

GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY.

In the town of Columbia, Marion county, Miss., circuit court was in session. The judge had been escorted thither by one hundred militiamen, and it was understood that some very important cases were to be tried. Robert Newman and others had been indicted for the burning of George Brown's cotton gin. Newman's case being the first on the docket, Judge Lincoln proceeded with the trial.

The court room was crowded. Doubtless some few had gathered through curiosity; another class, white not expecting any immediate riot, were loyal men, and were there because they wanted to see the law enforced. There were yet a third division of whom we shall not speak. In numbers they comprised fully one-half of the audience.

The case proceeded. A jury was impaneled with difficulty. Witness after witness was examined but nothing was brought out calculated to criminate defendant. At last James Buckley was called. His testimony was direct. He was an eye witness. His brother Dan followed and corroborated all that James had said.

With this evidence the prosecution rested. Newman was silent. He had no counsel, and did not wish to offer any defense. In fact, he paid little attention to the proceedings, but kept watching two or three knots of angry men, in the audience.

The prosecuting attorney did not care to make an argument. The court charged the jury which retired, and, after fifteen minutes returned a verdict of guilty.

The title of this story does not refer to Mr. Newman, nor is it our purpose to follow him further. Doubtless the sentence he received was just, and we leave him to his fate.

When the verdict of guilty was rendered the suspicious class of men referred to above simultaneously arose and left the court room.

Proceedings for the time were suspended. All were busy interpreting the strange move. What did it mean? Were those men intending to arm themselves, then return and break up the court?

Just then a gentleman entered and pressed forward to the judge's desk. "Your honor," he said, "I would like you to read this," placing a note in his hand. "I found it on a tree at the cross roads."

Mr. Lincoln rapped for attention. His face turned a shade paler; but he read with a firm, steady voice:

"To whom it may concern: If Judge Lincoln wants to try the case of Bob Newman for burning George Brown's cotton gin, he may do so. But if any man gives evidence against Mr. Newman he will do so at his peril, for death will be his doom.

(Signed) "WHITECAPS."

This ominous warning came like a revelation of evil. For a moment the stillness was total.

The judge turned to the Buckley boys and asked, "How far do you live from here?"

"Nine miles, your honor."

"It is now after sunset, and you had better remain here till morning."

James replied: "No, we had better hurry home. Mother is there alone. I fear that our home will be burned to-night. We must go."

The judge grew very much in earnest. Would the Whitecaps burn the possessions of these two honest young men because they were knowing to one of the dark deeds of this secret society?

"How old are you," he asked the elder brother.

"Twenty-three."

"And your brother's age?"

"Twenty-one."

"Is there no one at home with your mother?"

"No, we are her only children. She is a widow."

Within the radius of his acquaintance all knew that James Buckley was no coward. And yet the muscles of his face were seen to twitch uneasily. But it was not for himself. He was thinking of his dear mother, and wondering if he and Dan could reach home before the incendiary demons—those than savages—would apply the torch to all they possessed on earth, and perhaps cause their mother to perish in the flames.

The crowd which left the court room had dispersed. The full moon was struggling through the waving tree tops. The two young men mounted, and, accompanied by a neighboring boy about thirteen years of age, rode rapidly homeward.

The journey afforded a good opportunity for reflection. In spite of themselves their minds were filled with forebodings of evil. Thoughts of the angry crowd leaving the court room; the judge's anxious concern; the note of warning, but worst of all the picture of their home enveloped in flames—all these thoughts filled their minds as they rode along in silence.

At last James turned suddenly to his brother.

"Dan," he said, "I wish you never to join any secret society that operates against the laws of our country. Never have anything to do with Whitecaps. Never commit any deed that would dishonor our name."

The young man addressed was used to receiving counsel from his brother, but the peculiar earnestness of his tone and manner brought about a shudder over Dan which he could not account for.

"Why, Jim, you don't expect anything to happen, do you?"

"No, of course not; but think what a terror to our neighborhood the infernal Whitecaps have always been. If we can sell the farm, I think we had better move away."

"Don't the Whitecaps," replied Dan. "But you needn't be afraid of my having anything to do with them, unless they attack us tonight, and then I shall try to kill off a wagon load of the devils. But we ought to hurry home, Jim, and get our guns ready. We can hide in the brush by the smoke house, and when they crowd into the yard will be the time to sprinkle them with buckshot."

They were now about half way home, and were nearing the crossing of a little stream. What a scene of beauty would have been had the underbrush on each side been in a mood to see it. The tall sweet gum and cypress and magnolia overlapping like an arch above the road, with the underbrush on each side so intertwined with bramble and ivy and grape as to be almost impenetrable to man. And the road, descending the declivity, had the appearance of entering a tunnel—as indeed it was, a tunnel of forestry. The night was calm and pleasant and the fire flies filled the air like sparks rising from the burning grate.

The trio had just crossed the stream and were "rising" the hill on the opposite side, when suddenly a man, with rifle in hand, stepped into the road just ahead of them, and shot James Buckley from his horse.

There stood the bloodthirsty demon in the road preventing the other two boys from passing. To retreat perhaps meant to fall into an ambushade. The murderer was intent upon finishing his work of destruction so well begun. But Providence interposed. The cart-ridge shell got fastened in his gun, and, after several vain efforts to extract it, he fled.

Dan dismounted and bends over the prostrate form. He lifts the silent head. "O, Jim, Jim, speak to me," he

cries. He kneels beside him: "Can't you speak to me again. Surely you are not dead!"

Alas it is too true. He discovers that the brave young man breathes no longer. Oh, what fearful, sorrowful moments those are to Dan! His only brother, but a minute ago so full of life, now a corpse at his feet!

The two boys hurry home. The neighborhood is aroused, and many kind friends gather to offer sympathy and assistance. There is no longer any fear of the Buckley home being burned, for the Whitecaps have already weakened a more terrible vengeance than the destroying of property.

The body was sent for at once and was quietly taken home. The sheriff was notified of the awful tragedy.

The question now arises: Who was the murderer? Both Dan Buckley and his companion knew him—knew that he was none other than Will Purvis and was confined in jail.

We shall now have to take up another thread of our story—the thread out of which fate wove the destiny of the man just named.

It often happens that the killing of human beings is necessary to arouse people to a full realization of some terrible menace to society. It is certain that the murder of noble James Buckley had such an effect in Marion county. Every loyal citizen became a ready volunteer to help down his life, if necessary, in the defense of right.

There is a subtle power in moral or spiritual forces—a power that we can hardly account for. The better class of men in the county were in the minority, but the courage and determination with which they were suddenly filled, had the effect of crushing the influence of those who stood on the side of anarchy. Loyal men were no longer afraid to speak against secret works of darkness, and denounce them from the house-tops, and the mandate for Buckley to be killed, the Whitecaps had given the order for their own dissolution as a society. They were now conquered even before they had been whipped.

Three months after the trial of Newman, Judge Lincoln returned to resume his work. He came now unguarded. The time was opportune for striking a telling blow. He came with professed leniency to the better class of Whitecaps, if they would confess and renounce their allegiance to this murderous league. Justice was thwarted with mercy. To this standard the crestfallen wretches flock by hundreds.

The oath they had taken was published in open court. It was to the effect that if any man should reveal the secret works of the members, or fall to perform any act required of him by the league, he was to be assassinated by his fellows.

The society is by no means a new thing under the sun. It is only one of those secret societies whose origin reaches back to the beginning of the race. History tells of Satan's revealing a similar oath to Cain, who in turn admitted a system of murder.

The case of Purvis was the first to be called. We shall not follow the details of his trial, since the evidence has already been touched upon. Suffice it to say, he was convicted and sentenced to be hanged on Jan. 7, 1894.

"On this date everything was in readiness, and a large crowd had gathered to witness the execution. The sheriff was particularly anxious to see the bystanders examine the hangman's knot that he had just tied. Many did so.

"At last the hour arrived. The culprit was led to the gallows. He did not wear exactly the expression of a hardened criminal, but perhaps this fact was due to his tender years; for he was not yet twenty-two, though he was well developed for his age and was a decided character and leader among his associates. His speech and manners indicated good breeding compared with the country in which he was raised. His face was ashen pale, but his voice was firm and his dark eye steady.

It was easy to see that young Purvis had the pity, though not generally the sympathy, of the gathered crowd. He said:

"I am not guilty of killing James Buckley, though I know who did it. Mine is the crime of being a Whitecap. Scarcely a year ago I was persuaded to take the oath. I soon found that I did many things that were wrong, but I dared not renounce them. I was compelled to do their bidding, however detestable or criminal it might seem to me. I was a slave to a gang of murderers."

"My young friends," continued the speaker, showing signs of greater mental distress as he spoke, "I hope you will make a life-long impression upon your minds.

"It was at the burning of Brown cotton-gin that I met many other men and places have I worn the white cap. Now—with a ghastly smile—"I am doomed to put on one of another color.

"I hope you will take the word of one who is about to pay the penalty of his wrongs by the offering of his life. There is nothing good in the organization which is directly the cause of my being here today. Don't join it, young men, as you value honor, liberty and life itself."

His voice had now become tremulous as though he were wrestling with some strong inward emotion.

"I once was happy," he continued. "My hopes were bright and life was full of promise. But one false step—it was my downfall and now—"

The crowd man could say no more. For a few minutes he was convulsed with emotion, then beckoned to the officer that he had no more to say.

The nap is placed over his face. The fatal noose is slipped over his head, and adjusted around the neck. The anxiety and suspense of the crowd is beyond description. Some cover their faces with their hands; others turn away.

The sheriff steps forward and motions that all is ready. The signal is given! The trap is sprung! And Will Purvis is swinging from the scaffold into eternity!

Not so; the rope in some mysterious way unwinds from his neck—how no one can tell—and the young Whitecap is lying half unconscious, but still alive, upon the ground. In a dazed way he arises and looks wildly about.

The sheriff proceeds to make another knot as though he would try again. The crowd becomes wild with excitement. The simple country people look upon the occurrence as manifesting the hand of Providence, and go so far as to forbid him hanging Purvis again.

There is no other alternative than to confine the prisoner in jail, and keep him there till he can be sentenced, or pardoned. But first he begs to be

driven home that his parents may know that he is still alive.

They reached the parental home as the shades of night were falling. The sheriff, leaving young Purvis in care of a deputy, went in to break the joyful news to the father and mother. He found them in a back room prostrated with grief just as he expected they would be.

"Mr. Purvis," began the officer gently, "I have brought your son William."

A ravenous burst of sobs, which continued for some time, was the only answer.

Stepping forward and taking a hand of each in his own strong grasp, as if to assure them of his sincerity, and to impart unto them, as it were, of his own strength, he continues:

"I have brought your son, and—"

"Lay him on the place prepared in the front room," came the feeble interruption from the mother.

The sheriff remembered seeing, as he came in, two tables placed together and covered with a white spread, and a new suit of clothes and other necessities in readiness.

The brave man could bear no more. Bursting into tears he exclaimed, "Your son is still alive. He was not—"

"An old story to deceive us," interrupted the elderly man, shaking his head mournfully. "We know that our boy's only son, is now dead. May God help us to bear our sad bereavement."

The three walked into the front room. Mr. Purvis made an effort to support his wife with his arm. Her face fell upon his bosom; his head bent forward upon hers. Their eyes were closed as if in a prayer of resignation.

The man who had been a trustworthy character has become sacred to emotion too deep for words.

Here the sad story must end; for our characters being real, cannot be disposed of according to the poetic justice of fiction. Will Purvis was again returned home from the South, and the question of whether he were really guilty and if so must pay the penalty of his crime, was being widely discussed by citizens of the State. Public sentiment was beginning to lean to the side of mercy.

LUCK IN MONEY MAKING.

Fortune Won by a Man Who Stumbled on a Good Thing and Knew It.

Four men, each of whom had made and lost several fortunes, were discussing in a broker's office one afternoon last week the part chance played in money making, when one of them said: "How do you suppose Mr. Blank made his fortune?"

The man whose name was mentioned had made millions in the past few years as the half owner of a company that manufactures a machine as well known as the typewriter.

"Blank had some money to invest and this patent seemed to him a good thing and he put his money in it. No chance about that," said one of the party.

"It was all chance," said the first man, "and when I tell you the history

of this company as it was told to me by the inventor of the machine you will agree with me. I know that the story is the truth. The inventor knew that his patent was all right, and that the article which it described would be sold all over the world as soon as its merits could be made known. He had invested \$17,000, all that he could raise, in this patent, and he needed \$1,000 more to complete it. An acquaintance of his whom I may call Brown, had shown some interest in the patent and in his emergency the inventor appealed to him. They met in the cafe of a Broadway hotel to discuss the question. The inventor pleaded his case. He showed his plans and told exactly how he had spent \$17,000 in perfecting them.

"If you will give me the \$1,000 now which I need I will give you a half interest in this patent," said the inventor, "and I am sure there is a big fortune in it for each of us. I have gone over the ground carefully and I know what I am talking about."

"Brown listened to him, thought it all over, and then said: 'What you say sounds all right, but on thinking it over I have decided not to go in with you. I am sorry that I can't feel my way clear to do it.'

"The inventor thought that his last hope had been killed by this refusal and he said that he did not see anything but that you are a trustworthy man. Brown left him and as he was tying up his papers a middle-aged man who had been sitting at a table near him came over and said: 'Look here, would you mind explaining that patent to me? I have overheard your conversation and if you can show me that you have a good thing I have a little money to gamble on. My name is Blank, and when the time comes I will satisfy you of my financial standing. Are you willing to talk it over?'

"The inventor unrolled his plans and began to describe them in a perfunctory way, as he had described them many times before. Blank showed his interest by asking intelligent questions and the inventor took heart. After two hours' talk Mr. Blank said to him: 'I am convinced that you have a good thing here, but you will need more than \$1,000 to push it. If you can convince me that you are a trustworthy man I will advance \$10,000 for a half interest in this patent.'

"Mr. Blank and the inventor spent the following day investigating each other's standing, and as a result the partnership was formed. The patent was completed and protected in every way, and an expensive salesroom, where the articles might be exhibited, was opened on Broadway. You know the article has been pushed. It has salesrooms in every big city here and abroad, and it has filed to itself. Mr. Blank and the inventor have each made a fortune out of it, and the story is not yet. Now, then, didn't chance have a good deal to do in shaping Blank's fortune? If he had gone to some other cafe, or if he had sat at some other table, he would not have overheard Brown and the inventor talking. Chance alone gave him the opportunity, and Blank's little money and good business sense did the rest."

—New York Sun.

FREE TRADE WITH PORTO RICO

The President's announcement in his message that "Our plain duty is to abolish all customs tariffs between the United States and Porto Rico and give her products free access to our markets" is naturally hailed with special satisfaction by the free-trade journals of the country. The doctrine upon which protection has been supported in this country, and by nobody more strongly than by the President himself, is that the basis of competition in the American market shall be the American labor cost of production. The only reason for having a protective tariff on products of foreign countries is to make importing competitors pay in tariff duties the equivalent of the difference in labor cost. This is the economic and equitable basis of protective tariffs.

Now the President recommends that our entire principle be abolished in our relation to Porto Rico, whose wages are lower than those of almost any European nation. If the free importation of Porto Rican goods, which have been an economic injury to American industries last year, they will be so now. Nothing has occurred to change that fact. If it be said that this is



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- 11 inch Pie Plates only..... 2c
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- Broadened Novelty Dress Goods worth 18c for..... 12 1/2c
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