

THE FAMILY STORY

STORY OF A BACKWOODS WOOING.

UP the long and slanting hill-slope a man's figure went slowly, plodding onward after a sturdy black mare and turning up the ground between two tall rows of corn, which at times hid him completely from view. The shoulders under the straw hat proclaimed him young and manly, and the steadiness with which he went forward and his short stop at the top of the slope bespoke him a man of purpose.

Then came galloping through the white dust of the road below a lanky boy on a roan horse, in whose veins was the racing blood of generations. Clear and flutelike came the call. "Marion; oh, Marion!"

Marion, handsome Marion, came leisurely up to the rails. He did not expect any letters and was not excited. However, the boy knew his news was worth attention and burst out impetuously. "Yer won't be so cool when ye have heard it, either. Beck Bailey's man is dead."

He had the gratification of seeing Marion grow pale to his lips.

"What killed 'im?"

"The doctors air callin' it blood pizen," returned the boy. "Say, Marion, they're gittin' thar hot fur. I seen Tom Pence hitchin' up and Cunnel Will hez been thar high an' dry sence the turn kum."

Still Marion did not speak, but the boy saw his lips tremble.

"Run along, Pete, with the mail. Folks'll all be waiting," he said, and Peter, disappointed at nothing more definite, dug his heels into the colt and dashed away.

Then the man un hitched Dolly and, mounted on her bare back, rode down the lane into the sunlit woods, on, on, without path or guide post, deep into the woods until he was sure he was far enough from human beings to be safe. And then, with a shout jubilant enough to frighten the black mare, he threw back his head and laughed, a sonorous peal that astonished himself. He knew he was happy and he had come away here to fight the impetuous demons of newly aroused passion and eagerness until he could subdue them enough to be decorous before the world. For he had loved Beck Bailey when she was a slip of a girl, and as a young woman, and when she had married another he had come away here in the woods to fight out his hatred and misery and rebellion. Nature, dear mother, had calmed him and he even became resigned. But Beck Bailey's man was dead, and she was free, and the heart of the man went after her as a bird after the home nest. Beck! slim, sweet Beck, with her laughing, mocking mouth and wonderful, changeful eyes! She should be his—for what cared he for Tom Pence and even Colonel Will, the old, bowing, smirking beau. He would go down with the country side and see Beck at the "berryin'", but not before, oh, no!—he could wait awhile now.

The "berryin'" was a great affair. The Baileys' house had been thronged for days, and Beck kept up by a continual state of excitement. It was all grist to her mill, for she loved "some-thing goin' on," and in this case was almost wild, besides, with a sense of freedom and relief. Her new black clothes made her look "mighty peart," as the women said, and she was the adored and center idol of everyone, petted and consoled with, cried over and appealed to for advice and assistance in planning the great funeral.

Never had quiet Edward Bailey made such a stir in the world as now, when, quieter than ever, he lay in state in his black coffin, one "with solid handles." The traditional ceremonies were all gone through with, the weeping, wailing, the dolorous hymning of quavering voices, the sermon, long and full of eulogy, the farewell to the dead, at which Beck fainted dramatically into her father's arms, and the slow walk to the graveyard near, a long procession of the country people following. It was all over and as nightfall came on the crowd dispersed, wondering what "Beck wud do jist at fust, an' whod git er." For not one had missed Tom Pence at the "berryin'" with his pleasant, jovial face and smiling eyes, nor Marion Moore, silent and watchful, nor the "ole Cunnel mussin' aroun'." They had all ben to "berryin'" before and they all knew Beck Bailey. It was only four years since she set the country mad with her beaux and her fun and her daring escapades. And now she was a widow, rich, handsomer than ever. "An' ef the ole Nick hain't let loose in these parits, I'm a coon," said her own uncle in the bosom of his family.

In four weeks some one met Beck out riding with the "Cunnel." The news went like wildfire. Aunt Dilsey went over to see Beck. She found her in her white dress, lying in a hammock reading a novel.

"Whatever air you doin', Beck?" she said.

"What I please and plum enjoyin' it," said Beck.

"Yeh able to be lazy," sighed Aunt Dilsey, "but I wouldn't go ridin' jist yit."

Beck's handsome eyes smiled. "I wud," she said, "do jist exactly what I pleased. I'm rich an' I'm free, an' I'm goin' to enjoy life, an' yer can save yerselves a power by shettin' up."

"Then," said Aunt Dilsey, "she curl-

ed up like a young cat an' I cudn't get another word out'n her."

The next Sunday night there were ten saddle horses and buggies tied to the posts and the fence. Beck never enjoyed anything so much in her life. She treated everyone alike, gave them cake and home-made wine, laughed, joked and turned them all out at 10 o'clock, inviting them to call again. But the next Sunday night there was no Beck at home, and she electrified the small audience at the Methodist church at the cross-roads by appearing among them with a stripling cousin of 17.

During these days Marion Moore never appeared at the Bailey house, but formed one of the young men, ay, even the middle-aged and old men, who never failed to crowd about the young widow whenever she rode into the county town on Sunday afternoon. Being the only man she missed, Beck grew restive, and one October day, when Marion was clearing up a new bit of ground for the spring tobacco, she came riding down the lane toward him, her black skirts flying, her cheeks blazing and her tendril-like curls all falling down from under her black cap. He saw her coming, away off, and he knew the errand on which she came, and he had to steel his heart against her to hold his vantage ground. Handsome, stalwart, brawny, he rested on his ax calmly, though the blood in his veins ran as riotous a course as is a brook's after a storm. How Beck laughed as she drew up!

"I haven't been up here for years," she said. "Come over to the cliff, Marion. I'll walk Black Nell."

"I must work, Beck," he said. "Life isn't play all around, ye know."

"Which means ye won't," she smiled. "But I know yer want to go, plum bad! Ye're playin' a losin' game, Marion, fur I know by yer eye that ye're jest the same as ye were," and she laughed tantalizingly. "Don't think yer can fool me, Marion."

He threw his ax down with angry vehemence and stood looking at her.

"I don't know whether ye're a witch or what," he said, hoarsely. "I am jest the same, Beck, an' yer want to look out. I can't stand foolin'."

"I won't marry ag'in, I'm goin' to enjoy life," she mocked. "What's the use of my marryin'? I've got money and land and years of good times ahead o' me. What'd I git in exchange?"

Marion never answered except by his persistent gaze.

"Good-by," she said presently; "ye're in too bad a humor. Ye're takin' life too serious, Marion. There's more'n gray skies above my head. Give me the blue ones." Then she galloped away to the bluffs and Marion's temple of nature, high in the woods above the river. He half fancied she would come back his way; but no. The afternoon wore away and no lith, slim figure on a black mare appeared on his horizon.

So she knew, and, since she knew, she mocked him. Well, he had always loved the brier rose. How could he tame this untamable tigress, this guesser of men's secrets and mocker of men's loves? The intuitions of Marion Moore were better than his knowledge or his reason. He guessed that only a real, lasting affection would ever make her more faithful, more tender, more true than any other woman—but how, how, indeed, was this to come to her?

The mad reports went flying hither and thither. Beck was here, there, everywhere. It was Colonel Will and Tom Pence and Arthur Smedley and Henry Carroll. The widow's bonnet was now never worn, and bows of lavender and elaborate black and white toilettes were sent for to Cincinnati, and cooking and feasting and fun went on in the Bailey house. Thanksgiving came and Beck was the queen of the Pence family gathering that day.

One morning Marion Moore was near his favorite wood haunt, and stopped to look over the fair valley and the infinite hills spread out before him, like a beautiful winter picture. As he stood quiet there fell from the great tree beside him something rustling and dark and green, a lovely piece of the native mistletoe, with its waxen berries thick and plentiful. A smile came to Marion's face. He had been sent a token, and one he would accept. He would hesitate no longer. He took his bunch of mistletoe and walked away. He would become the wooer, for nature, whom he trusted, had sent him a token. He dressed himself with care and rode his fine chestnut horse up to the side gate in the lane, leading to the cluster of cabins that long ago have been the "quarters," but now were turned to various uses. Beck, wrapped in a gay shawl he well remembered, was giving directions to some men at work inside the nearest building. It was just sunset. Perhaps nothing in the world had ever seemed so fair to Marion Moore as this saucy and careless creature, who greeted him with a cool triumph which he had expected and ignored. He accepted her invitation to supper and walked by her side to see the promising colts in the barn lot. Then they went into the house, and Marion proceeded to make himself comfortable

in a very matter of fact way. He looked critically about, much to Beck's astonishment.

"Whatever air yer lookin' about fur Marion?"

"Seen' ef this house is as comfortable as mine," he made reply.

"Well, it plum is, Marion," she replied, forced into earnestness. "The outlook is better with yer all, but this house has more comforts."

"We could soon put some of 'em inter mine," he replied musingly.

"We?"

"Yes, yer an' I."

"Yer takin' a deal fer granted, 'pears ter me. I don't intend ter leave here."

"Oh, well, we could live here. It is all one ter me, so it is where ye're livin'."

"I'm bespoken yer askin' by two, Marion. 'Pears like the men are all crazy."

"Yer're good temptation, Beck, but no one else shall have ye," he said.

Her eyes grew luminous. "Well, now, what would yer do ef yer heard I was off on the marry with one o' the others?"

"Don't yer try it!"

She was up in arms in a minute. "I'm not tellin' you anything, but yer all air too heady with me, Marion. I got an engagement to go to Cincinnati to-morrow, an' ef I say the word what'er prevent me comin' back married?"

Marion was quite white, but was equally determined. "Ef yer go, of course I'll know it's all up. I'll be at the turn of the road at any time set. That'll end it fer me, whichever way. Lord, yer're a hard one! I won't stay to supper. I'll never sit down ter supper here 'less it's as master. What time'll yer go?"

She set her lips. "Noon!" was all she replied.

He put on his coat and hat. "I wish when I think o' some things I'd never seen yer, little or big, girl or widder, but when I go out in the woods and see the wild, sweet things runnin' riot around I can't help lovin' yer. It is born in me."

Then he went out, having tossed to her the fresh branch of mistletoe, and thus left her the memory of a day, long ago, when they were little more than children and he had taken her out to gather some of the weird, waxen-berried growth, and had kissed her, the first kiss of love and desire she had ever known, and the memory of which had never left her.

The next day at noon Marion sat grim and silent on his horse at the turn. He held his slight whip in his hand, but he grasped it like a weapon. He could not keep one thought from returning itself again and again. He could not let that man live who would carry Beck Bailey away from him. When he heard the sound of wheels he got off from the restless horse he rode, fastened himself, stood erect, and braced himself for the ordeal. The buggy came nearer. He drew an awful breath as he recognized the horse. It was Colonel Will's Flighty Dan, famed through the country. It was that old profligate, was it, who was to win the brier rose? An awful singing rhythm in his brain went saying: "Kill him, kill him, kill him!" What Marion would have done he never knew, but the buggy stopped and Beck, in all her dark furs and fluttering feathers, came running toward him, holding out her hands and crying.

"I don't want ter go to Cincinnati, Marion, an' we'll live in whichever house yer like, for I've ben fightin' my feelin's for you all the time, an' I won't give up ter no other one. Take me home, Marion, an' I'm plum tired o' bein' wild. I want ter live quiete'n anyone."

The colonel drove Flighty Dan on into Cincinnati alone, and Beck went with Marion along the homeward road, she riding the chestnut and Marion walking, and there was no wild bird that had ever built nest in the woodlands near that was as contented as this wayward creature who had at last been conquered by her best feelings.—Household Words.

King by Trade.

While in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1891, Judge T. J. Mackey, of South Carolina, was selected by the American colony to deliver a Fourth of July oration at a banquet given in honor of the day. It was attended by all the foreign consuls, and among them was the Consul General of Austria-Hungary, who furnished for Judge Mackey's address the following anecdote and vouched for its authenticity:

A number of Americans residing in Vienna in the year 1810 united to celebrate Washington's birthday, and invited the Emperor Francis of Austria to honor the occasion by his presence.

That genial monarch, a true gentleman, although "every inch a king," overlooked the disregard of established forms into which his would-be hosts had been betrayed by their patriotic zeal, and made this answer in his own handwriting:

"Gentlemen: I thank you for your hospitable invitation and the gratifying terms in which you have expressed your desire that I should attend a banquet which you propose to give in celebration of Gen. Washington's natal day.

"But you must excuse me from uniting with you to honor the memory of your illustrious countryman, since I could not do so with sincerity, for Washington scorned a crown, and did more to bring royalty into contempt than any man who have ever lived; and I am a king by trade."

Sarcastic Priest.

Father Healy's wit seldom had a sting to it. On one occasion, however, some vulgar people asked how he got on so well in fine houses.

"Faith," said Father Healy, "it must be from my mother I got it, for papa was as common as any of you."

TREED BY A MOO

A Prospector's Narrow Escape in the North of Minnesota.

Two pine land prospectors, Ben Jackson and Gustave Herman, have just returned to Tower, Minn., from a trip into the northern part of that State, and among other things they tell of a hair-breadth escape which Jackson had away up near the Rainy River. Coming to an excellent tract of pine land, the two men entered from opposite sides to thoroughly investigate it. Herman had not gone far before he came upon the feeding and breeding grounds of a herd of at least 500 moose. His approach stampeded them and they all went off in the opposite direction.

"After having examined the breeding grounds for some time and hearing nothing from Jackson," says Herman, "I started off on the trail left by the moose, which was not a difficult thing to do, as the animals had made a good road through the snow, over which an army could have marched. Small trees were broken and old stumps overturned by the moose in their mad flight, and about a mile from the yard I came upon the mangled remains of a small cow moose. She had, no doubt, fallen as she ran, and had been trampled to death by her companions.

"Just at dusk I found Jackson. He was up a pine tree, at the foot of which, pawing, stamping and snorting in anger, was a gigantic bull moose. The animal had been tearing at the tree with his antlers until most off the bark was torn off, and the blows he inflicted upon the tall pine made the woods ring. I fired one shot at the animal, and he made off, as I had intentionally missed him when I fired. At the foot of the tree lay what was left of Jackson's rifle. The stock was broken off and trampled into little bits, while the heavy barrel was bent and twisted in a dozen different ways, and showed plainly the marks of hoofs."

"I was making my way through the woods," says Jackson, "when suddenly a noise like a hurricane coming fell upon my ear. There was no wind stirring, and therefore I was at a loss to account for the sound. Just then the herd of moose, many hundred strong, came into sight, and for a minute I felt sick, for I did not think there was any escape for me, and, knowing that a bullet or two would not change them from their course, I dropped my rifle and went up a tree like a squirrel.

"The animals paid no attention to me for a time, and as they dashed along under me the very ground trembled, and the tree in which I was shook as though it were a sapling. When the herd had got pretty well past an old bull, who seemed to be bigger than all out-doors, took his stand directly under the tree, and until Herman came along kept trying to knock down my refuge."

The Commissary Department

Of the human system is the stomach. In consequence of its activity, the body is supplied with the elements of bone, brain, nervous and muscular tissue. When indigestion impedes its functions, the best agent for imparting a healthful impetus to its operations is Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, also a curative for malaria, bilious and kidney complaints, nervousness and constipation.

THE LAWS OF WAR.

Some of the Things Which an Enemy Must Not Do.

The "laws of war" as at present formulated by civilized nations forbid the use of poison against the enemy; murder by treachery, such as assuming the uniform or displaying the flag of a foe; the murder of those who have surrendered, whether upon conditions or at discretion; declarations that no quarter will be given to an enemy; the use of such arms or projectiles as will cause unnecessary pain or suffering to the enemy; the abuse of a flag of truce to gain information concerning an enemy's position; all unnecessary destruction of property, whether public or private.

They also declare that only fortified places shall be besieged, open cities or villages not to be subject to siege or bombardment; that public buildings of whatever character, whether belonging to the church or state, shall be spared; that plundering by private soldiers or their officers shall be considered inadmissible; that prisoners shall be treated with common humanity; that the personal effects and private property of prisoners, excepting their arms and ammunition, shall be respected; that the population of an enemy's country shall be considered to be exempt from participation in the war unless by hostile acts they provoke the ill-will of the enemy; that personal and family honor, and the religious convictions of an invaded people, shall be respected by the invaders, and that all pillage by regular troops or their followers shall be strictly forbidden.

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The Discipline of Children.

"About the worst thing parents can do is to discuss the failings of children before them," says a writer in the Washington Star. "The next worst thing is for one parent to attempt to punish the child and the other parent to protest against it. Either action will damage the respect of the child for one or the other of its parents, and if there is one thing more than another that parents want to preserve it is their dignity before their children. A child who gets the idea that one parent is at variance with the other on the question of discipline will make both unhappy and render itself decidedly objectionable by playing off one parent against the other. If you want to have any harmony in the family, get together on the question of disciplining the children—at least in their presence—and if you want to quarrel on methods do it in the privacy of your own apartments, where you can have it out without lowering yourself in the eyes of the children."

"Going to pot" is a reminder of the days when boiling to death was a legal punishment of parricides.

The English comic paper, Judy, is now to be edited by a woman, Miss Lillian Debenham, who is also the proprietor.

All Good Republicans

who propose attending the National Convention should connect with the Special Train for St. Louis which will leave Sioux City over the Northwestern Line at 8:00 p. m., Saturday, June 13th. Rate: One fare for the round trip. Tickets, sleeping car berths and full information on application to the local ticket agent, to H. C. Cheyney, General Agent, Northwestern Line, Sioux City, Iowa, or to J. Francis, General Passenger Agent, Burlington Route, Omaha, Neb.

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Fellowship in treason is a bad ground of confidence.—Burke.

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