Hill.

BY ROBERT YULEE TOOMBS From The Cosmopolliau CHAPTER I.L.

Bible Hill postoffice was at the and Miss Vina kept even better metals. top of the high steep hill that one posted than he on his private busi- He was quite a mineralologist in son Rakestraw. The house was

Malvina and their little parentless grand-daughter Caddie.

into which patrons of the postoffice clothes and town ways. deposited everything which they carried away by mice or rats or it ing to try to do it." chanced to be used on dark or cold mornings to start the fire.

ness in business matters; and in as I tries--but they's honest." the light of subsequent events will The old parson-postmaster owned possibly charge that Parson Rake, a mill down on Lost creek. It was the plainest writing-his old large. Vina, indignantly denied. She was print Bible was hard work to him. I miller but she was a lady too and

ever, was a scholar. She was a fur." Let'em watch if they could great big girl-tall, round limbed n't take her word for it. The hand and red haired; she wore a No. 8 some but unfortunate little spy had shoe and weighed probably a hun- indeed last summer spent many dred and seventy five pounds. Miss pleasant afternoons fruitlessly lurk Vina was strong physically, and ing about the mill-half the time un mentally her strength was in keep | consciously in plain view, greatly to ing with her size, but morally her Miss Vina's amusement training had been neglected and misdirected and she was a worthy Soice. " Bible Hill, in a steady Excelsion corn whiskey which they drank making for itself a place in the rev clear of the cradle an 1 it seemed he convicted-always unjustly as they his coffin. claimed-in the Asheville courts of They raised patches of corn and reach by this windfall. And ablockade with large quantities of ging for themselves. fine whiskey-much superior at Many of them had for trifling parcels among its contents were oft

The Postmaster at Bible the extreme and unmanly length a verse from Lorena.; After a long of devotedly courting Miss Vina, time, however, seeing that the purand paying the postmaster hotel chasers simply held the purchrsed rates for board an entire summer. right in idleness and made no ef-He was indiscreet enough, however, fort to develop them, he sold his to send and receive all his letters mineral rights also and at once bethrough the Bible Hill postoffice, gan a vigorous hunt for the presious

climbed immediately, after cross- ness and the state of his affections his way and prospected industriousing Lost Creek, going west. It was regarding herself. Being a good- ly along the mountain streams and. also the long-time residence of Par- natured dutiful daughter, she among the rocks on the hillsides warned her father and his friends He carried numerous .: specimens one-story two-room pen built of and made herself extremely agree- and bits of shining stuff in his casmall logs and was inhabited by able to their spy-boarder as long pacious pockets, testing them at the parson, his wife, their daughter as he remained with them.

masked men stopped him on the

the receptacle of all outgoing mail cusing him of trifling with Miss all his labors as will come to all matter-was a large crook-necked Vina's affections led him away to who dig and wait. Parson Rakegourd, which hung at the gate, at to the woous and most cruelly straw struck it rich: 1200 the end of a rope, from the branch whipped him with switches; then of a tree. There was a narro x open- warned him against ever returning ing in one side of the great gourd to annov the poor girl with his fine

"We're all honest people on this intrusted to the mails. All incom- hill," Parson Rakestraw would freing mail for the office was held un quently say. "I named this hilltil called for in a candle box on the myself J named it, an' I promised et of glittering ore. mantle shelf in the common room the Lord, Him a helpin' me, to use of the log hat, where the family my utmost endeavors to keep unto cooked, ate and slept, unless it was this hill s good name, an' I'm a go

Rubbing his chin stubble with his great rough hand he would gaz People who chanced to differ in guilelessly into even a "revenue's" politics with the postmaster, or were infidel eyes and continue: "Some of over systematic themselves were the boys air bad, myself I know shocked at his apparent careless, they's bad, nor can I help it hard ing with the strang gold fever.

straw did not hesitate to read the a slow primative affair and was contents of all letters that went kept busy all the time gri ding through his office in which he im- corn into meal for an extensive setagined he might be personally in tlement. Informers had charged terested. In advance we will prove that the mill was used to grind this charge unjust to a self declared "mash" for the mountain whiskey honest man; he could not even read men but this the fair mller. Miss Miss Malvina, his daughter, how conducted the mill "honest and 8 Same

times after a rude . fashion . with When he went away a number of very unsatisfactory results. 1

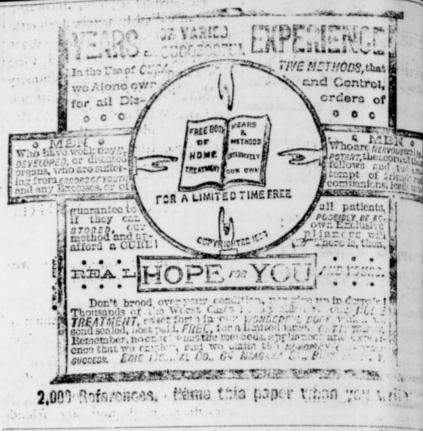
The day dawned at jast however. The postoffice letterbox-that is, road to the railway station, and ac that was to bring him reward for It happened this wav:

Late one dreary afternoon it was raining and a dense fog covered the face of the earth. Deep.among the rocks and roots in a dismal dell his pick shattered a fragment from a ledge of stone and unearthed a pock-

With a glad startled cry cautiously smothered when, but half uttered as he remembered how, he had sold his mineral rights, he grasped a handful of the bright -tuff, pressed it to his heart, to his lips, danced wildly, about with the yellow rocks close clasped in both hands, until exhausted and pant-

He kneat alone in prayer beside the rich pocket and really resolved in his heart for the moment to lead a changed and better life, to become an hopest man witht his gold which he was practically stealing from the mineral rights speculator. Then he carefully covered his precious secret with earth and leaves and valked home a strangely saddened man.

The next day Parson Rakestraw gave his mill to his only son John a great rough parody of his father. saying he felt a call to more entirely consecrate himself to the good cause and that he feared the mill



A. Cure for the Ailments of Man and

Mustang

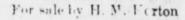
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If the old cranky singing wreach? while Parson Kakestraw had de-If the old cranky singing milach? while Parson Kakestraw had de- "When we've got anything for a er were guilty, it seemed utterly in clined to part with any "rights or feller," said a possom-faced mounpossible to trap him. Detectives titles whatsomever." He wanted taineer, "we generally take a squint in various guises vainly attempted to be able to read his titles clear barrels and send it to him without to work up a case against him. One bere and hereafter, he said, like a troublin' the mail riders." handsome little spy even went to true Christian; then he would sing

It was a strange country.

The people lived in wretched lo. daughter to her sire. Her good houses without floors often and larname as to personal virtue however rafters overhead; they were ignor was unquestioned. Mrs. Rake ant, unwashed, uncombed, uncouth straw was a dirtily dressed, dilapi- but strong and healthy. Their an dated woman with small furtive petites and digestion were wonder eyes and a rasping fault-finding ful. From the arsenical clay which they often ate, to the pure, strong

wort of a Way. had for years been nothing hurt them. Only help one thue records of the western district, asked no further favors until h-A number of its citizens had been was ready for you to help him into coffee, tobacco and whiskey were

"manufacturing, removing and sell tobacco, hunted, fished and eked his wife could attend to the mill as ing" moonshine whiskey; and re- out miserable poverty stricken excently in a vague general way Par istences, yet every landowner re still roam the forests in search of son Rakestraw had come to be sas- garded himself as a possible willion game, with an easy mind and a pected as an accessory, a general aire, as the possessor of a gold mine manager, in fact, for a hold and yet to be discovered-"If one of successful band who were known them mineral fellers would just neighbors were not a lefter writing to have their headquarters near the come along an' dig-it out." they people. The candle tox on the "Hill" and who were running the used to say, never dreaming of dig mantle shelf rarely" contained a

least to the usual grade of the illic sums sold all mineral rights in their great gourd at the gate did not avlands to speculators, but for a long erage one letter daily,

might prove a stumbling block in his path.

John was a mighty hunter who followed his calling seven days in the week. He claimed to always enjoy Letter luck on Sundays than during secural days. His long ild fashioned rifle brought in meat sufficient for family consumption and to sell inexchange for coffee as d tobacco, but John was often sorely put out with his wife's questions as to where their "next bread were a comin' from." New however, there would never more be trouble on that account; the mill would bring in corn and meal to sell, and to keep; also brought in secure and easy his sister had heretofore, John could clear conscience.

Bible Hill postoffice was not very dozen letters for delivery and many

(TO BE CONTONUED.)