

carpetless floor served as an accompaniment for her vigorous thoughts. The catalpa tree, brought many years before by Brian Lacey from the Blue Grass country, where he had been working, and planted opposite to his window, where its broad leaves might wave him welcome on summer mornings, was now in full bloom; and partly because it represented a strange vegetable growth, partly because Judith Sanders, sitting in its shade with a large book resting on her lap, represented a phase of life, likewise strange, Mrs. Logan regarded it with a displeasure she made no attempt at concealing.

"Thet hejus tree's bloomin' agin," she mused. "I doan know what ole Brian seen in it to make him fetch it frum Burbon an' ten' an' keer fer it like ez ef it was a child. An' she's ez crazy 'bout it. When I tole her tother day she oughter cut it down so's the sun kin git into the house uf a mornin' she looked at me ez if she thought I was a fool. I wish sumthin' 'ud happen to it, fur sence the leaves cum out I can't see the light uf a night an' tell how long they set up. An' she's been a-settin' out thar all mornin,' with one uf them books. It's awful the way thet gal spen's her time, with one uf them books 'mos' always in her han's. An' yit she gits along, sumhow. Her work's always done 'long afor anybody elses. She raises more turkeys than any one in the country and yoh can't count her chickens. Things prosper bettah with her than they did with Brian."

For some time she sat motionless.

"It's no use his tryin,' he says," she then thought, recommencing her hard rocking. "She doan take any more notice uf him then she does uf the nigger Rody sen's up to ten' the

crap. He says he heerd her say once she warn't ever goin' to marry any man. The idy! An' thet place to go to Rody's chil'n an' we to go on livin' up hyar on this po'r hill. It's them books as what has got the gal so 'ceptional frum every body else. Thar's witchcraft in them! If I could only"—

The sound of a man's laugh, clear, ringing and strange, broke across her thoughts. It brought her hard rocking to an abrupt stop, and turning her eyes from the girl, sitting under the catalpa tree, she saw her son climbing the steep hill, followed by a tall, well-dressed gentleman, who, with one hand, was guiding a bicycle through the wiry white clover and timothy that were making desperate effort to cover the narrow fence-path.

"Wall, I'll declar'!" she cried, springing to her feet, "ef it haint the Baptist preacher, what Lucindy Smith tole me was stoppin' at the Hotel at the Licks! Whar on earth did Bud fin' him? He'll be hyar fur dinnah an' thar haint even a fire in the stove yit!" She ran down the three short logs that, properly placed, served as steps for the porch and peered anxiously at the bottom one; then, said to herself,

"An' it's 'way pas' eleven o'clock already."

Many years before, Mrs. Logan's brother, from Headquarters, a village some eight miles distant, had visited her, and, being the possessor of a watch and finding no timepiece in his sister's house, he had cut a deep mark on the log step, where the shadow fell that day when the noon hour was reached. That was her guide as to the serving of the dinner. It were useless to attempt to convince her that her time was correct only one day in