THE LONE LAND BRIDE.

A Story Written for This Paper by Grant Allen.

CHAPTER V.

Summer came and went and winter returned again, and with it Lucy's ill-health became more pronounced. She was fading. Jake sometimes thought, under the stress of that hard life, like a summer flower before the frosts at October. But Tom didn't see it; he was often positively harsh and cruel to her now; it made Jake's heart bleed sometimes to hear how angrily and unkindly he spoke to her, and Jake firmly resolved to take his brother to task for this cruel treatment of Lucy the very first chance that he should get. He had not long to wait, for, some business having called the two friends several miles away from home, Jake took good care that Tom didn't get away from him and make the journey back alone. He stuck close to the partner of many years, and after half a dozen attempts to unlimber his tongue and get it into talking order he succeeded in blurting out: "Tom!"

Tom halted suddenly in his tracks and gave a surprised look at him. In all the years they had lived together he had never heard him pronounce his name in just that tone before. The truth is, Jake himself was astounded at the way the name had sounded in his own ears—so pleading, so gentle, so womanish-like. For an instant the two stood there staring each other in the face, the one ashamed of his own display of feeling, and the other wondering in his mind what in the world it all meant.

"Tom," repeated Jake, in a tone a little more like his usual one, "I've lived with ye for many a long year and never so much as a cross word or an angry look ever came betwixt us. It's true we've never had very much to say to each other, but t'wan't necessary; we understood each other as two beavers do when they want to throw a tree across stream in a certain direction. We lived so many years without talkin' that when we fell in with Indians or trappers the words wouldn't come, and they called us the silent pards, and chuckled over our curious way of gettin' on without fuss and feathers and findin' fault with each other, but, Tom, the time's come when I've either got to talk or kill ye."

Tom's face flushed a little and he glared at the speaker out of the corner of his dark eye, as he laid his hand on his pistol, but he never said a word; his lips seemed frozen together.

"When ye brought that little woman home," continued Jake, "I was as a boy would be if his father had trapped a little fox, or a little coon an' had fetched it home to him for a pet. I felt she would do us both good. We had lived too long alone, like two animals in silence, with no thought, save for our own work, nothin' to be glad about except for a good catch, and nothin' to handle gently and kindly but the bank-notes we saved up from our earnin's. I felt that we needed a woman in our little home to keep us from turnin' to hermits and dyin' like wild animals some day, grizzled over and stiff and helpless, one waitin' for the other to go first and then follow him; and, though I didn't say much, for somehow I'd forgotten how to talk, I felt my heart throbbin' away got poundin' agin my chest like a trip-hammer as I sot eyes on Lucy, with her sweet face and little white hands and almost childlike smile, so full of confidence in you, more as if she were a daughter of yourn than a wife. Tom, I was too full for words and so I said nothing, but one day you took a knife in my heart by turnin' away Lucy when she tried to crawl into your arms and go to sleep on your lap, for she was lookin' pale and hollow-eyed. She warnt herself, Tom; She ought to have been in bed, but ye didn't seem to care; ye let her shift for herself and went about your business, and when ye had gone out she sat down and began to whimper, and I chased out, too, for I couldn't set and see that little woman grieve without pityin' of her, and I knew I had no right to do that, I knew it warnt my business, but all the same I felt hard toward ye, Tom, for the first time in my life, real hard, too, and if ye hadn't been my chum I'd laid ye out stiff on the floor to teach you how to treat a woman."

Tom's right hand again slipped around half instinctively and gripped his pistol.

"But, thinks I," continued Jake, calmly and smoothly, with an ease that was as astonishing to him as it was to Tom, "my partner's out of sorts about somethin' an' he'll be kinder to Lucy next time; he'll think it over and be sorry that he pushed her aside with one hand while he put out the other and petted the head of one of his dogs. But no, Tom, ye haven't improved. Ye've gone from bad to worse, ye don't seem to think that it's necessary to be as kind to Lucy as ye do to one of your dogs, and from week to week and month to month ye've hardened yerself agin her as if she had done ye some wrong, as if ye wanted to punish her, and God knows she's done nothin' but love ye and smile on ye and try to make our little home brighter and more comfortable."

Here Jake's voice trembled so that he was obliged to come to a full stop, and the two friends walked along side by side in silence broken only by the creak of the ice crystals beneath their snow-shoes.

In a moment or so Jake's voice again fell on his partner's ear, and there was more of a tremor in it than ever and more of softness.

"Tom, women ain't like us men, perfectly satisfied when the catches are good and price high, and we get enough to eat and drink and clothes to wear and a place to sleep. They are like children: they've got to be coddled and loved and petted, the way ye treat your favorite dog, and they've got to be spoken to kindly and have notice taken of 'em, and ye've got to put up with 'em when they're fretful and peevish, and let 'em have their ways in small things. If ye don't, they'll go about the house whimperin' and out of sorts, and start at every word ye speak, as if they thought ye was goin' to fall foul of 'em and beat 'em. Then know they can't strike back with their weak little hands, an' so they live in dread of ye as a horse does of a cruel master."

Again Jake's flow of eloquence had exhausted his breath and he came to a standstill.

"Ye've learned to talk, haven't ye, at last," said Tom in a tone of bitter taunt. "Ye've been a long while comin' to it."

Jake took no note of the fling. "Tom," he added, this time raising his voice and speaking slowly and deliberately, "we're almost home, and I've only a word more to say to ye. Ye're my friend, and I'm willin' to bear with ye more patiently than I would with a stranger; but take care, man. It may be as ye say, that I've learned to talk, but I haven't forgotten how to act. Ye mustn't trifle with me. Ye mustn't work me up unless ye are willin' to take the consequences; so I say to ye, treat the woman better, or look out for yourself!"

"She's mine," growled Tom: "I'll do as I please with her," and the partners separated without looking each other in the face.

CHAPTER VI.

One morning in January, a cold, sunlit morning, when the thermometer (if they'd had one) would have stood some fifty degrees below zero, Jake rose from his bed, all fiery in soul, and went out to his work to trap the ermines in their winter livery. He was ill at ease. Things grew worse and worse for Lucy. He had heard voices in the night from Mrs. Tom's room—Tom and his wife had been having words, he knew. That wretch to dare to talk so to that angel!

Slowly the change had been working in his heart. It had worked itself out

HE LOOKED FULL IN TOM'S FACE.

fully now. He had loved Tom once, and then that morning for Lucy's sake, he knew he hated him.

He went about his work with a sluggish soul. It was a bitter cold day, even for the far north, and the snow glittered icily in the clear frosty sunshine. He longed every minute to be back with Lucy. To think she was unhappy alone in the hut there, that pure fair girl, nursing her grief, with none to comfort her! Do what he could he couldn't help recurring to it. At last the impulse was too strong for him to resist. He left his traps half baited in the snow and trudged wearily home across the frozen forest to comfort Lucy.

At the door the sound of angry voices met his ear once more. His heart throbbed hard, and then stood still within him. He knew a great crisis in his life had come. With trembling fingers he lifted the latch, then he strode, black as night, into the desolate little parlor.

By the table Lucy was sitting, her face in her hands, with the baby in her lap, sobbing violently. Opposite where he stood Tom had just risen, and was speaking in harsh tones to that poor quivering woman. As Jake raised the latch, he caught just one word. It was a word that made the blood boil in his veins. Tom—to Tom he had once loved so well—had flung a hateful oath at the woman Jake would have died for, to save from one pang of trouble.

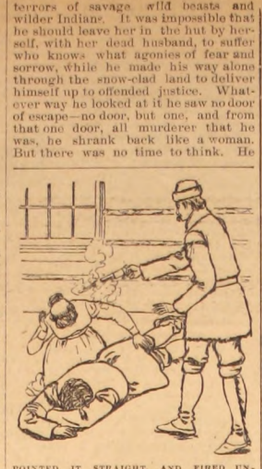
Jake was a choleric man, and he could stand it no more. The man had spoken his own condemnation. Advancing with a firm stride into the middle of the room, he looked full in Tom's face, one fierce wild look, and cried out aloud in a terrible voice, "Coward!" Then, without pausing a second, in the white heat of his righteous indignation he pulled out his revolver from the belt at his side, and taking aim steadily, with a tremulous hand, sent a bullet through the heart of Lucy's husband.

Tom turned just once toward his murderer as he clasped his hand to his bleeding breast. Then he staggered and fell at full length on the floor, with his lifeless head close by the legs of the plain wooden table.

CHAPTER VII.

At that terrible sound Lucy leaped from her place, and, laying down the baby, flung herself in an agony of terror and amazement on the lifeless body of her murdered husband. It was all so ghastly, so sudden, so incomprehensible. She flung herself upon it in one wild burst of despair; and the awful cry that went up from her lips to heaven above brought Jake at once with a rush to a blinding consciousness of his crime, and of the insoluble riddle which it so sternly imposed upon him.

Quick as lightning, as he paused there, revolver in hand, with the body of his friend bleeding fast before his eyes, the whole, impassable deadlock to which he had brought things by that irrevocable act flashed across his fevered brain like wildfire. It was impossible, he said to himself in his agony, that Lucy should pass one night alone under that desecrated roof with husband's murderer. It was impossible that she should accept the murderer's escort to see her safe through the frozen forest to the nearest place of refuge from his blood-stained presence. It was impossible that he should let her tramp alone with her baby in midwinter through the pathless woods, surrounded by the manifold terrors of savage wild beasts and wilder Indians. It was impossible that he should leave her in the hut by herself, with her dead husband, to suffer who knows what agonies of fear and sorrow, while he made his way alone through the snow-clad land to deliver himself up to offended justice. Whatever way he looked at it he saw no door of escape—no door, but one, and from that one door, all murderer that he was, he shrank back like a woman. But there was no time to think. He



POINTED IT STRAIGHT, AND FIRED UNFLINCHINGLY.

must nerve himself to act. Tenderly and remorsefully he raised that deadly weapon again in his hand, pointed it straight and fired unflinchingly. Another report, another loud cry, and another thick cloud of white smoke in the little parlor.

When it cleared away Lucy lay lifeless on Tom's warm corpse, and Jake stood alone in the hut with the baby.

She was shot quite dead through the heart from the back. Jake's practiced hand had never taken a surer aim. He had nerved himself to the task to save her needless pangs of mind or body. He had dared to solve the insoluble problem in the one awful way that still remained open to him.

CHAPTER VIII.

As soon as he had sufficiently recovered from the first sickening horror of that terrible scene, Jake took the two bodies up reverently from the ground in his arms and laid them side on the bed in their own bedroom. Then he knelt down like a child beside the bed and prayed. Words came to him in his need. He prayed long and fervently, and earnestly.

But he didn't pray for mercy or forgiveness for himself. It was not of himself or his own selfish fears for this world or the next that Jake was thinking. He prayed for the souls of Tom and Lucy. He wasn't theologian enough to know in his simple mind that in the particular church of which he reckoned himself to be an outlying member prayers for the dead are discountenanced and discouraged. He followed the dictates of his own innermost instinct. He prayed that Tom and Lucy might henceforth have rest, and might forgive him this wicked wrong he had done them. He prayed that the baby—Lucy's baby—might be spared to live as its mother would have wished it, and grow up to a happier life than hers had been. He prayed with great beads of dew standing on his cold brow in the agony of his repentant remorse and contrition. Last of all he prayed a merciful heaven, in simple but heartfelt words, to be pleased to lay upon him such condign punishment as the magnitude of the great crime he had just committed most duly merited.

Then, consoled and deep and abiding guilt that made him unworthy to kneel any longer beside the corpse of that pure and beautiful woman whom he had loved and murdered, he rose once more, with staggering steps went out into the snow alone with his crime and dug a deep hole with a pick in the frozen drift to receive those two piteous blessing bodies. He couldn't bury them, to be sure, for the ground was too hard; but he could lay them up there safe in the preserving snow, and pour water to freeze above their temporary grave, so that they might lie there in safety from the wolves and the foxes till the thaw set in, when men from the fort would come over and take them to Nithegouna cemetery. There Lucy should lie in holy earth till the Day of Judgment.

When the grave was dug he carried out those two tenderly once more in his arms, and laid them side by side with their faces turned towards one another in the shallow trench he had thus made to receive them. Over the top of the trench he poured buckets of water, and in half an hour, so intense was the cold on that bitter, glittering January day, the whole mass was frozen stiff and solid together as a granite column.

After that Jake took Lucy's little book from her leather desk, and slowly and solemnly, in spite of many stumbling efforts, read over the grave, with blending tears and choking voice, the Church of England burial service. At times his tongue failed him and his lips quivered, but still he went on alone in the clearing. Come what might, Lucy should not be buried without a Christian burial. As he finished, he flung himself passionately on the grave, and cried out aloud from his very heart in a broken voice: "Tom, Tom, I was your friend, and I killed you! I killed you!" But he didn't dare to say a last farewell to Lucy. Murderer that he was, he was unworthy to speak to her.

From the grave Jake turned once more, awful in his loneliness, into the bare hut where the baby lay crying and stretching out its nine-months arms for its dead mother. Jake took it up in his fatherly hands and kissed it, as he had kissed it many times before, and mixed it some food with broken biscuit and condensed milk, and fed it with a spoon till it smiled and was happy.

Then he wrapped the baby in a thick, warm skin, rolled in her dress all their remaining bank-notes, strapped his knapsack on his back, full of condensed milk, fastened the snow-shoes on his weary feet, and set out through the snow with the baby in his arms, pressed close to his breast, in a paroxysm of remorse, to give himself up for the double murder to the authorities at Ottawa.

(THE END.)

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A MAN is always more truthful in his opinion of his second baby than of his first. Women call it more brutal.—Atchison Globe.

LAUGH AND GROW FAT

A HEALTHY TONIC FOR INVALIDS OF ALL KINDS.

Humorous Anecdotes Gleaned from Various Sources—Something to Read Which Will Make Anybody Sleep Well—Better Than Medicine When Taken Before Retiring.

An Old Proverb Proven.

Mrs. Hichurch (as she gazes out of the window on a rainy Sunday morning)—Yes; it's true. Providence does temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Mr. Hichurch—What makes you say so? Mrs. Hichurch—Why, my new bonnet didn't come home last night! —Puck.

Fellow-Feeling.

Gotham Mann, Esq.—And here's a quarter for you, waiter. H. Slinger of Chicago—Thanks, but I can't accept such a trifle. I have known what it was to be poor myself. (Pockets a dollar complacently.)—New York Recorder.

In Chicago.

Mr. West Monroe—These Eastern people are awfully careless when eating. Mr. Fort Wayne—How so? Mr. West Monroe—Just look at that Eastern man!—how carelessly he throws his napkin in his lap. He doesn't appear to care whether he gets his vest all full of soup or not.

Her Reference.

Lady (examining written character of applicant for situation as cook)—But this is not at all satisfactory as to your cooking capacity. Can you cook? Cook—Well, ma'am, if that paper don't satisfy you on that point ask my policeman.—Tit-Bits.

A Valuable Error.

Cholly Why, wheah ah youah diamonds and watch gone? Chappie (beamingly)—Oh, I met a bunco man this mawning and he took me foh an Englishman, just ovah, y' know, so I let the deah fellow cheat me out of ev'wything.—Puck.

The Latest Style.

Little Boy—What's all those women here for? Little Girl—They've been up-stairs to see the baby. Little Boy—Babies is plenty 'nough. Little Girl—Yes; but this is a real new one an' I guess they wants to see the style.—Good News.

A New Invention.

"What kind of a clock is that Jawkins? It doesn't seem to be right." "Sh—sh—! It's called the Married Man's Delight, my boy. The hands stop at 10 o'clock every evening, but the ticking goes on as loud as ever. See?"

Evidently Not.

The man who sat out on the woodpile and told funny stories, expecting the wood would split, evidently did not strike a "responsive chord." Yonkers Statesman.

Farmer Ryestraw (to tramp)—I s'pose yer willin' to work? Indolent Ivers—Not much! I ain't no canned fruit.

Fond of Children.

The Mother—I want to buy a dog for my little girl. Is that fierce-looking animal of yours really fond of children?—The Dog-Fancier—He is, indeed, mum. He came near eating two of my little ones yesterday.—Detroit Free Press.

Her Beliefs.

Maud—She is a woman who has suffered a great deal for her beliefs. Ethel—Dear me! What are her beliefs? Maud—She believes that she can wear a No. 3 shoe on a No. 6 foot and a 23-inch corset on a 30-inch waist.—Quips.

Decidedly.

Pipkin—Do you think there is anything unlucky about the number thirteen? Potts—I know there is. I paid that for a suit of clothes once and they did not wear well at all.—Truth.

His Better Half.

Brown—So Tillipy is dead? Jones—Yes; he died at 5 o'clock this morning. Brown—What were his last words? Jones—He didn't have any. His wife was there.—Detroit Free Press.

His Crying Want.

Young Gotnix (sadly)—I saw a sign in a window down the street that exactly described my condition. Jinks—What was it? Gotnix—"Cash girl wanted."—Wail.

No Alternative.

"I wish you would get me a couple of packets of cigarettes," said the condemned murderer to the jail warden. "Can't do it," replied the officer. "The law must be allowed to take its course."—Exchange.

Emancipated at Last.

Waiter—Scuse me, boss, but dis table is resarved fur ladies. Take yo' hat off, too, sah, if yo' please.—Puck.

"Thou Art a Jewel."

Whipper—So Miss Grace Willoughby is in mourning, eh? I don't suppose she'll appear at any fashionable watering place this year. Snapper—I suppose not—she's so horribly consistent that she'll probably go to the Black Forest.—Puck

Something for Nothing.

Mr. Fligg—You should remember, my son, that there is nothing attained without labor. You need not expect to get something for nothing. Tommy—I get lots of lickin's for nothin', anyhow.—Indianapolis Journal.

A Good Scheme.

Watts—Are you going to make any garden this year? Potts—I think I shall. I had a garden last year that kept me supplied with chickens clear up till frost.—Indianapolis Journal.

They Knew It.

Myrtylla—How can I be sure that you really love me! Harry—By watching this evening and noticing how all the other girls want to flirt with me. —Truth.

Under Certain Circumstances.

"How much is twice two, Nellie?" "Five." "Oh, no!" "Well, it would be if you added one to it."—Exchange.

His Request.

"For the luv av Hivven, Mary Ann, phwat are yez doin'?" "Whist Moike! It's manicurin' me nails I am." "Oho! Whin ye finish thot hand, ye can manicure me boots."

A Crisis.

Landlord—Look here, Mr. Roots, you'll either have to move your painless dentistry parlor somewhere else or make your patients stop hollering. The other tenants won't stand it any longer!—Exchange.

Still Missing.

Yabsley—Did you ever tackle any of "those missing-word" contests? Mudge—Yes. The missing word was "yes," but I could not get her to say it.—Indianapolis Journal.

A Crucial Test.

"And you think he loves you?" "I am afraid he does. I sung to him for an hour and a half last night and when I stopped he asked me to go on."—Vogue.

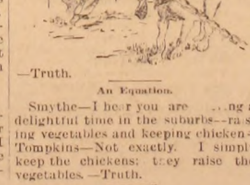
Impossible to Tell.

Mrs. Youngwife—Bridget, did the butcher have a sheep's tongue? Bridget—I couldn't see, mum. He didn't stick it out wance.—Philadelphia Record.

Belonged to Both.

"How is it you write for both the Bazoo and the Weekly Hoodoo, when they quarrel so abominably?" "Oh, I have charge of the quarrel in both papers."

A Dark Brown Taste in His Mouth.



—Truth.

An Equation.

Smythe—I hear you are ...ng a delightful time in the suburbs—raising vegetables and keeping chickens, Tompkins—Not exactly. I simply keep the chickens; they raise the vegetables.—Truth.

No Mar

School-boy—Did the teachers give black marks for everything when you went to school? Father (retrospectively)—N-o, my son. We got red marks.—Good News.

Determined to Be Married.

A Virginia maid jumped from a window of her Roanoke home to join her lover and elope. She was picked up with a broken leg, taken to a churchyard and patched up, and the wedding came off on time.

ALL OVER THE STATE.

ILLINOIS NEWS CONCISELY CONDENSED.

Anderson's Breeches Saved His Life—Benton, Franklin County, Has a Costly Blaze—Sleepy Farmer Fell from a Window—To Exterminate the Sparrow.

From Far and Near.

AT Decatur Mrs. Paul G. Faber dropped dead while standing at her front gate.

FRANK HICKEY, a jealous suitor, tried to kill Dollie Davenport, Chicago. A corset steel saved the girl.

WILLIAM DANIELS is under arrest at Nashville. He is one of the burglars who have been operating there.

A COLLISION on the Illinois Central Railroad at Chicago resulted in the serious but not fatal injury of two men.

CHICAGO undertakers are being victimized by a sorrowing brother who borrows money on the strength of his sister's death.

POSTMASTER Thompson, of Quincy, recently appointed by President Cleveland, underwent a surgical operation, and is now in a dying condition.

VETERANS of the One Hundred and Fourteenth Illinois Infantry held a reunion of the regiment at the home of their Colonel, J. W. Judy, at Tallula. The gathering was well attended.

ELLSWORTH MURPHY, a young Aurora lawyer who came from California about two years ago, has, it is alleged, fled from the city after various transactions involving several thousand dollars.

THE coal miners of St. Clair County are organizing for a strike, a demand for a small increase made by them having been refused. Their order is run down, but the local trades assembly will assist them to reorganize.

J. W. MARTINE claims to have compounded a fool which no living thing except the English sparrow will touch, which will clean that pugnacious little pest out faster than a two-cent bounty law. He wants to slaughter the birds on contract for the city of Chicago.

C. N. TREAT, captain of a Quincy militia company and a "Q." clerk, is under arrest for alleged embezzlement from the road. The money, $700, was spent, so Treat says, in keeping up his end of the military company and in keeping himself solid with the boys.

FREDERICK MILLER, a well-to-do Newton farmer, was serving on a jury which had failed to agree and with the other jurors was locked in the room on the second floor of the court house. He went to sleep near a window and fell out, breaking his collar bone, several ribs, and injuring himself internally.

JACKSNNVILLE entertained a large force of Sunday school teachers and officers from all parts of the State at the sessions of the Morgan County Sunday school convention. S. H. Crum was elected President and the body listened to addresses by W. C. Pearce, State missionary; Rev. D. F. Howe, J. B. Joy, and others.

P. ANDERSON lands the prize cattle in the Jersey Club's exhibit at the World's Fair, and, like many another husky farmer, wears two pairs of breeches. This saved his life the other day. An ugly bull tossed him several feet up in the air, caught him on his horns, and there he stuck. His trousers did the rest, and companions rescued him, badly bruised.

FIRE broke out in the Benton Chronicle office in the rear of the building occupied by the postoffice, and soon consumed several buildings on the southwest corner of the square, causing a loss of $14,000; insurance, $2,200. Among the buildings burned were the postoffice, Chronicle office, S. B. Espey, real estate; Browning, Hankins & Co., general hardware; A. A. Haines meat market; J. G. Buchanan, photographer; city hall; H. Duppe, bakery; Dennings & Bennett, barbers; J. H. Swain, restaurant; L. S. Naylor, grocery. The electric light wires were burned and the city was left in darkness. Only a small portion of the mail matter was destroyed.

THE Sheriff of Morgan County arrested George Sewaltz for assault.

AT Metropolis, officers arrested Charles Roberts, wanted at Jonesboro, Ark., for the murder of his 14-year-old wife.

LEWIS WILKINSON, 20 years old, accidentally fell from a train between two cars, at Quincy, and was instantly killed.

WEDNESDAY over $50,000 in gold was paid by the Government to 1,500 Chicago postoffice employes. They will be paid in gold hereafter.

A BILL to provide a new public building for Chicago, to be erected on the site of the old and cost $4,000,000, was introduced by Senator Palmer.

BECAUSE of a quarrel with her aunt 17-year-old Maud Bailey, of Chicago, attempted to drown herself and scratched the face and tore the hair of her rescuer.

THE wife of Robert E. Woodmansee, a solicitor for one of the Springfield dailies, has applied for a divorce. She alleges cruelty, and is now staying with her parents.

NIX BROTHERS, doing a general merchandise business in Iuka, Marion County, have assigned for the benefit of creditors. The assets are $1,149 and liabilities $1,442.

JAMES WILSON, a stockholder, declares the Total Abstinence Life Association, which had a large membership in this State, is insolvent and has applied for a receiver.

THE corner-stone of a Catholic church was laid at Franklin. The edifice was burned a few months ago, and will soon be rebuilt. Bishop Ryan, of Alton, Father Mueller, of St. Louis, and other prelates were present.

JOSIE COPELAND was shot and killed by John Stuart at Chicago. Both are colored.

AT Shiloh Church, near Cairo, Frank Parker, an ex-Union army officer, instantly killed Philip Holeman. The trouble dated back for a year, when the two men fell out over the ownership of a piece of land.

LOUIS D. BARTH, dealing in general merchandise at Enterprise, has made an assignment. His liabilities are given at something over $28,000; his assets, consisting of notes, accounts, goods and farms, at about the same figure.