the last trace of her parentage."

Abner, looking sorrowfully into the pale, pleading face. "When change has come, nothing can bring back the old order of things."

lawn, below attracted her attention. She knew her father had been in the house for hours, and it was something unusual for the slaves to select that portion of the grounds for midnight conversation.

The night was beautiful, the moon shone brightly, even penetrating the dark shade of the trees, beneath one of which two figures were distinctly visible.

"Irene could discover that Joe's companion was a negro, a man past the middle age of life, of strong frame and strongly marked features."

"No, he never had any other name but Jacob, the son of Isaac."

"Your father's name was Henry," said the man. "Now, don't you remember that his Christian name was Henry?"

"Irene was leaning against the window-sill, holding the half-closed shutter in her hand. In her eagerness she pressed forward, pushing the shutter so far upon that it slipped from her hold and swung crashing back against the house."

It was late before Irene closed her eyes for sleep, and when she did, Joe's troubled eyes, Abner's eyes, sad and reproachful, and the gleaming eyes of the stranger haunted her dreams.

his father Jacob, who was soon to come down into Egypt. "It was about two weeks after Abner's visit that Olesh found himself at the head of a small scouting party in the neighborhood of his home."

"Our friend Diggs was of the party, and when Olesh stationed his men in a grove, about a mile distant, and set out to visit his home, Mr. Diggs volunteered to accompany him."

"I can't for the life of me, Diggs," he said, "see that we bear any possible likeness to knights or crusaders."

"At this moment another character entered on the scene. It was Crazy Joe; he paused a moment, and a look of recognition lit up his features."

"Why are you here, sir? Why did you not remain where I left you? When I make a man out of clay, and stand him up, I want him to stay where I leave him, until I can show people the greatness of my handiwork."

"Irene was leaning against the window-sill, holding the half-closed shutter in her hand. In her eagerness she pressed forward, pushing the shutter so far upon that it slipped from her hold and swung crashing back against the house."

"I understand now," exclaimed Olesh; "you can not choose between us; you know not which of us you prefer, or perhaps you prefer him. His eyes shone like burning coals, and his voice was hoarse with passion."