



AN ARKANSAS PROPHET

A NEW YEAR'S STORY

By RUTH McENERY STUART.

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"An't that about yore recollection of how he expressed it?" said McMonie, pausing now in his recital.

Just the same as I miss that of struck-by-lightning sycamore tree that Judge Towns had cut out of the co-house yard. My mother had my granpa's picture framed out of sycamore balls, gathered out of that tree forty years ago.

"But you see I'm makin' every excuse to keep from goin' on with the story, an' ef it's got to be told, well—"

"Whether somebody told the Merediths about the nigger's prophesy, an' they got excited over it, an' forbid the city feller the house, I don't know, but he never was seen goin' there after that night, though he stayed in town right along for two weeks, at the end of which time he disappeared from the face of the earth, an' she along with him."

"An' that's all the story, parson. That's three year ago lakkin' two weeks, an' nobody ain't seen or heard of May Day Meredith from that day to this."

"Of co'se girls have run away with men, an' it turned out all right—but they wasn't married men. Nobody s'plined her was married till it was all over, an' Harry Conway he found it out in St. Louis, an' it's been found in Texarkana, that testifies that he was called in to witness what he believed to be a genuine wadin' where the preacher claimed to come from Little Rock, an' he married May Day to that man, standin' in the blue cashmere dress she run away in. She was married by the 'Placopal' prayer book, too, which is the only thing I felt hard against May Day for consentin' to—she being well raised, a hard shell Baptist."

"Well, Sir, I loaned it to the Old Nigger." Meredith run away that I was ridin' through the woods twist here an' Clay Bank, an' who did I run against but old Prop'h-walkin' along in the brush talkin' to hisself ez usual.

"Well, sir, I stopped my horse an' called him up an' talked to him, an' tried to draw him out—ask him how come he to prophesy the way he done, an' how he knowed what was comin', but, sir, I couldn't get no satisfaction out of him—not a bit. He 'lowed that he only spoke ez it was given him to speak, an' the only thing he seemed to know was the stranger's name, an' he ast me to say it for him, an' he over-hear'd it after me. An' then he ast me to write it for him, an' he put the paper I wrote it on in his hat. He didn't know B from bull's foot, but I s'pose he thought maybe if he put it in his hat it might strike in."

"Why, ef 'twasn't for that, I donno what we'd do. Some of our folks is so teehy an' high strung—an' so many of 'em kin, which makes it the New Year's wadin' shakin' why in a few weeks we'd be ez bad ez a deaf and dumb asylum."

"Like ez not. Well, sir, after I had give him the paper he commenced to talk about huntin'—had a bunch of birds in his hands then, an' give 'em to me, 'lowin' all the time he hadn't had much to eat lately, 'cause of his pistol bein' sort of out of order. 'Lowed that he took such a notion to hunt with his pistol that 'twasn't no fun shootin' at long range, but somehow he couldn't depend on his pistol shootin' straight."

"Well, sir, the second chapter of the story I reckon it could be told in half a dozen words, though I s'pose it holds misery enough to make a book."

that enter and those which accumulate within the body will be vigorously opposed and expelled if the liver be active. To keep the liver active take Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. Health depends greatly upon regularity of habit.

round to ask me if I wouldn't loan him my revolver. Jest to try it an' see if he wouldn't have better luck. 'Lowed that he'd fetch it back quick ez he got done with it."

"Well, sir, of co'se I loaned it to the 'Old Nigger'—took his hat—then an' there, I give it to him loaded, all six barrels, 'n, sir, would you believe it? No livin' soul has ever laid eyes on 'er Prop'h from that day to this."

"I suppose no one has ever looked for the old man?" the parson asked.

"No, sir, I don't know of no one. 'Ef he'd allow it, an' the folks would be willin' to go out there tonight for the old year party—take their fiddle an' cakes an' things along, an' surprise her—she'd be obliged to be polite to 'em; she couldn't refuse to meet all her friends for the midnight handshakin', an' it might be the savin' of her. Three years has passed. There's no reason why one trouble should bring another. We've all had our share of 'er this year, an' I reckon everyone of us here has paid for a tombstone in three years, an' I believe of we'd all meet together an' go in a body out there—"

"Ef you say so, I'll ride out an' talk it over with Meredith. What's your opinion, parson?"

"My folks will join you heartily, I'm sure, 'cause you was here last year, parson. You know that it's the custom in Simpkinsville, at the old year party, for everybody to shake hands at twelve o'clock at the comin' in of the new year. It's been our custom time out of mind. Folks they'll have some fallin' out an' maybe not be speakin' to each other for a week or hands an' make up—start the new year with a clean slate."

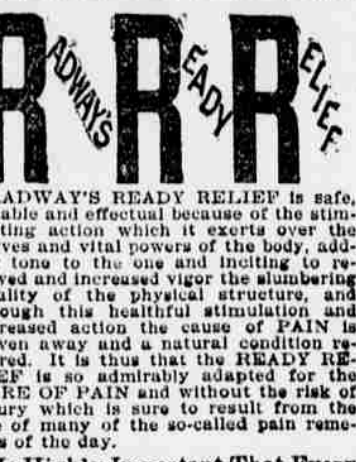
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RAILROAD TIME-TABLES. Central Railroad of New Jersey. Cobleskill and Susquehanna Division. Anthracite coal used exclusively. Insuring cleanliness and comfort.

Nov. 18, 1894. Train leaves Scranton for Pittsburg, Wilkes-Barre, etc., at 5:15, 11:30 a. m., 2:30, 8:30, 8:50, 1:30 p. m., Sunday, 8:00 a. m., 1:00, 2:15, 7:10 p. m.

Nov. 18, 1894. Train leaves Scranton for Philadelphia and New York via D. & H. R. R. at 7:45 a. m., 12:05, 2:35 and 11:35 p. m.

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