

CACKLING HENS BETRAYED HIM

Edward Roebeck, a life-term prisoner at the Joliet, Ill., penitentiary, by his model conduct and good behavior, had won for himself a position with the "honor squad." As an "honor man" he enjoyed an extraordinary degree of liberty about the penitentiary. He had numerous opportunities to escape but he realized that if he made an attempt he would probably be apprehended before he got very far and that after one such effort the measure of liberty he then enjoyed would be taken away and he would be worse off than if he continued by good conduct to hold the respect and confidence of the prison officials.

Despite the considerate, humanitarian treatment accorded him and despite the extra privileges he enjoyed as a "trustee," he never could get away from the thought that he was still a prisoner. Liberty is sweet and restrictions and confinement are galling, no matter how much prison life may be palliated and "reformed," and Roebeck sighed to get away. He resolved to keep his eyes open, to study the situation and if an exceptionally favorable opportunity presented itself to make a dash for freedom.

One night not long ago such an opportunity came. He hurried from the grounds and managed to escape the vigilant eyes of the guards. Once outside he was joined by three friends and the four hurried away as rapidly as possible. Arriving at a farm four miles from the prison they proceeded to help themselves to a horse and wagon. Unfortunately for Roebeck's plans, their activities aroused the chickens which set up such a cackling that the owner of the place hurried out to see what was wrong.

Roebeck and his pals threatened to shoot the farmer if he did not go back to the house. He went, but lost no time in telephoning to the sheriff. In a short time that officer, with a posse in automobiles, was speeding after the fugitive and his companions. A few shots from the posse and the whole party surrendered. Roebeck was promptly returned to the prison. The liberties he formerly enjoyed have either been taken away or very much abridged and he now regrets that he was not content with his lot as a "trustee."