

lovingly. Finally she laid it tenderly on the table and was taking up the note to read, when, on a strange impulse, she bent over the satin and kissed it, as one would kiss a little child in its cradle. To this lonely woman there was something sacred about her valentine. It brought back all that had been dear to her.

Her idea that black satin belonged to married women only had taken a strong hold on Sally, and she did not know whether it were right to accept the gift, but she reflected that Silas always did the right thing, and Silas had sent it. Taking the letter in her hand she drew it out of the envelope with trembling fingers, and as she scanned it her heart beat time with the little kitchen clock on the window shelf. This was what she read in Silas' scrawl:

"Dear Sally:—I calc'lated to send ye one of them black shiny things long ago, but first there was Sister Anne to take care of, and then the mortgage to lift off the farm. But as crops has been good again nowadays, I want ye to take this, and, if ye don't object, me along with it.

"Your most humble servant,

"SILAS GRAY."

She raised her face from the paper in dull wonder, which quickly turned into incredulity. Then her features relaxed and an expression of the utmost tenderness stole over them, when, throwing her great checked apron over her head, she fell back into the little chair, sobbing aloud. For a few minutes the silence remained unbroken, except for Sally's weeping and the "Wel-come, wel-come" of the little plush rocker, which joined the song of Sally's heart and called thus softly for Silas.

Suddenly she sat bolt upright, and, jerking at her apron vigorously, smiled through her tears with pride and exultation around the homely little room.

"I always knew only married folks had black satins; I always said it. Oh, Silas," she cried, "Silas!"

GERTRUDE E. SANDS.

A STATE OF MIND.



WHEN I go into my mathematics class at nine o'clock in the morning, it is with a foreboding that at last my gross ignorance must be exposed. As the recitation proceeds I am conscious of a growing bewilderment. I hear things spoken of with which I seem strangely familiar, and yet I do not seem to know anything of them. I am filled with contempt for myself, as my mind refuses to grasp what seems so clear to others.

This bewilderment gradually deepens into a heavy despair and dullness. My mind becomes a perfect blank. The words I hear have no meaning to me, although I hear them distinctly. Irrelevant thoughts throng into my mind. Soon a reckless frivolity takes possession of me. I am not disturbed by the fact that I have lost all track of the recitation. I feel inclined to laugh and whisper and poke my neighbor. But this mood in turn is swallowed up in an intense feeling of boredom. My only hope is to hear the bell. Centuries elapse; then the end comes. I am free.

ZELLA BISSELL.