

THE FAMILY STORY

....HEARTSIE'S 'TONEMENT....

Whack! bam! whack, whack, whack! echoed through the country stillness of a South Carolina afternoon as the man, reaching upward from where he stood on tip-toe on the rickety step of a corn-house hammered the big nails steady and square and drove them home. Having fastened one end of a narrow board to the upper side of the wall he drew it down diagonally across the dwarf door and nailed it hard and fast, effectually preventing entrance. This done, he picked up half a dozen fowls which laid tied together on the ground and went to the open door of the cabin, brushing ruthlessly against the blooms of a red japonica bush in his haste.

All was dark inside. The wood in the fireplace was only smoldering, not burning. The daylight of the gray afternoon that stole in through the heavy shuttered window showed that a woman sat in one corner.

"Here, you there!" called the man; "you understand that if you rip off that board and use any corn out of that house you go to jail—you and your old man both! You understand?"

"I know, but you ain't doing us right," answered the woman. "We's paid out for the things, not 'scusin' (excepting) the picture what you fetched last. Here's the papers what the mens give us, every time they been here."

"I never authorized anybody to collect payment, and you owe me clear \$15, not to say interest, since April. I'll send back in a week for that corn and if you've laid a finger on it you'll be sorry. Where's your husband?"

"I dunno; out gittin' wood, I reckon. Since you've taken the feather bed and the pick of the quilts we'll have to keep up a steady fire to warm by."

"Well, you make 'tiah understand what I say; you hear?"

"Mr. Beckwith ain't goin' to touch nothin'," said the woman in a depressed voice. "But you's mighty hard on us old people. You ain't leave us even a pullet to raise from," crying wistfully the feathered bunch hanging limp and resigned by their yellow legs. "You couldn't low me dat speckled hen? She's a sure layer and an awful good mother. I'd save you a couple of the first chickens she'd hatch if you'd 'gree to it."

The speaker came forward and regarded her creditor pleadingly, a repressed eagerness in her manner as though she half expected he would comply. She was tall, with a smooth, shining, bronze-brown skin and good features, showing little trace of the thick lips, flat nose and receding forehead of the typical negro.

"Speckled hen, indeed!" said the man, waving her off. "I've got her now; the chickens she might raise I might never see. I'm up to your tricks! Get some of your neighbors to raise on shares with you. Don't meddle with the corn-house, now," he called as he drove off in his rattling road cart. "The law drove them nails and it will be the worse for you if you draw any of them out."

Heartsie Beckwith stepped outside after he was gone and looked at the cornhouse door with the tell-tale board across its face, then she looked pathetically at the open trap door of the little fowlhouse opposite.

"It won't be no use to shut it to-night," she muttered. "We's ruined, plumb ruined, and there ain't nobody and nothin' to turn to."

Half unconsciously she looked in the direction of the long avenue of oaks that stretched across the big flat field in front of the cabin. As she stood thus an elderly negro in a tattered coat, with his head tied up in a motley collection of scarfs and strings, came up behind her.

"Is dat debil gone?" he asked in a thin, high voice.

"Yes, Mr. Beckwith. He's gone, and everything gone with him, 'scusin' the corn and that little handful of peacocks in the corn house, what we ain't to lay hands on. Everybody goin' to know now that we's been shut up and disgraced."

"Is you show him the papers what the mens give you in 'sidenation of the 'aters and cotton and things what we pay out on de clock debt?"

"Yes, But that make no differ. He tell it as how we give the things to the wrong men, rascallion men—bat he ain't send to fetch 'em. He wouldn't leave me so much as that speckled hen what's such a regular layer. It's wicked for anybody to eat a hen like that, what pays for herself over and over every year."

"Come in out of the damp, baby," was all that Mr. Beckwith said, and as they entered the cabin, where a light-wood knot in the chimney place blazed up thruply in welcome, a brazen-tongued clock on a shelf struck thirteen in hurried, uneven tones. Mr. Beckwith's face brightened. "It's got us in a lot of trouble, but it's mighty good company,"

he said, looking up at the tall clock in its gaudy frame.

Peck! peck! as of a sharp bill striking on bare boards came from the inner room. Mr. Beckwith looked at his wife inquiringly.

"The rumpus pullet!" she explained. "While the buckra and the dog was runnin' down the other fowls it fly in there and squat down under the bed, so I just shut the door and ain't say nothin'. Seemed like the Lord aimed for we to keep it."

Her companion chuckled. "There's near 'bout four bushel of corn down yonder in the fence corner," he said, "but it ain't gone there itself. I took it out while he was gone to the sto' for nails. He ain't goin' to miss it out of the main batch."

The rumpus pullet, released from confinement, stepped out near its mistress, pecking at the oven, against the rim of which a few crumbs from the last cooked bread stuck fast.

The pullet's red feathers stood up mutinously; it was not prepossessing in appearance, but Heartsie took it up and stroked it gently. "It's one of the four that was hand raised," she said. "That what make it come in here to hide. That white hen what died on the nest was its mother."

A boy of about 10 years came in with his arms full of wood. He put his burden down, then drew near one corner of the fireplace and stood silent, looking into the flames.

"Is you hungry, bud?" asked his grandmother. "There's a piece of corn cake in the cupboard. Where's Bollum?"

"I left him in the branch. He had jump a rabbit," replied the child.

"That dog got sense," pronounced Mr. Beckwith. "He know when there ain't nothin' fresh in the house. If that clock man had knowed he'd a' carried Bollum off long wid the other things. You see! If he don't fetch in a rabbit to-night he'll get one by sunup. He's suttin' a knowin' dog."

Humpy was asleep and Bollum, the yellow spotted cur, dozed fitfully before the fire that night, but the excitement of the afternoon had banished slumber from the eyes of Heartsie and her spouse. They discussed and rediscussed every phase of the situation.

"Is you think to mention them things to him, baby?" the old man asked. "Them things is rightly worth a heap more than \$15."

"I ain't crack my teeth on him about 'em," said his wife. "I just was all timesome like for fear he would go 'screbin' about and stumble on 'em. It never 'curred to him though to look in that old trunk with the cover all teared loose and rags stickin' out. He'd a' took 'em soon as his eyes light on 'em, but it wouldn't have been for no pay he would have took. He'd a' said as we stole them things and had us up before the trial justice—you as a 'spectable member in good standin' and me what is always been held to be a righteous livin' woman. He'd a' taken that ground sure!"

"I believe you!" ejaculated 'tiah, looking admiringly at his quicker-witted partner. "I never thought of that!"

"Mr. Beckwith," said Heartsie at length in an impressive undertone. "I's got a notion that them things is a carryin' us to the devil. I's ponderated on it now a long time, when you ain't had no notion I was ponderatin', and accordin' to my stakin' off we won't have no let-up this goin' down hill we're doin' till we gets rid of them things for good and all. Ain't we work hard this year every day the Lord send?" she went on.

"Dat's what we done," affirmed her spouse.

"Well! Ain't we try our best las' year?"

"Dat we did."

"And de year before that? Ain't we always been hard workin', and ain't everything gone against us? The cholera killin' off us hogs and fowl and 'rings and skippin' other people's? Our cow crackin' of her neck in the ditch and Black Sally just naturally gittin' poorer and more perish-away lookin', the more feed we give her? Till the boss say we can't keep her no longer? Ain't all this what I tellin' you precisely so?"

Mr. Beckwith nodded. His pipe had long since gone out and he did not know it.

"Well! Mark my words!" emphasizing them with uplifted finger, "just so long as that candlestick and that breastpin and that piece of watch chain stay there in that trunk where they is the old boy's goin' to follow us."

Mr. Beckwith groaned with excess of interest and belief.

"Well! what kin' we do?" he asked, helplessly. "Fling 'em away? Bury 'em, what? If we was to try to sell 'em we'd git took up."

"Fling 'em away! Bury 'em!" re-

peated his wife. "What good would that do? Uriah Beckwith, there's no such a thing as 'tonement, 'tonement for wrongdoin'! If we could hit on a plan to have them things go back to the family they 'bongs to the old boy would quit noticin' of us so close and particular. We's in a worse fix than we ever been in yet to-night, and if we don't watch out plagues worse than the white preacher tell about is 'goin' to 'stroy us finally."

"But the family all is dead or else move off, even the house burn down and the land sell or goin' to be sell," said Mr. Beckwith.

"I know, 'tiah, what was it the old boss used to think more of than anything else 'sides good eatin' and drinkin' and he wife and children?"

"A good horse," ventured Uriah. His wife looked disdainful.

"His hounds, fishin'?" Heartsie shook her head.

"I dunno, less 'en you mean his niggers. Since you talk 'bout givin' of the things back, supposin' we dig deep in his grave and bury 'em there. He'll have 'em then for sure, nobody else. His grave right there by the church without no headstone."

Heartsie still looked inscrutable. "They ain't doin' nobody no good in the trunk and they wouldn't be doin' no good bury in the ground," she said. "Since you ain't 'member nothin' I mind you how the marster think a heap of he church, how he never miss a Sunday 'tendin' there and was a high sitting member—that's just the same as sayin' he give money reg'lar and a heap of it. Now, if we give them things to the church in he name it would be a 'tonement just like it tell 'bout in the book."

Mr. Beckwith was strongly stirred. He gazed at his partner as though he thought her inspired.

"If we could give them things to the same church," went on Heartsie, "my poor Regina would rest more contented in her grave and we'd have better luck to provide for her orphan child," glancing at the corner where Humpy, rolled up head and ears, slumbered peacefully. "I's wished many times I had had the spunk to own that my gal took them things and give them back as was right and proper. When 'Gina was little and used to lift things out of ladies' rooms and out of the pantry closet I used to steal 'em back in place and scold and whip her, but, after she got grow'd and was such a likely gal as could speak up so smart, I hated to own as she was a common nigger thief."

"How you am to give these things back, baby?" asked the old man. "The church is shut up these days. There never is anybody stirrin' 'bout there."

"I hear Em-line say yisterday that there's goin' to be preachin' there this Sunday. People is comin' over here from the city and they goin' to dedicate it over again. She say it's a 'versary and that it's the oldest church in the whole country. There's to be a 'excursion."

"But how we kin manage?"

"I plan it out like this," said Heartsie. "When they lifts the collection (they calls it the lofty in the white folks' church) you could tote up the things and hand 'em in and 'splain where they come from and how it is a 'tonement we made wid 'em."

"Before all the people?"

"Yes. 'Course the book say about acknowledged before men. I would say it myself, but it ain't respectful for women to speak in church, and if I patch you up proper seemin' and do you up a shirt with rice starch you'd look better than me."

The rededication of St. Jude's took place the next Sunday. The excursionists were there in numbers. Many saw the old negro, with his gray wool combed into order and his shabby suit brushed sleek and span, walking up the aisle at a respectful distance behind the acting vestrymen. Only those nearest could hear what he said, as, having deposited his burden, he bent low before the church officers and made hurried obeisance to the minister. Before they had recovered from the surprise sufficiently to question him he was already half way to the door, mopping his brow that was moist with the stress of exertion.

"Luck will turn now, see if it don't," said Heartsie, as she joined him.—New York Evening Post.

Killed by Th m.

A remarkable cause of death from fright was the case of the famous painter Poutman. He was at work in his studio, where there were a number of death's heads and skeletons, when he happened to fall asleep. During his sleep there was a slight shock of earthquake, and when he woke up suddenly he saw the skeletons and skulls dancing round in the greatest confusion. He at once became panic-stricken, and rushed across the room and threw himself out of the window on to the pavement below. He died in a few days after, not from injuries received in the fall, but from the nervous shock given by the dancing skeletons, though the cause of the festivity was explained to him.

Enterprising Birds.

At just about the time the Central Park ostrich laid its five-pound egg a Kentucky hen at Lewisburg laid a five-inch egg shaped like a pipe bowl.

The next time you have your shoes and stockings off, look at your feet; you never saw anything uglier.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL CHURCH.

Finest Structure Ever Built for Use of the Colored Race.

The finest church ever built for the use of the colored race is soon to be erected in Springfield, Ill., as a monument to the great emancipator. It will be known as the Lincoln Memorial African M. E. Church. The superstructure is to be built of Bedford stone, and will be covered with a slate roof. There will be an auditorium which will hold 700 people, a Sunday school room which can be thrown into an auditorium, giving the whole space a capacity of 1,000; a reading-room, a library, a gymnasium and a night school. A memorial-room and a museum will be provided which will contain relics of slavery, such as the auction block, the slave chain, the manacles and the whipping post. There also will be



LINCOLN MEMORIAL CHURCH.

seen the obverse of the picture; that is, a collection of books by negro authors and other signs of the character growth of the race since its emancipation. Above the memorial-room will be a large triple window containing life-size figures of Lincoln, Frederick Douglass and John Brown. Other ornamental windows will symbolize the history and progress of the negro race in America. Twenty-eight windows will be named in honor of great abolitionists, American and foreign, and of a few prominent Illinoisans. The material for the pulpit will be brought from Harper's Ferry, while the pulpit chairs will be made of material from Lincoln's old home at New Salem, Ill. The entire cost of the church is estimated at \$25,000.

A HANDY DOG.

Draws a Prospecting Outfit for a Colorado Miner.

A novel prospecting outfit may be seen once a week at Sawpit, a mining camp in the San Juan country, Colorado. Every Sunday a miner arrives from Deep Creek, where he has several claims that are in process of development. Harry Wilkes is the name of the hermit, whose life seems bound up in that of his prospects and his humble four-footed companion, through whose services he is able to prosecute his work in the middle of winter in a country where the whirl of the snowslides passing down the adjacent mountains is the only music that enlivens the tedium of the long evenings. Deep Creek is off the regular trails that lead to Sawpit, and thus is separated by an area of snow that would not stand the weight of an ordinary pony, especially during the warm hours of the day, when the surface snow is soft. Wilkes is poor—too poor to lay in a winter's supply of grub, and only capable of buying as he gets out a small quantity of ore. He thought himself of a St. Bernard dog, which he had brought to the cabin when the first snows of the winter fell, and after a little application managed to break him to harness. Having accomplished this much Wilkes next built a rough sled and now goes to town every Sunday for his grub. The dog makes good time, while his master accompanies him on snowshoes. The trip is made with an average of 200 pounds of tools and merchandise. The intelligent animal trots off with the



BETTER THAN A HORSE.

load at a gait that makes it warm for Wilkes to keep up with, and often necessitates a wait on the part of the dog for his owner to overtake him on some of the steep hillsides.

The New Yankee Doodle.

The children of New York city are singing the following lines to the tune of Yankee Doodle:

Do not spit upon the street,
In cars or public places;
This is far from being neat,
And leaves unwholesome traces.

Dread disease is spread about
By such selfish doing;
We will try to put to rout
Smoking, spitting, chewing.

A boy never expresses the love he feels for his mother, and seldom feels the love he expresses for other women.

SNEAD NONSENSE

"How would you define ennui?" when you're tired of doing nothing too lazy to do something."—Puck.

Shunleigh—I don't see why you are so little for me. Miss Gyer—Have you ever taken a good look at yourself?—Town Topics.

She—Do you understand those French jokes? He—I'm afraid I do. She—Then I wish you'd translate them.—Pick-Me-Up.

Gosling—"What do you think of the new tie of mine?" Wiggins—"My boy, it's not a tie. It's a colored supplyment."—Truth.

"George describes the girl he is engaged to as a perfect vision." "Yes. And his sister says she is a sight."—Indianapolis Journal.

"Has Mr. De Broken proposed to you yet, Beatrice?" "No; but he has a lawyer looking into papa's financial affairs."—Detroit Free Press.

When a woman is saving up to buy a new hat she can never see any use in her husband's spending money to belong to a club.—New York Press.

Cannibal king—You haven't succeeded in fattening the captive? The chief cook—He's losing flesh all the time. I think he's worrying about something.—Puck.

George—I just saw you coming from the conservatory with Miss Golda. Rather handsome girl, but too reserved for me. Thomas—Yes, I just reserved her for life.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

"Ever notice what an even temper Johnson has? No matter how much he is disagreed with, he never gets angry." "No; but what a deep pity it has for the other fellow."—Indianapolis Journal.

Dyspepsia Specialist (irritably)—"But, madam, you must chew your food. What were your teeth given for?" Female Patient (calmly)—"They weren't given to me—I bought 'em."—Odds and Ends.

"Theatres ought to be seated with the women all on one side and the men on the other." "Why?" "So that when men go out between the acts they can tramp on each other's toes."—Detroit Free Press.

A fashion paper announces that gowns this summer will come higher than they did last year, owing to a boom in the silk market. We trust they will—at the shoulders.—Commercial Advertiser.

"The bicycle is all right, I suppose," remarked Mr. Walker, "but it should not be carried to excess." "I don't think it should be carried at all," replied Mr. Sprocket. "It should carry you."—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Philanthropist—"Yours is the first hand organ I have seen for some weeks. Got too cold for them, I suppose." Organist—"Eet ees so, signor. Zee peeples keepa windows shut and notta pay us to mova on."—New York Weekly.

Mr. Norris—"I won't hear a word of it! It is too preposterous!" Mrs. Norris—"Don't be severe with Frank; you know he has fallen in love." "Well, can't he fall out again?" "No, I'm afraid not without getting married."—Answers.

"I have seen some pretty hard knocks in my time," began the anvil, in ringing tones, when the bellows interrupted him with, "But think of the trouble I have. There isn't a day that I'm not hard pressed to raise the wind."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Mr. Esplanade—"I miss one topic from the program of the Mothers' Congress which I fully expected to see discussed." Mr. Monterey—"What is that?" Mr. Esplanade—"How to Manage a Husband," by Miss Soanso."—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Chumley—"I hear one of your freshmen was pretty badly injured the other day. How was it?" Hankins—"Why, it was in the elocution and oratory class. He has such a heavy voice that he strained his back in trying to raise it."—University of Michigan Wrinkle.

Advance Agent—"You Western people don't seem to be quite up to opera. Everywhere we go the audiences weep in the wrong place." Local Manager—"You won't have any trouble here. My ushers are instructed to eject anybody who does not weep in the cuspidor."—Detroit Journal.

Mabel (studying her lesson)—"Papa, what is the definition of volubility?" Mabel's Father—"My child, volubility is a distinguishing feature of your mother when, on account of urgent affairs, I don't happen to reach home until after 2 o'clock in the morning."—Baltimore News.

Mother—"Mary, that young Spinner has been paying a great deal of attention to you of late. Do you think he means business?" Mary (with a far away look)—"I'm afraid he does, mother. He is the agent for a bicycle firm, and he has done nothing but try to sell me a bicycle ever since he has been coming here."—Square Moments.