

THE FAMILY STORY

SISTER CALLINE'S CHILDREN.

THE train ran into a little station in the heart of the pine woods, and the conductor sprang to the platform.

"Hurry up there!" he called, running forward, to the negro coach.

The steps were overflowing with pickaninnies, so black that at first sight their small features would have been indistinguishable but for the wide crosses on each face, filled with even rows of teeth, startlingly white in contrast with their sooty environment.

A fat, good-looking negress, holding an oval bundle, wrapped in an old shawl, close to her breast, seemed to be the center of the crowd, and an old, old negro man, grizzled and wrinkled, was hovering around its margin.

"Is you got um all, Sister Calline?" he asked anxiously.

"Clare ef I knows!" said the woman, running her eye over the company. "Pears lak dere's one on um missin'!"

"All aboard!" shouted the conductor, and the train moved.

"Hyar, mistah!" shrieked Sister Calline, "you'se ca'lin' off one o' my chill'en!"

The conductor laughed good-naturedly, and was gone.

"Oh, Lawd!" moaned the woman. "He's done ca'ed off one of um, suah!"

The station agent sauntered near. He wore that intensely bored expression only possible to a man who spends his life in a piney woods clearing, seeing four trains a day go in and playing checkers on a barrel head in the intervals.

One wonders if the lunatic asylums are not largely recruited from this class.

"Orter have tied 'em along a rope, so's they couldn't get away," he said.

Sister Calline turned her black velvet orbs in his direction.

"You call dat train back, I say," she cried. "He's done ca'ed off one o' my chill'en."

"S'pose I can call the train back?" said the man, contemptuously. "If you're sure one of 'em is missin' you'll have to set down and wait here till the train comes back. They'll bring it, I reckon."

"Oh, my pore lil' chile!"

Tears began to stream down the black face.

The wrinkled old uncle looked deeply distressed.

"Is you pint blank suah one on um's missin', Sister Calline?" he asked, sympathetically.

Her eyes wandered, vague and troubled, over the dusky, shifting crowd of faces.

"I'se mos' puffedly suah," she said.

"Better count 'em," suggested the agent. "How many are there, anyhow?"

"Dere's Lu Roxy Adline, Lucy-aller—"

"Ts here, mammy!" interrupted a long-limbed girl of 14.

"I told you to count 'em!" said the agent, impatiently.

"I cayn't count, mas'r! I'se bawf afore de wab. But anyhow dey say dere's leben on um."

"Sister Calline," said the old man, tenderly, "let's we set right down hyar an' I'll count 'um for ye. I'se a scholar."

"You sholy is kind, mistah," said Sister Calline, gratefully, sitting down on the edge of the platform.

The agent laughed shortly and turned away.

The grizzled old uncle took a red and yellow handkerchief from his pocket and carefully dusted the end of the planks before he took his seat.

He wore a threadbare black suit which had undoubtedly once moved in high society.

Sister Calline looked at him with interest.

"I reckon dat you mus' be a preacher, suah," she said, definitely.

"Madam, I is. I'se been preachin' de word dese nine years, eber sence my pore ole lady died. I was a powerful sinner afore dat."

Sister Calline looked awed.

"I was, suah," said the old man, retrospectively. "But I'se come inter de kingdom now suah 'nuff, bress de Lord. Is you got a husband, Sister Calline?"

"I'se a pore widder, mistah, wid all dese chill'en ter scuffle fer, an' de Lawd knows what I'se gwine ter do."

Uncle glanced at the bundle in her arms. It had begun to move and whimper.

"Dat your baby, chille?" asked uncle, innocently.

"Dis my baby," replied Sister Calline, looking down at the sooty mite in her arms with maternal pride.

"My pore ole man neber see dis baby. He was blowed up de biler bustin' in de mill where he waked. He was tunc killed when dey brung him home. De doctors tried an' tried to pump some life inter him, but he never spoke no mo'."

"For de lan's sake!" ejaculated the old man.

Compassion was written all over his kind old face. He had been a good darky from his youth up, and his past was purely fictitious.

"What de matiah wid you ole lady you done lost?" asked Sister Calline.

"Consumpsion," replied the old man, solemnly. "It runs in our family. Ole Cunnel Kent's wife died ob it, an' de cunnel's first wife died ob it an' lil' mistah died, too. An' den my ole lady took it an' she died. It's a terrible dease."

"Dat sholy is so!" coincided Sister

Calline. "Seuse my insurance axin' you, mistah. Does you git you libin' preachin'?"

"De folks pay me some, an' den I'se got a nice piece o' lan' an' a lil' house. My ole mas'r give um ter me," said the old man, with modest pride.

"Sho! Ain't you too old ter wuk?"

"I wuks some, an' de ars helps me. I'se de oulist one ob de ole saven's lef. I'se 95 year ole!"

"Sho, now!" said Sister Calline, much impressed.

"How ole you is, Sister Calline?—hopin' you'll seuse me fer axin'."

"I dunno 'zactly," said Calline, studying a little. "I'sepect I'se 60—gwine on 50."

They had become so interested in their humble annals that the pickaninnies had been lost sight of. They were scattered along the railroad line gamboling like a menagerie turned loose.

"Does you wan' me tu coun' you chill'en, Sister Calline?"

"Co'se I does. Hyar! You-all, Come hyar."

The children paid no attention.

"Dey needs disselrainin', Sister Calline."

He rose. "Chil'en, chil'en!" he called in a voice of authority.

The black cloud drew together and bore down on the station-house.

"Now you-all stand still outwell dis genelman couns' you," commanded the mother. "Lu Roxy, min' yersef. Abe Linkum, stan' up. Don' scrouge so! How he gwine coun' you, ef you dodges roun' dat away?"

A mild degree of order at last prevailed and the old man began.

"One, two, three, fo', fife, six, seben, nine, eight, ten! Dere ain't only ten."

"Dawter be leben, suah," said Sister Calline. "Oh, what I gwine ter do?"

"I'll coun' 'um ober agin'," said the old man, kindly.

Sister Calline wiped away her tears.

"You am so kind, mistah! I knowed you was a good man when Brer Martin tole me ter keep long er you on der train."

"An' I knowed you was a good woman when Brer Martin tole me 'You take good ca' o' Sister Calline,' says he. Now I'll coun' 'um agin'."

"One, two, three," and so on. They went over and over this, but by no legerdemain of counting could ten be made eleven.

Sister Calline grew more and more distressed and was just breaking into hysterical sobs when the train whistled at the next station below.

They both sprang up and Calline screamed to the children, who came flying across the track like a flock of wild blackbirds.

When the train drew up and the conductor stepped off, there was Calline to meet him.

"Please, mistah, has you brung back my chile?" she tearfully pleaded.

He looked at her.

"Donner und blixen! What do you mean, woman?"

"I'se got 'leben chil'en," groaned Sister Calline, "an' dis genelman has coun'd 'um ober an' ober, un' dere 'r'n't only ten."

The conductor ran his eye over the group.

A score of heads were thrust out of the coach, and a murmur of amused sympathy stirred along the line.

"H-n!"

He pulled forth his book hurriedly and turned over the pages.

"Pass Calline Jackson and eleven children."

He glanced over the black, bobbing heads and back at the woman.

His eye fell on the bundle in her arms.

"Great Jove! What's the matter with the baby making eleven?"

"There were roars of laughter and much waving of hats and handkerchiefs as the train moved out.

"You done coun'd um wrong, Mistah," said Sister Calline, looking up reproachfully at the old man.

"Is dey all hyar?" he asked, with dignity.

"Co'se dey's all hyar."

"Den don't dat pintedy show dat I coun'd um right?"

Sister Calline's dark countenance wore a troubled expression, but as they went along the piney woods road toward Keatville it gradually cleared up, and when they came in sight of Kent Hall it was beaming.

"Dere's de cunnel!" said uncle, pointing to a gentleman dressed in a white duck suit, who sat comfortably in a big armchair on the gallery.

"He's one o' de ars. You jes' wait here a spell ontel I go an' tell him."

"Well," said Colonel Kent, good-naturedly, laying down his newspaper. "What is it, Uncle Dick?"

"I'se jes' come ter tell you, cunnel, dat I'se foun' a good woman dat I loks bes' in de world, an' we'se fix'd our min's dat we'll marry fore long. We reckons ternoight is de bes' time."

"Marry! Good Lord!" said the colonel, astonished. "Such an old fellow as you are?"

"I is ole, for a fac', Mas'r, but I'se lived alone nine years, an' its mighty lonesome—"

"That's so," said the colonel, kindly.

"An' 'pears like I can't stan' it no longer. An' Sister Jackson needs a husband ter help her raise her chill'en. Dere's leben chil'en an' none ob 'em missin', coun'din' um right."

"Eleven! How in the name of General Jackson are you going to take care of eleven children?"

"Dey's gwine ter take ca' o' me, Mas'r," said the old man, eagerly. "Dey's mighty peart chill'en, mighty peart, an' dey ca' pick a heap ob cotton an' 'loe co'n an' faters an' weed in de garden an' do a power ob oder turns."

The curiously wizened old face shone as if he had just come into a fortune.

"An' cunnel," he went on, "I'se git-ting too ole ter wuk much, an' I tinks my meetin' up wid Sister Calline is a special providence. I wants ter git de oration roun' soon dat dere's gwine ter be a weddin' down ter my lil' house ternoight."

"Go ahead then," laughed the colonel. "The missis will have a cake baked for you, and, by George, it'll have to be a big one to go roun'."

The cake was baked in the big iron bake kettle of antebellum associations, and there was a festival in the cabin down by the creek which lasted into the small hours.—New York Tribune.

THE PIANO NUISANCE.

Protracted Practicing Leads to Severe Nervous Maladies.

Gonno, the composer, bitterly resented the omnipresence of the average piano player, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. He was strongly in favor of a somewhat severe pianoforte tax, his argument was that ninety-nine out of every one hundred who learned to play the instrument failed to attain to more than a superficial stage, either of conception or execution, and that they wasted valuable time, which might otherwise be employed in doing something that would benefit them. He also contended that piano practice of students constituted a public nuisance, and was irritating and exasperating to such a degree as to become an outrage on peacefully inclined citizens. The proposed tax was never levied, but some figures published by a French scientist may possibly in some measure tend to restrict the indiscriminate teaching to music to very young children. It is declared that a large number of nervous maladies from which girls of the present day suffer are to be attributed to playing the piano.

Children who ought to be exercising in the open air are kept at dreary and distasteful work at the keyboard hour after hour daily, and the nerves simply will not stand the strain. It is said to be proved by statistics that of 1,000 girls who study this instrument before the age of 12, no less than 600 suffer from this class of disorders, while of those who do not begin until later there are only some 200 per 1,000. The prosecution of the study of the violin by the very young is proved to be equally injurious. The remedy suggested is that children should not be permitted to study either instrument before the age of 16 at least, or in the case of delicate constitutions, not until a later age. So far as the piano is concerned, however, it is possible that the true remedy may be found in a better method of teaching. The main point in early tuition is to "form" the hands and give them flexibility and strength. This is purely mechanical, and it can be done away from the pianoforte keyboard. The endless repetition of sound, which is responsible for much of the wear and tear of the nerves of young musical students, is thus avoided, and better progress is made from the concentration of the mind and technique only. The objection has been raised that such a system makes only those "mechanical" players who would be so under the ordinary system of tuition. To those of true artistic instinct it is an inestimable help, and shortener of labor.

Just Like His Father.

"My old black auntie," said Representative John Allen to a Washington Post man, "the old black shopkeeper who raised me, and who still looks on me as a lamb of her rearing, grows at times very congratulatory and proud of me."

"Deed! I is proud of you, Mars John," she said, on the occasion of her last meeting. "I takes de vastest pride in ye, honey, an' de way you does 'hol' office. You is jes' like yo' ol' father, Mars John, jes' like him fo' de word. He was allar 'hol' in office same as you, honey; 'hol' office all de time, you paw did, an' he 'minds me of you so much. Deed, I'se proud of 'ol' of ye."

"Why, what office did my father hold?" I asked. I was a bit astonished, for while I had a dim recollection of the old gentleman running several times, I never knew of any office he held. "What office did my father hold?"

"Sho! Mars John, you go an' forget de office yo' father 'hol', the old aunty replied, reproachfully. "I'se 'shamed yo' you. He was a candidate, Mars John. De whole neighborhood remember it well. All his life he 'hol' dat office, yo' paw does; never I know him when he war'n't a candidate. Looks like you an' yo' father jes' same that away; bof allers 'hol' in office."

New Kind of Seed.

All international disputes are liable to what are called "complications." Here is one, cited by the Washington Post in connection with the Venezuela matter:

A Western Congressman is said to have received a letter from one of his constituents, who believes in losing no chances.

"Everybody here," he wrote, "is talking about the Monroe Doctrine, and nobody knows what it is. I don't know myself, but if the Government is giving it away, send me what you can."

Another Story.

Ferry—Why don't you get married? Don't say you can't stand the expense; that excuse is too thin.

Hargreaves—I could stand the expense well enough, but the girl's father says he can't.—Cincinnati Tribune.

"I get your views," as the constable said when he levied on a stereoscopic show.



Speed of Electric Locomotives.

Appropos of the shipment of the last of the three electric locomotives for the operation of the trains in the Belt Line tunnel at Baltimore is the statement made by the designers, the General Electric Company, that with these locomotives a speed of eighty miles an hour has been attained without effort, and that they could as easily make 150 miles an hour as a steam locomotive makes 60. As the electric locomotives have in all respects fulfilled the claims of their designers, there is no reason to disbelieve this statement.

Not Injured by High Voltage Wires.

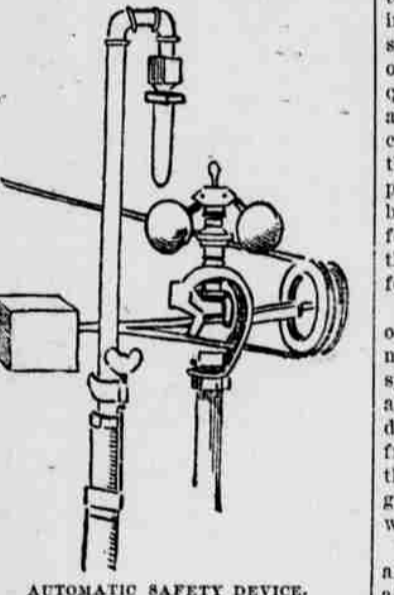
An experiment to ascertain whether a high pressure alternating current can be sent from a conductor to earth by means of a jet of water from a hose of a fire engine, and also whether the current can be transmitted to the fireman under such circumstances, was made a short time ago by Professor Slary, of Berlin. The overhead conductors of a 10,000 volt power transmission line were used for the experiment. A volt meter was connected between the metal mouth-piece of the water hose and the earth. On turning the water on to the live conductors no flow of current to earth was noticeable.

Edison's Record of Patents.

Thomas A. Edison has been granted 711 patents during the last twenty-five years, which beats the record of all times and all countries by a large majority. Elihu Thomson stands No. 2 on the list, with 394; Francis H. Richards is third, with 343; Edward Weston, 274; Charles E. Scribner, 248; Charles J. Vanderpoole, with 244; Randolph M. Hunter, with 228; and George Westinghouse, with 217. Seventeen other gentlemen have received more than 100 patents during the twenty-five years ended with 1895. Connecticut patents more inventions than any other State in proportion to its population. The District of Columbia comes second. Then come Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, Montana and Colorado. The inventive genius is least developed in Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and Arkansas, where comparatively few patents have been applied for.

A Safety Stop.

An automatic safety device for engines or other machinery which instantly stops them on their attaining an excessive speed, has been adopted by the North Hudson Railroad Company. The device is the invention of their chief engineer, T. A. Bonta. The apparatus consists of an air-pump, a small reservoir for compressed air and pipes lead-



AUTOMATIC SAFETY DEVICE.

ing to the various pieces of apparatus to be controlled, and to places from which it is desired to shut the machinery off. The air-pump automatically stops when it has produced in the system the desired pressure. The automatic device consists of an auxiliary governor belted to the engine shaft, and a brass pipe, working in a stuffing box so as to be easily adjusted to any height. This pipe is closed at the end by a small glass tube, like an ordinary test tube, but much thinner than the ordinary tubes. The movable brass U-tube is adjusted so as to carry the glass end a very short distance above the normal position to which the governor balls revolve. Any dangerous increase in speed will lift the balls, thus breaking the glass tube and relieving the pressure of the compressed air, which acts to operate a valve cutting off the supply of steam. These tubes are also located on each side of the main belt and above the belt, so that in case of the raising of a lap of the belt it will break one of the tubes and thus stop the engine, or if the belt should slip off sideways the same result would be produced.—Philadelphia Record.

Brevities.

The British army officials had an electric light plant installed at the practice and testing grounds, at Lydd, for the purpose of working a search light to be used during the heavy gun practice at various objects during the night. This will, of course, afford an ideal practice.

One of the newest developments of the practical applications of the electric current is in the production of the char-

acteristic effects produced by massage. By suitably applying the different forms of electric current muscular stimulation is produced.

That the electric launch is making progress in England is illustrated by the report that at one place the local electric light company has run a cable to the water's edge to provide suitable means for readily recharging the storage batteries employed in these launches.

It is figured by a statistician in New Orleans that by the change of the street car system from horse to electric power in that city an average saving of twelve minutes for each passenger is effected. According to the passenger traffic of that city, this makes an economy of 10,000,000 hours a year, equivalent to 1,250,000 days' labor of eight hours. If time is money and one day's labor is worth \$1, the electric cars are saving the city \$1,250,000 a year in time.

Railway Incident.

Prof. Lincoln, of Brown University, who died a few years ago, used often to relate with glee a railroad adventure which he had in Germany during his last European tour. The party was traveling in one of the little German railway carriages with the doors at the sides when the train stopped at a station where there was a restaurant.

They were told that the train would wait a few minutes, and so, with American independence, Prof. Lincoln and another member of the party stepped out, crossed another track, and proceeded to the station.

This infraction of German regulations was at first unnoticed, but on the return an obstacle was found in the shape of another train between them and their car.

The various railway personages appeared stolidly ignorant as to time-tables. The train was too long to go around; the cars were unprovided with our convenient end platforms and steps, and the space beneath them was none too ample for a cat to go under; only one course remained—that was to go over the train.

This seemed a simple matter, as the German cars are very small affairs compared with our own, and moreover are provided with a convenient ladder on each side for the use of the man who climbs up and puts the lamps down through a hole in the roof.

Accordingly the start was made, and the feat was about half-accomplished before it was noticed by the railway officials. Then began a great commotion, with violent gesticulations and commands to come down.

But by dint of Prof. Lincoln's vociferations in German to the officials to the effect that coming down on the farther side was just as well as to return to the station, and of sotto voce hints in New England vernacular to his comrade to keep on going, the retreat was successfully covered and the railway carriage safely gained just in time.

Good for the Colored Porters.

The New York Tribune tells an excellent story of the kindness of some sleeping car porters, as gathered from the lips of a young Englishwoman whose husband was seriously ill, and who found herself suddenly obliged to undertake a twenty-four-hour railway journey, with a baby only two months old, and with no one to assist her in the care of it.

I didn't know how baby would take to traveling, and the thought of his crying all night in the sleeping car was simply maddening. We started at 6 o'clock, and for two hours baby was quiet. But then he became restless, and soon he began to cry. I did all I could, but he kept it up. The men in the car looked at us ruefully, as if expecting a sleepless night, and I finally began to cry myself. I know it was foolish, but alarm for my husband and the trouble with baby were too much for me.

There were three women in the car, one elderly and the others young, but none of them offered me even a word of sympathy. But the negro porters were as kind and good as they could be. I didn't know much about negroes, and from the newspapers I had an idea that the porters on sleeping cars were greedy and soulless. These certainly were not.

The one on my car may have been animated by a desire to get a tip, but all the others who passed stopped to speak to me and to ask if they could do anything for baby. They got me lumps of sugar and warmed the milk, and spoke so cheerfully that I felt much relieved. Fortunately baby quieted down in an hour or two, and slept well all night. Now my heart is warm for the negro race, and especially for sleeping car porters.

Its Fate.

One of the readers for a large publishing house was asked to pass judgment upon a manuscript for another firm.

One evening, just as he had begun his reading, a card was sent up, and the visitor proved to be the author himself.

The men were friends, and hurriedly gathering the scattered pages together, he thrust them into a drawer in the desk and had scarcely done so when his caller was admitted. After the call was over, as the visitor rose to go, the literary critic rose also, and half sitting upon the desk which hid the manuscript he said, by way of parting:

"I suppose you are busy, nowadays?"

"Oh, yes. I have gone at my writing again. Just finished something the other day and started it on the rounds. But, Great Scott! What's the use. I suppose some idiot, who doesn't know beans about the subject, is sitting on the thing."

The critic looked down somewhat mechanically at the desk on which he sat and said: "Possibly so."

A Drawback.

Susie—Wouldn't you like to be as happy as a lark?

Johnnie—Now! Think of the time they have to get up.—Truth.



A Song of Hope.
Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
What are you wearing—
Labor and sorrow?
Look to your looms again;
Faster and faster,
Fly the great shuttles
Prepared by the Master
Life's in the loom.
Room for it—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Lighten the labor
And sweeten the sorrow,
Now—while the shuttles fly
Faster and faster,
Up and be at it—
At work with the Master,
He stands at your loom,
Room for him—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Look at your fabric
Of labor and sorrow,
Seamy and dark
With despair and disaster,
Turn it—and lo,
The design of the Master,
The Lord's at the loom,
Room for him—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Look at your fabric
Of labor and sorrow,
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The design of the Master,
The Lord's at the loom,
Room for him—room!

Children of yesterday,
Heirs of to-morrow,
Look at your fabric
Of labor and sorrow,
Seamy and dark
With despair and disaster,
Turn it—and lo,
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