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almost content to sit opposite her and to talk of the old days.

"And if sometimes, when he saw her eyes rest on the boy, and knew she was dwelling on gentle memories in which he himself had no part, if at those times a moment's doubt of his right to play at Providence came to disturb him, he would comfort himself with a thought of things as they had been and as they were. It was a long way back to the Ohio farm and to the day when he had taken the road that carried him away from her and from what might have been. And he had chosen for himself what he knew she did not wholly understand and perhaps wished might be otherwise. But it was that choice and the things he had done that had accomplished what meant most in life to him then and always—until she died. Afterward—

"Gentlemen, I look back a little further, I guess, than do any of you, and I believe my eyes still see clearly. The world is full of work worth while which must be done; big things and little things, as the world estimates them. The little things may be intrusted to men singly; for the hearts of most men are just, and one man's strength is enough. But for the big things only the strength of a score of men will do, that and the common purpose. And the common purpose can prevail only when among those men is one able to reconcile their differences, bind their wills, and hold them true, not to what might be brought about, but to what can be brought about, in that hour. At this I have tried my hand. In some things I have failed where I should have succeeded; in some I have succeeded where I should have failed. There are still a few years left me. I want to go on."

FOR a brief space after he ceased speaking he stood facing them, and there was no sound. Then he stepped back and, feeling for his chair, sat down. Almost with one accord they were on their feet, cheering him, calling him by the name they best knew.

The Avenger

Continued from page 4

who carried a rifle of the same pattern as the man's, was almost as sure a shot as he. The continued absence of the cow, the wound on the red steer's flank, the defiant network of tracks all about the cabin, showed clearly enough that the fight was now to the death. The man and woman knew there would be no security for them so long as the mother panther remained alive. Therefore they were in haste to settle the matter. They picked out a distinct trail and followed it. It led them straight to the body of the slain cow, which the slayer had visited twice in course of the night, just to satisfy her thirst for vengeance.

But at the moment when the two indignant hunters were examining the carcass of the cow the panther was at their cabin door listening. She had seen the man and woman hurry away. Now she could hear quite distinctly the little complainings of her young. She pushed against the heavy door till it creaked; but it would not yield. Close by was the window. Standing up on her hind legs, she stared in. At last she managed to make out the two cubs lying in a corner in a box of rags and straw. The sight scattered all her caution to the winds. Scrambling up to the windowsill, she dashed her head and shoulders through the glass. That the jagged fragments cut her mouth and muzzle severely, she never heeded at all. Forcing her whole body through, her powerful haunches caught the window frame and carried it with them to the floor. Writhing herself free of this encumbrance, she darted to the box of rags, snatched up one of the cubs by the loose skin of its neck, sprang through the window with it, and bore it off into a growth of tall, rank grass behind the barn. Returning at once to the cabin, she rescued the other cub in the same way, and brought it triumphantly to its brother in the long grass.

ABOUT this time she heard the man and the woman coming back. Instead of trying to get away, she coiled herself flat in the grass and began to suckle her cubs to keep them quiet. Her hiding place was the most secure that she could have found within miles of the cabin, the man having never any occasion to go behind the barn (as she had seen by the absence of tracks), and the rank growth furnishing complete concealment. Crafty woodsman though the man was held to be, it never entered his mind that so shy a beast as the panther would take covert thus within the very stronghold of the foe. At sight of the shattered window he fell into a rage, and when he found the cubs gone

And for an instant his pulses leaped in exultation; but for an instant only. Then some note in their voices, some look upon their faces, revealed the truth to him. And he knew that his time had come. He had opened his heart and held out his hands.

And they had given him pity! And to whom men gave their pity they did not intrust Power!

The Playwright Novitiate

Continued from page 8

to get it, or that if he gets it it will be worth following. But I find that the mere stating of a difficulty helps to show the way out of it, and that in trying to make some one else understand all the details of the situation and what it is that I wish to do with it I usually find for myself wherein the trouble lies, and am thus enabled to put my finger under the weak spot and lift it out.

And finally let the dramatist realize that, after all, plays are not written. They are built upon the stage, line by line and scene by scene. The finished manuscript of the finest play of the season can serve only as a starting point, a foundation on which the real drama as seen by the audience is built. With this as a basis, the author, the stage manager, and the actor must fight it out among them. The greater strength there is to the original version, the closer the finished production will adhere to it.

And this is why it is so important that the dramatist should turn out a finely woven, closely connected, dramatically true piece of work; so that in its passage through that grueling mill known as "production" it will not be shorn of those tabs and earmarks that have endeared it to its maker. Only in this way can the author maintain his own in the ever present fight with that couple whom every playwright seems to regard as his anciently entrenched enemies—the stage director, and the producing manager who presents his play.

The Avenger

Continued from page 4

he exhausted ingenuity in consigning to every torment the man who had tempted him into speculating in panther cubs. Storming noisily, he hunted everywhere—except behind the barn. For a time his wife sat composedly on the woodpile and cheered him with pointed backwoods sarcasm. At last, however, the two went away over the ridge, to recover the skin of the other panther before it should be spoiled by foxes, and during their absence the mother got both cubs safely carried off to a hollow tree some five miles farther along the ridge.

That night, while the man and the woman slept with boards nailed over their window, the panther bore her little ones far away from the perilous neighborhood. She had no more thought of vengeance now. By difficult paths, and across two turbulent streams, she bore them into the deep hill forests of the neighboring county, a barren and difficult region, where the farthest wanderings of the man were little likely to penetrate.

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