Boredom of Life Led Mrs. Sweetin to Slay Husband

No Romance in Home of Miner Husband; Turned to Hight to Relieve Tedium of Living.

(Continued from Page One.)

But I always remembered I was married to another man.

"He told me that his wife didn't love him and that he didn't care anything about her. By then he was like God to me and whatever he told me, I believed. So, when he told me I didn't love Wilford, and that Wilford didn't care for me, I believed that too.

"It was dusk one day, and we were standing on the church steps at Ina when he told me he couldn't live without me, that he had to have me and that if he couldn't have me any other way, he'd get rid of his wife and marry me.

Turns to God.

"I thought of divorce. I went home and prayed to remain a good wife and mother. I couldn't sleep and God forsook me. Hight no longer prayed with me. He just loved me. I was a slave and he was a king. I worshiped him and thought he could do no wrong. I had erred but never sinned. For my errors I could ask forgiveness and did, but for my sins there was no prayer. My lips were silent and my heart mute.

"I loved Anna, his wife. I thought she was too good for him. And I think she loved me, but I couldn't raise my eyes to hers, for I loved her husband.

"It was on another night and again in church that my pastor told me that I belonged to him and that he was mine. 'We've got to get rid of them,' he said. 'We're going to kill them.'

"I ran down the steps and down the road. It was terrible, too terrible to think about. I went home and dropped to my knees and prayed and when my husband came home, I couldn't talk to him and I couldn't come near him.

The Downfall.

"The more I tried to forget what Hight had said, the more it persisted in my mind. And then it just seemed that I had to do what he told me, so when he gave me the poison I put it in the things my husband ate.

"It didn't seem terrible any more. Love was the greatest thing in the world. It didn't matter if you killed for it, if you stole for it, if you cheated and lied. If your love was great enough, and Godly enough, all was forgiven. No one who loved could do wrong and it didn't matter what the world said.

"And when Sweetin died I wasn't at all sorry. The pastor preached the sermon. I remember that it was a good sermon. One line stands out. He said: 'I don't feel worthy to do this,' meaning to preach the sermon for my husband.'

"After the body was buried, Hight walked home with me and he said: 'Well, that's over. I wish the rest of the job was off my mind.'

"We had a $1,000 in insurance and I paid that on the home and then I had just a little bit left. I went to work clerking for six dollars a week but that kept my three boys and me with the help I got from my family.

"Then I began to think how much I had loved my husband and how good he had been to me. He gave me everything I wanted but he wasn't sweet—and Hight was sweet.

Retribution.

"If I could have gotten Wilford back, I would have. After all, I had been married to him 16 years and a women gets used to her man. I was afraid that Hight would poison Anna and I didn't want him to do it. I told him I didn't.

"I didn't want to marry Hight then for he wasn't good to me any more. I got tired of him. My mind came back to me and I knew he wasn't nearly as good as I thought he was. I was a woman and he was a man and a preacher and he shouldn't have put sin in my mind and murder in my heart. I just wanted to think about my children.

"Do you know, I think he's a coward. He shouldn't have said anything about me. And I have three children! They're so dear!

"And then I began thinking that I wasn't any better than he, and that I was a wicked woman. He kept telling me he loved me, and we were planning for a time when we could go away and forget that there had ever been anybody else for either of us.

"I didn't try to pray any more, and he didn't pray with me.

"It wasn't that he was good-looking, or appealing, or anything else. It was just that he was so different and he loved me."

The tale becomes repetitionary as the woman attempts to expound and clarify her own beliefs and motives. "He loved me" becomes the obligato to the emotional strain "He killed her." Elsie Sweetin wishes that it might have been different, but—"

Reward.

"I couldn't have been happy," she philosophizes. "His face—my husband's—was always before me. It is now. I think of him and I know now that I loved him more than I could love Hight. He was a coward not to protect me. He drew me out of my happy life with a promise of something better, and I have—this.

"Why did I do it? That's what I am thinking about. But I didn't have any sense. I just knew that somebody was commanding me to do things and I did.

"There is no more murder in my heart. I couldn't kill again—not even Hight. My heart is clean.

"But what can I say? I have killed because I loved too greatly and now I have nothing."

The story of a burned out passion is ended. The undefined shounders shrug with inner cold. The eyes look out dully as if visualizing the vast, dreaded future stretching endlessly ahead. And the woman who killed turns to the hard cot in her cell as the steel door clangs shut behind her interviewer.

Sans prayer, sans faith, sans love—Elsie Sweetin stands alone with her thoughts.

20 Bands to Combine in Concerts at Kearney

Kearney, Neb., Sept. 24.—Twelve bands have accepted invitations to participate in Kearney's musical festical October 7 and 8. It is expected that the entry list when completed will total 20 bands scattered through the trade area. A $350 cash prize goes to the winner in the band contest and every entrant is assured a premium down to $25, the total prize money exceeding $1,000. A feature on both evenings of the band festival will be a concert participated in by all bands assembled here, in which between 300 and 400 pieces are expected to take part.

State Will Not Seek Death for Woman Slayer

Prosecutor to Ask Extreme Penalty for Hight, but Life Sentence for His Accomplice, He Says.

(Continued from Page One.)

do. He suggested poison as the solution. She was frightened at first. But he won her over—she poisoned her husband.

Hight preached the funeral sermon, walked home with her after the body was buried.

"As he walked home with me he said, 'Well, that's over. I wish the rest of the job was off my hands.' The rest of the job was the slaying of his wife."

Six weeks later Mrs. Hight was dead. He had poisoned her, as he said he would. Then the horror of it all dawned on Mrs. Sweetin.

Idol is Shattered.

"My mind came back to me," she said. "He wasn't nearly as good as I thought he was. I couldn't marry him. His face—the face of my husband, was always before me. I knew then it was my husband I really loved. But it is too late—he's gone—I killed him."

Hight is a coward, the woman declared. He is repulsive to her. Gone is every bit of love she thought she had for him, swallowed in the abyss of the crime.

"He was always a coward," she cried, "or he would have protected me when he found I was weak. It was he who put murder in my heart, and he knew better.'"

The children of the two families—innocent victims of this crime—were taken from their broken homes today. The children of Hight were taken by relatives and given homes. The three children of Mrs. Sweetin are to go to the Masonic Orphanage. Both Hight and Wilford Sweetin were Masons.

Girl's Identity Learned.

The identity of the little school girl whose picture was found in Hight's home was learned today. She died two years ago under circumstances that are being investigated. Her name was Grace Elliott. She died October 15, 1922, after a long illness, which the doctors pronounced typhoid fever.

The little girl, some 15 years old at the time, was organist in Hight's church. She spent much time at his home—his wife became jealous of her.

Hight has denied that he killed the child. But arsenic, his favorite poison, sometimes acts when given in small doses over a long period like typhoid. The symptoms are said to be much the same. The child's father said today he never suspected she died from other than typhoid; he does not think so now. But the authorities will continue the investigation.

Other Women Involved.

There are other chapters in the life of the minister that may be investigated. It is now apparent to the authorities that while cloaked as a minister he frequently strayed from the path of righteousness. There are women, it is said, who have kept silent when they might have revealed the true character of the man. These may be interrogated by the authorities.

Hight said today he would not employ a lawyer. He expressed the desire to go into court and plead guilty. From questions he asked it was revealed he hopes by pleading guilty he will escape the death penalty. But it is not believed the court will take his plea of guilty. He probably will be given a trial before a jury. The state's attorney feels sure the verdict will be death.

The woman, her relatives say, will have a lawyer. She has expressed a desire to fight for her life. She does not believe a jury will hang her after her story has been told. State's Attorney Thompson indicated he would not press for the death penalty in her case.

Mass of Evidence.

"I have been too busy getting these confessions to think much of the punishment," he said today. There is a mass of evidence to be gotten together for the grand jury. After it is all assembled the state's attorney will know better how to proceed.

The coroner's jury that made its report today found that Sweetin "came to his death by means of arsenic wilfully and maliciously administered by his wife at the instigation of Hight, in conformity with an agreement between them to murder Sweetin." And this same jury found that Mrs. Hight "came to her death by arsenic administered with malicious aforethought by her husband."

In the eyes of the law both are equally guilty, but the judge may hold there was mitigation in the crime of Mrs. Sweetin, in that she was under the influence of the stronger will of the minister. So she may escape with life imprisonment.

Members of the coroner's jury were bitter against the minister when they were dismissed. They openly declared he should be hanged.

The grand jury is expected to return indictments in October and a short time later, probably at the same term of court, the two prisoners will be tried for their lives.

Burgess Bedtime Stories

By THORNTON W. BURGESS.

Regrets have ever been too late;
On this I pray you meditate.
—Bowser the Hound.

A Surprise for Three.

"Bow-wow-wow-ow-ow-ow!" roared the great voice of Bowser the Hound, as his wonderful nose was filled with the fresh, strong scent of Reddy Fox beside the barn. This was the kind of a trail it was a joy to follow. He knew that Reddy was only a little way ahead of him. This was a trail that could be followed at his best speed.

Down along the side of the barn Bowser raced, baying as only he can bay. Around the corner, across the cow yard back of the barn, around the next corner and up along the other side of the barn the trail of Reddy Fox led Bowser. Then out straight across the barnyard toward where Bowser had left Unc' Billy Possum the trail led.

Now, Farmer Brown's Boy had been very busy in the barn fixing a pen in which to keep Unc' Billy Possum. He was working by lantern light. At the first roar of Bowser's great voice he gave a start of surprise. For a moment he stood listening. Then he dropped his tools and ran for the barn door. He got there just in time

"Bow-wow-wow-ow-ow!" roared the great voice of Bowser the Hound.

to see Reddy Fox running across the barnyard toward where Bowser had been left watching Unc' Billy Possum.

In that first, quick glance he saw that Unc' Billy wasn't there. He discovered it at the same instant that Reddy Fox discovered it. It is a question which was the more surprised—Farmer Brown's Boy at seeing Reddy Fox there in the barnyard, or Reddy Fox at the discovery that Unc' Billy Possum was no longer stretched out there. It was hard for Reddy to believe his eyes. But he had no time to try to find out what had become of Unc' Billy Possum. Bowser the Hound was already turning the corner of the barn. Reddy sped away into the Black Shadows.

With a shout Farmer Brown's Boy ran to head Bowser off. He didn't want Bowser chasing Reddy Fox all night. He caught Bowser at the very place where Unc' Billy Possum had been left. He spoke sharply to Bowser. Bowser put his tail between his legs and crawled to his master's feet. He whined. He was trembling all over with excitement and eagerness to keep on after Reddy Fox. But he obeyed his master.

"Well, sir, what do you mean by this?" demanded Farmer Brown's Boy sternly. "What has become of that Possum I told you to watch?"

It wasn't until that very instant that Bowser remembered Unc' Billy Possum. He looked around, expecting to see him lying there. Such a funy look as there was on Bowser's face when he discovered that no Possum was in sight. How could a dead Possum get away? It hadn't been over three minutes since he had started after Reddy Fox. Yet that Possum had disappeared. It must be that Reddy Fox had picked him up and carried him away.

Bowser was filled with shame. You never have seen a dog more ashamed than was Bowser the Hound as he looked up in his master's face. He had been left to watch that Possum and now that Possum was gone.

(Copyright, 1924.)

The next story: "Clever Old Unc' Billy."

RESIDENTS FIGHT RAIL EXTENSION

Stanley and Helen Labedz and Walter and Jennie Wilczewski, filed suit in district court, seeking to enjoin the Union Pacific railroad from extending its side track across the intersection of Twenty-eighth and K streets and in front of their homes.

Nebraska News Nubbins

Beatrice.—Rolf Huls, farmer and stock raiser in Hanover township, died at his home, after a brief illness. He was 60 years of age, and leaves his widow and a family of grown children.

Blue Springs.—Mrs. W. M. Copeland died at her home at Fayette, Idaho, after a prolonged illness. The body was brought to Blue Springs, the former home of the deceased, for burial. Her husband was formerly Burlington agent at Blue Springs.

Columbus.—Knights of Columbus elected the following officers: Grand knight, John Miller; deputy grand knight, Joseph Stanzel; chancellor, A. W. Frischolz; recording secretary, Martin Messing; financial sercetary, L. N. Herrod; treasurer, Leo Mosrsen; advocate, William O'Brien; warden, Clarence Schwind; inner guard, Dr. F. W. Leonard; trustee, Thomas Wade, and lecturer, Henry Woerth.

Beatrice.—B. H. Oden, for more than 40 years a Beatrice resident, was given a dinner by his daughter, Mrs. Pearl Hamilton, in celebration of his 70th birthday aniversary. Fourteen members of the family were present.

WHY I QUIT GOING TO CHURCH

Rupert Hughes is so drastic in this article that, if you've been backsliding, he may irritate you into going back to church just to prove how wrong he is in October

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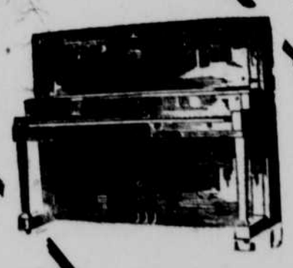

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