and the moon streaming in. "Why, how's this! no wonder I'm cold," thought he, but as he rose to close it up, it went as far as it would and Joe stepped back a pace and watched.

The moon dodged behind a cloud and as quickly out, again shedding its flood of silver light over the frozen country, and the icy crystals danced and sparkled.

Joe had the common failing of his race, and hesitated a moment whether he should prepare for ghost or man, but only for an instant, and then noiselessly he took down an old muzzle-loader from its peg, and turning to the window again, saw a dark object bound lightly to the sill and then cautiously within the room.

The blood rushed wildly through his dizzy brain and cold beads stood out from his brow, as, with one trembling arm, he raised the gun to his shoulder.

His sight was confused, and the aim long and unsteady. Click! went the hammer, but that was all; he had forgotten the powder and shot, and the next instant he was seized from behind and thrown violently to the floor. In vain he struggled, but five desperate men were too much for him, and he gasped out as he lay there:

"What yo' all want in heah?"

"Tell us where yer money is, and we'll leave yer be right where yer are," said a familiar-looking man with a red nose.

"I ain't got no money," moaned Joe.

"You black rascal, if yer don't tell me where it is, and party quick, too, I'll blow yer bloody head off," and for emphasis he placed the cold ring of a revolver muzzle to Joe's throbbing temple.

"Come, nigger, talk up, or I'll pull; we ain't got any time to waste."

Joe collected his scattered thoughts, and answered slowly:

"Under de fouth apple tree."

He had taken them at their word, but they did not keep it, and out into the night they led him.

"One, two, three, four; is this the place?"

"Yes," said Joe; and a lump rose in his throat.

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1882.

One man sat by to see that he did not escape, while the rest dug and dug and dug, till the roots of the tree were almost bare. Suddenly an idea occurred to the red-nosed monster, and, scrambling out of the pit, he grasped Joe by the throat, as he cried in a fearful voice:

"You nigger—you've lied! Speak quick, or I'll choke yer!"

Another dark shadow traced a hurried line across the white fields, and when the pale light fell once more on Joe's ashen face his eyes were closed.

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IN THE LIBRARY.

I sit by the time-worn casement,
Amid the evening's gloom,
The flickering freightlight casting
Soft shadows through the room,
And I gaze on the creaking cases,
On the thousands of books, blood-wrought,
And I turn with a trembling finger
These ashes from flame of thought.

There are prophets and antique sages,
In bindings worn and old,
There are novels with uncut pages,
In the latest white and gold.
Here is gathered the sum of man's learning,
All that the centuries taught—
And I am still thoughtfully turning
These ashes from flame of thought.

And here in the growing shadows,
'Midst the teachings of ages gone,
A voice seems to speak from the darkness
In a low, half-minor tone—
"Man, count o'er the books that are written,
And the learning that comes to naught—
This is the sum of thy wisdom—
'Thinking's a waste of thought.'"

Burton Eghert Stevenson.