Jack's been stalk, and that those ten-

appropriate, conveys in one word an

Things had not improved at Tievina

'stylish" in front, with its couple of

long French windows opening on the gallery on either side of the large front

door, which with its broad side-light

and transom gave light to the long

central hall that ran the length of the

showed a grim frontage in spite of the

sheltering arms cast about and over it by more than a score of grand old

pecan and live oak trees crowding the

space between the front door and yard

gate. The original plank fence that had girdled the gray house and its fine

trees was an ante bellum boast of Mr.

Southmead's and had certainly had no

near rival in elegance; but it had been

patched and repatched, now with old planks, now with new rails, again

with piles of brush from the thorny

osage orange hedging that stretched

its ragged length about the entire

place, and most recently of all with

yard or two of glittering barbed wire

which had been sent Mr. Southmead by an enterprising dealer in novelty fenc

ing, until its identy was completely

lost and its solitary claim to respec

now lay in its being entirely pig-proof A startling ornate brand-new from

gate, large enough for man and beast,

gave token that the Southmeads still

had spasmodic movements in the direc-

tion of home decorative art. Dumped

in an inconsequent fashion about the

the back yard, were several out-houses

all antedating the war and giving

rickety suggestions of better days, even of a past glory that had found ex-

pression in scalloped eves to the leaky

roofs and latticed blinds to the un-

redly from among the prevailing grays and duns of the premises, and a plank

platform connecting it with the "big

house" was regarded as quite a con-

cession to the modern spirit of im-provement, as well as to the exactions

Two or three huge spikes driven

well into the bark of one of the big trees in the front yard, did duty for the horse-rack that had rotted down

some two or three years before and had never been replaced, owing to pres-

sure of other matters and lack of suit-

sides," Mr. Southmead had said,

At irregular intervals patches of

cision of old runic stones the location

of the circular carriage-drive that once

had been. Even now inside the vaguely outlined circle, in early spring

a few hardy snowdrops blossomed like ghosts revisiting the scene of their

former joys and triumphs, and van-

ished as quickly from the bare and

unresponsive sod. The grass grew thick over the carriage-drive now,

with none to care to check its rude en

croachment. Carriages were never

everlasting, and unless Cinderella's

godmother should good-naturedly vol-

unteer to turn the golden pumpkins,

lying about in the fields for stock con-

sumption, into gorgeous coaches for th

benefit of nineteenth century skeptics, they were not likely to become plenti-

which were exumed on occasions of

o point the moral of universal decay

and to them the grass in the Tievina

ran along the banks of a beautiful lake

some six or seven miles inland from the Mississippi River. Toward noon

of December, 1870, the interior of this establishment had been startled out of its slumberous quie-

entered his wife's presence on his re-

turn from his usual rounds over the

place, and said, positively and abruptly: "Amelia, my dear, I have

resolved to bury the hatchet. It be-

apart from the deuced inconvenience

of not being on speaking terms with

mead?" his wife asked, quite as if the mild air about Tievina bristled with

unburied hatchets.
"The hatchet of sectional prejudice,

which has kept us aloof so long from our neighbor, Major Denny! The

hatchet which, unburied, must remain a perpetual reminder of the wounds and scars of civil conflict!" Mr.

Southmead answered, a trifle grandi-

Bury which hatchet, Mr. South

one's nearest neighbor—and all the

snipe on his land too !"

omes me as a gentleman to do so,

tude by

a morning in the early part December, 1870, the interior

Mr. Southmead himself,

carriage-drive was no disrespect.

rheumatic and decrepit vehicles

ful in that neighborhood again

Even now inside the

rusty boxwood indicated with the pre-

able material close at hand. "Be

of free labor.

George Southmead.

when roads espec wood sides rain team ing press ing with tion (exce color ears team dire

ing said

mul tear that fore star who

in mu dist wh old

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Ashes on the Slide.

When Jim and Bill and I were boys a many How gaily did we use to hail the coming of the snow!
Our sleds. fresh painted red and with their runners round and bright.
Seemed to respond right briskly to our clamor
of dailedt. ners round and briskly to our case.
Seemed to respond right briskly to our case.
Seemed to respond right briskly to our case.
Seemed to respond right briskly to our case.

As we dragged them up the slippery road that climbed the rugged hill
Where perched the old frame meetin' house, so solemn like and still.

who knows by bitter experience that it grows with the magical celerity of

Where percent like and still.

Ah, coasting in those days—those good olddays—was fun indeed:
Sleds at that time. I'd have you know, were paragons of speed!
And if the fill got bare in spots, as hills will dowly, then why, then we'd had on ice and snow to patch those bald we'd had on ice and snow to patch those bald spots up again; adjectably our spirits spots up again; But, oh! with what sad certainty our spirits would subside. When Deacon Frishee sprinkled ashes where we used to slide! idea of the place and of its owner, Mr.

we used to slide:

The dea on he would roll his eyes and gnash his toothless gums
And clear his skinny throat and twirl his saintly, bony thumbs
And tell you: "When I woz a boy, they taught me to eschew
The godless, ribald vanities which modern youth pursue!
Things had not improved at Tievina since the war. Rather had they deteriorated with the facility that generally marks the downward progress of men and things. The house, originally an imposing-looking structure, built well up from the ground, encircled by broad verandas, and decidedly "stylish" in front, with its couple of

Now, he who ever in his life has been a little Will not reprove me when he hears the language I employ
To stigmatize as wickedness the deacon's zealous spite
In interfering with the play wherein we found
delight,

And so I say, with confidence, not unalloyed of pride:
"Gol durn the man who sprinkles ashes where the youngsters slide!"

Weather stained. But Deacon Frisbee long ago went to his last-

ing rest.

His moley well invested in farm mortgages out West;

Bill, Jin, and I, no longer boys, have learned through years of strife

That he troubles of the little boy pursue the man through life.

That here and there along the course wherein we hoped to glide

Some envious hand has sprinkled ashes just to spoil our slide:

deacon's now.

Grim, ruthless Fate: that evil sprite none other
is than thou!

Riches and honors, peace and care come at
thy beck and go.

The soul, elate with joy to-day, to-morrow
wriths in week.

The soul, clate with 195 writhes in woe! And ill a man has turned his face unto the wall and died Wall and died He must expect to get his share of ashes on his slide!

The New Man a' Rossmere.

CHAPTER I.

There are certain lacalities in the South for which it is difficult to forecast bright future ; localities which, for patent reasons, must remain, at least for many generations to come, what they were and as they were at the close of the war. Possessed of no mineral resources suggesting latent possibilities and inviting capital, there is nothing upon which to found a reasonable to the sloperish that the sloperish current of their ways will ever increase in velocity. Debarred, by the very exigences of natural position, such impetus toward improvment and able expectation that the sluggish progress as follows in the fiery wake of the locomotive, the local pulse must continue to beat in unison with the slower revolutions of the paddle-wheel, which still embodies for it the acme of speed.
This unchangeableness bestows that

extrinsic value upon such localities which belongs to the type of every age and clime; and whosoever would pre serve, as matter of story or history, the record of life as it was in the agricultural districts of the South, must seek it, not in the neighborhood of her shipping points strung along the treacherous banks of the Mississippi things are changed from what they River like tawdy beads on an untrustworthy string, or else back, hidden from view by miles of intervening timber, in the clustering hamlets of houses of varying degrees of shabbiess, which have a common raison detre in the Court House that pro-

claims the county seat. In the swamp lands of Arkansas and ouisiana, in the "Piney Hills" Mississippi, and elsewhere in the South, one may travel many a day and not ose sight of these petrified neighborhoods where things came to a standstill, socially, long ago, and where a week-old newspaper is the freshest link between a world where people do and dare and a world where they en dure and remember; places where "mail-day" punctuates the week with a single period, and where the fluctuations of the cotton market and th "Liverpool quotations" outrank Wall Street and the Signal Service report; places, in short, where men brawn and brain to make them the peers of any man are held in bondage by the iron god Circumstance, until the possibilities of their lives are re

duced to zero. It is in such a neighborhood and amongst such people that the scene of the following incidents is laid; incidents of actual occurrence, which narrator has simply portrayed and painted with their genuine surround-The age is altogether too urgent ings. its demand for facts, for one who seeks to please to neglect the paramount condition of success-veracity and, in verification of the old saying that truth is stranger than fiction, it must be added that the most improbable seeming of the events in this story are the ones described most literally as

they occurred. "Tievina," to any one familiar with the flora of the South, and capable of associating the name with the fact that the pestiferously clinging vine known "tie vine" is at once the bane and the reproach of the planter who succumbs to its encroachments, was the unfortunate but singularly appropriate name for a plantation in the southern part of Arkansas, which had been owned and "run" by the Southmeads unto the fourth generation of that

happy-go-lucky family.

The tie vine, which every zealous planter fights with the energy of desosely.

peration, is a charming object to the botanist, with its dark, glossy, serrate leaves, its graceful tendrils that curl with vicious tenacity about the growing crops, and its delicate blue and white flower-bells, morning-glories in miniature; but to the tiller of the soil, who knows by bitter experience the tiller. "Sectional prejudice! Major Denny! Our neighbor! Why, George," Mrs. Southmead gasped, in excited crescendo, "he is a Yankee!"

do, "he is a Yankee!"
"I am afraid I can not disprove that assertion," her husband says lightly but, as it does not necessarily follow that he is an anaconda, I suppose we can find enough for him to eat on Christmas Day. I have invited him to dine with us then."

'Have invited?" " Have invited.

"And you are absolutely committed o it? Absolutely."

Mrs. Southmead folded her plump hands over the sewing-machine, whose wheel had come to an astonished halt, and uttered an ejaculation of dis satisfaction. Her handsome blue eyes were full of the amazed consternation

of a totally unreconstructed rebel.
"I veritably believe you are the most tactless man on earth," she said, presently, as if she had been silently naking up her mind on this point Of course, he will expect to be entertained like a prince.

his expectations will be 'I think nore than filled if he finds himself re ceived like a gentleman," Mr. South-

mead said, shortly.

"I hope I have self-respect enough for that," she said. "But think of it, George!" She resumed her plaint in a pathetic monotone, jumbling to-gether patriotism, housewife's pride, personal vanity, and inherited prendices, with a reckless disregard for the unities, that was pathetically

"A Yankee! And I've nothing on earth to wear (thanks to him and his)! No champagne! What a farce of Christmas dining! A major, and they do say he lives like a prince at home, if he is an interloper! And not a piece of my best chinaleft! No dining-room servant! And a major with his bands dived red in the hands dyed red in the blood of my kindred, and yet we will hobnob with him over the poorest and skinniest turkey that was ever killed since Job's. Mercy! I believe I will send the creature word I am ill and can not possibly receive company. Ursula," turning suddenly toward the door that had opened at her back, "do come here and help me out of the mess your Uncle George has gotten us all

The individual thus adjured advanced into the room with the most unsympathetic of smiles playing about immense and weed-choked area called

"Well, auntie, what now? "Oh! you needn't say 'what now' as if I were in the habit of conjuring up troubles out of nothing. The dear knows I have plenty of genuine ones on hand without putting myself to that trouble! What would you say if I glazed windows. A new kitchen of unpainted cypress lumber gleamed were to tell your that you Uncle George has actually invited that Major Denny, who bought the Rossmere place, to dinner here on Christmas?"

"I should simply say that I was delighted."

"Hurrah for Sula and common ense!" cries Mr. Southmead, waving his hat triumphantly over his head.

"Why, auntie," Sula goes on in her soft, coaxing voice, "Christmas is just the time for a friendly overture of this sort. Peace on earth and goodwill toward man, don't you know

"Oh, yes! I know. I haven't quite forgotten all my Christmas mot-Atlantas and Birminghams and Arguing rather pathetically against toes, if I have lived twenty years out Memphsis, but at the drowsy little any urgent need of replacement: "it of the sound of a church-bell; but all the Christmas mottoes on earth are not sufficient to make me think it was right of Mr. Southmead to involve me

n this thing."
"Why, just think of it, aunt, this Major Denny has been living within three miles of us for a whole year, on for promptly and liberally; and we have treated him with no more civility than if he had stolen the place, and stolen it from us at that! Put yourself in his place, Aunt Amelia. I think Uncle George has done just

'And you can think so?" Ursula understood the emphasis, and flushed to the roots of the soft. wavy brown hair that was parted over her most placid brow.

"And I can think so," she said, th sweet gravity. "It will not with sweet gravity. "It will not bring my Willie back to me, aunt, to close my hand and heart against this stranger that is within our gates.

"Sula," said her uncle, laying his hand on her head tenderly, "I think on that great day when all the rewards universal public interest only served promised in the Sermon on the Mount to the various 'blesseds' shall be acorded, they will have to put the one promised to the peace-maker on our So much for the exterior of Tievina which was visible from the road that

ittle girl's head. Before Sula had begun her gentle little "preach," as the family called her takings-to-task, Mrs. Southmead had one powerful ally, in her opposition to Major Denny's coming, in Frederic, her son, who had been moodily drumming on the window during the entire controversy. But then Fred was sore just then on the subject of a suddenly terminated or interrupted collegiate course, and he felt unreason ably inclined to hold every man from the north personally responsible for his father's lack of means and his own consequent misfortune. But by the use of that magic re-adjuster, yourself in his place," he speedily arrived at a juster conclusion, and showed himself quite ready and even anxious to do his share toward entombing that rusty old hatchet, which, after all, he said bitterly, had inflicted the

held it aloft. could extend a hand in amity, what was he that he should hold back!

orest wounds upon those who had first

mation, nor burn our cotton either."
At which they all laughed, Mrs.
Southmead included. It was very difficult to regain her tragic attitude after the concession of that laugh, so Mrs. Southmead surrendered the point of the dinner ignominiously, but unconditionally.
"Sula," she asked, with feminine

inconsequence, "do you suppose it is possible to turn that old black silk once more? I should like to let him see that I do know how a lady ought to

receive! And Sula thought it was.

CHAPTER II.

ONE VIEW OF THE MAJOR. If leaning with his elbows upon the window-sill raised to admit the mild air which had strayed by some happy mistake into the month of December doing nothing but moodily wondering how much longer it would take the Southmead family to go to the dogs at their then rate of progress, allowing his ears to absorb and his memory to retain every sound that floated toward him, could be called eavesdropping, then Frederick Southmead was guilty of that naughty practice on the morn-

ing in question, and met with the proverbial bad luck of that character. From those morose meditations upon the fact that he was rapidly approaching man's estate, but with a partial education, no prospects and no trade, he was aroused by hearing a small imperious voice out yonder in the new cypress kitchen, which his window overlooked, saying, in tones of lofty condescension:

"Ef you'll give me a piece uv dough all for meself, mammy, and yo' great big thim'le, an' put m' up to table, an' tell me all 'bout Kris Krinkle while I cuts out me little bits o' bitsa, I let yo' go on rubbin' silver."

By which knows that Paul Pry, as the youngest son of the house is called, because of his insatiable curiosity, is in the kitchen, "pesterin'" Aunt Nancy, their cook, in a way she would not dispense with for half a year's wages; and he gathered, furthermore, by the vibratory motion communicated through the connecting plank plat form, that Aunt Nancy was doing baby's despot's will, and finally, by the childish chuckle of satisfaction, that it is done, without the accompanying-"Dar you is! How long you gwine stay dar?

"Now about Kris Krinkle!" says Carl. inexorably.

Carleton is the boy's real name, but it is seldom bestowed upon him except on rare occasions when parental authority asserts itself in a sudden

gusty assumption of austere dignity. "Well, honey chile, ole Kris ain' never hurt hisseff a-doin' fur you," says mammy, settling to the work of narration and silver-rubbing simul-"but, bless de lam, w'en tancously, yer brer Freddie en yer sis Jinny were leetle like you, he usen t'jes' tum'le down dechimbly in yo' ma's room bodashusly, wid his pack on his back ! Stockin's warn't nowhars! Git out, chill'n! He'd stuff, en he'd cram, en he'd ram, till he heered de stitches a-crackin' long de stock-legs, we'en he'd sorter let up on de stockin's en go t' spillin' things 'bout ev'awhars, sorter permiscus lak, fer yer buddie and yer

'em more!' "No sech uv a thing!"

Nancy answered, combatively. "You's jes' es good es gal' w'en you's a min' t' But I sorter 'lows, honey son, dat ole St. Nick mus' 'a' ben a cott'n planter en done loss all his niggers, or a plantation that he bought and paid de wurrims mus a strip his field, or some'n nudder mus' 'a' give him a mouty satback, fur thar's no two ways about it, he do make a monsous po show dese daws."

"But he's coming, though!" Carl says, triumphantly, "and he's going bring me - bring me - what's he going to bring me, manmy? - you

"What does you mos' wish he'd brung yer?" mammy asks, with insinuating cunning, and it is safe to pre-dict that if the boy mentions anything within reach of her slender purse it will be forthcoming. Upon which encouragement Carl

launches into a spirited enumeration of his needs and desires, so reckless as to number and magnificent as to qual ity that it would seem Aunt Nancy' hints about the good saint's financial straits had fallen upon incredulous ears. While Carl grapples with "futures" and his thimble buscuit,

Aunt Nancy rubs her silver to the accompaniment of a retrospective monologue, wherein she bewails the departed glory of the house of South-"C'ris'mus!" she sniffs, with audible

"C'ris'mus! Whar's de use scorn. uv havin' enny C'ris'muses dese times, ennyways? Whar's de eysters, en de orringis, en de lemmins, en de citrins en de reesins, en de ammuns, en de taller fur de mince-meat? W'at sorter C'ris'mus kin you mek out widout a black cake en mince-meat, ef you'll please t' tell me? Seems lak all dem things usent' come 'long uv der own 'cord sho's C'ris'mus roll'roun'. they don' now, dat dey don'. I ain' got no use fo' C'ris'mus myseff. sence we done broke all t'flinders. An' we is come down in de wurrul', sho es gun is iern. En who's t' help us up 'gin? Tell me dat, people! Not ole marser; he's too sot in his ways to pester his head 'bout free niggers If Ursula, widowed and desolate, build extend a hand in amity, what has he that he should hold back!

"After all, mamma, he said, magimmously, "this particular fellow ldn't write the emanuication and the state of the said right! Not dat boy Freddie, fur, Gawd bless dat boy, he do ve'y'ly seem lak de lilies uv de fiel which the state of the said right! The said bout free niggers; gin him his setter pup en his rifle, en he's all right! Not dat boy Freddie, fur, Gawd bless dat boy, he do ve'y'ly seem lak de lilies uv de fiel which the said bout free niggers;

wid my ole brass frim' le dar! Is we got t' wait on him t' pull us outen de mire uv disspon en de bog uv poverty? Go way, people! Ain' I ben seed de times w'en Marse George Southmead would 'a' thouten sech doin's es we hes now jes' 'bout fit'n fur his fiel' han's, leave out he's yard folks! C'ris'mus, en one lone toluble decen turkey, uv my own fotchin' up, en one po' blue, skinny leg 'er mutt'n, all de show fur meat! Ciar t' goodniss, de mutt'n we hes now is so mean, seems lak it swinks up in de b'ilin' cuten pure shem-facedniss fur its own meanness! En comp'ny comin'! Whar's de celery, en de capers, and de pulv'rize sugar fur de icin'! Whar's de grit in dat boy Fred, dat he don' tek his gun en try fur some wil' ducks, at leas'!
Whar's enny thin' fitt'n fur comp'ny

w'te folks?—tell me dat."
"Cozzie can tell you! Cozzie knows every thing," says Carl, coming to a sudden halt in a vivid description of a steam-engine with red wheels and a blue boiler, which figures conspicu ously among his holiday demands, in order to make a suggestion that he thinks will satisfy Aunt Nancy's querulous discomfort about things in gen eral, or ought to if it does not.

Aunt Nancy was the cook at Tie vina; had been ever since she had reached years of discretion. She was black, ponderous, and capable. Freedom had made no appreciable change in her position in the Southmead family, unless by affording opportunity for the exercise of certain bene volent and patronizing tendencies that had never had free play in times." Carl and her cooking-stove ranked first in her affections. She had times." been proud of the establishment in the days of its prosperity; she yearned over it pityingly in the days of its ad-

versity. It would have been difficult to imagine the domestic machinery of the household moving at all without its ebony mainspring, Aunt Nancy. In a burst of humility and self-knowledge Frederic had once been heard to declare that if either Aunt Nancy or himself had to be offered up a sacrifice on the altar of necessity he would say, take him, a cumberer of the earth, and leave. her, the very salt thereof.

But it is one thing to call one's self a cumberer of the earth, and quite another to hear one's self called so. The old woman's words stung and rankled.

Was he really as useless as one of Solomon's lilies? and was he totally devoid of manly "grit"? In a spirit of sullen acquiescence he sprang from his seat by the open window, swung his shot-gun over his shoulder, and left the honse. He would like to fling a brace or two of ducks at Aunt Nancy's feet in triumph when he came back but whether he killed anything or not he relished the idea of a tramp through the woods this mild morning.

The lake front of Tievina was

narrow, not more than a mile and a half from the belt of woods that separated it from Thorndale, old Squire Thorn's place, their nearest neighbor to the right, to the other belt of woods that intervened between them and Rossmere, the plantation recently bought by Major Denny. It was back in this last strip of woods that the best duck ponds and the snipe grounds were to be found; and in this direction Frederick turned his steps. The fields were brown and rusty with the dead sissie."

"May be sister and bruddie Fred were brown and rusty stalks of the cotton that had all been was better'n me, 'says Paul Pry, with wistful humility, 'an' ole Kris loved picked, but not so closely that little dingy remnants of the staple, bed ragged and worthless, were not to be seen flapping dismally at every step. There was nothing doing in any partment, except at the gins, where the last few bales were being marked for shipment, and the moats, refuse of the stands, were being ginned up. The soft puffing of the little steam pipe, that sent quick white clouds up to mingle with those in the blue above and the crackling of dead twigs under his own feet, were the only sounds that followed Frederic into the gray and leafless woods. The long line of the levee, brier-grown and log-encumbered, afforded better footing than the roadside, so he clambered up it, and walked on in the direction of Rossmere. The road was badly cut up at this season of the year by the heavily-laden cotton wagons, that had but one route for the eight or ten plantations that lay in what was called the bed of the lake, out through the Rossmere place, to the river-landing that was now part of Major Denny's property. The ship-ping of the cotton all came in between he months of November and January,

CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE. To the question, Which is your favorite poem? there may be a great variety of answers; but when asked Which is your favorite blood-purifier? there can be only one reply-Ayer's Sarsaparilla, because it is the purest, safest, and most economical.

