

# LEVI BROS.,

## SUMTER, S. C.

We are giving more attention to the handling of Cotton this season than ever before, which means that while we bought more Cotton than any other firm on the market, it is our purpose to buy a still greater quantity. This we cannot do unless we pay the price, and when you bring or ship to us your Cotton, the VERY HIGHEST PRICE IS ASSURED.

## Our General Mercantile Department

has been thoroughly looked after and we invite an inspection of our Dry Goods, Fancy Goods, Shoe and Clothing Stocks. Our buyer has devoted much of his experience this season in looking after the Dress Goods selections, and we can assure our Lady friends that we are enabled to please them not only in styles, but prices. Our General Dry Goods Stock was never more complete and better bought—GOODS WELL BOUGHT ARE HALF SOLD.

## Shoes! Shoes!

There is no need wearing out shoe leather running about for footwear, when we have, direct from the factories, Shoes of the best make, and which we can sell with a guarantee. Then, we carry as nice a line of Gents' Youtths' and Boy's Clothing as you will be able to see in any other city. This Department was selected with a view to style, fit and durability.

## OUR GROCERY DEPARTMENT

Cannot be excelled anywhere, and our prices defy competition. We have always enjoyed a fine Clarendon patronage for which we are grateful, and we shall strive to continue to merit the patronage and confidence you give us—come to see us,

Yours, &c,

# LEVI BROTHERS,

## SUMTER, S. C.

## THE FALL OF 1904

Is full of promise for Sumter merchants. The indications are that

## Our Farming Friends

Upon whom we are so largely dependent, will make a good crop of cotton, and if anything like the present prices are maintained, they can look forward to

## A Happy Christmas.

Already they have harvested good grain crops, and we cannot conceive of any greater happiness than to feel that they are not dependent upon the West for their bread, and the surplus from their cotton crop can be used in improving their homes, which means

## Happiness to their Families

It is useless to say that we have made unusual preparations for the season's business, and with a continuance of the patronage heretofore so liberally bestowed upon us, which we solicit most earnestly, there will be no disappointment on our part.

## Enlarge and Improve

Has always been our policy, and a glance through our stores and warehouses is a convincing proof that they are stocked as never before, and probably as no other mercantile house has ever been stocked in Sumter. We are frequently asked, why do you buy such a large stock, and our reply is that in buying quantities

## WE SAVE MONEY FOR OUR PATRONS

And another reason is we have the friends to buy them. There is no town in the State in which there is a better class of merchants or more active competition than in Sumter, and while this house is credited with doing

## The Largest Business

It is only by the strictest care in buying, and the closest margin of profit in selling, that we can maintain our supremacy. It matters not what baits or inducements our competitors may offer we will take care of our friends, let the cost be what it may. The present state of the weather does not justify us in entering into a detailed description of our Winter Fabrics, but this will be taken up later.

# O'DONNELL & CO.,

## SUMTER, S. C.

# The Substitute

By WILL N. HARBEN,

Author of "Abner Daniel," "The Land of the Changing Sun," "The North Walk Mystery," Etc.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE evidence was all in. The speeches had been made on both sides of the case, and the attorney for the state had grown severe and eloquent in urging conviction. The jury had remained in retirement all the morning and at last had filed in and rendered their verdict. David Buckley, the prisoner at the bar, was found guilty of having deliberately and in the night stolen a bale of cotton from a neighbor's barn, branded it as his own and taken it to market the next day.

He was a short, thickset man near the age of sixty—gray, stiff haired and sullen faced, and just now more angry, it was thought, at certain neighbors who had testified against him than chagrined at the verdict of the court. He glanced at his wife, who sat against the railing behind him, and then stared steadily at the floor till the sheriff came and led him back to jail.

Later in the afternoon he was brought back to receive his sentence. The judge, a tall, powerful man, dark of hair and eye and as brown as a Spaniard, was about to order him to stand up when Hiram Hillyer, a well to do cotton and grain merchant of the town, rose and begged permission to speak to the judge in private before the prisoner was sentenced.

"Well, I reckon we've got time, Mr. Hillyer," the judge said pleasantly. "If it's anything in Buckley's favor I'd like to hear it. I've been on the bench seven years, and I don't think I ever had a man before me that was painted as black by his neighbors."

Making his way through the cluster of lawyers and students of the law around the store to one of the vacant jury rooms, the merchant waited for the judge to join him, and when he came Hillyer, nervously pulling at his short, gray beard, faced him, an eager look in his mild blue eyes.

"I'm afraid it ain't nothin' in the old man's favor, Judge Moore," he faltered. "The truth is, I'm a-thinkin' about his son, Judge, for that ever was a finer, more honest an' upright boy than George Buckley. I hain't never run across 'im."

"Oh, you can't tell me anything about George," said Judge Moore. "He and I are friends. He voted for me and legged for me in the Upper Tenth district. Ah, so he sent you to me, did he? Well, what does George want? I was glad he wasn't in court to hear all that stuff against his daddy."

"You see, we thought—me'n' George both thought that maybe you mought—justice mought be carried out by imposin' a pretty heavy fine, an'—"

"Old Buckley is able to pay a cent," broke in the judge. "I've made inquiries, and if his little farm is sold it will leave his old wife without any means of making a support. No, the jig's up with 'im."

"But George's been savin' money for the last five years," said Hillyer anxiously. "I've got it borrowed from 'im at regular rates. I can lay my hands on the money at a moment's notice. Yes, he can raise a reasonable amount all right."

Judge Moore frowned, thrust his hands into the pockets of his trousers and turned to a window which looked out on the courtyard, where a few idlers lay on the grass near the hitching rack.

"I'm not going to be the medium through which deservin' innocent people suffer for the guilty," he said firmly. "I've thought it all over. I was afraid George might ask this, but it's no go. I've made up my mind on that score."

"Oh, Judge, don't say that!" pleaded Hillyer. "The boy simply can't bear it. You see, Judge Moore, since I tuck 'im an' sent 'im off to school he's been sorter away from his home, an' the feller's got as much feelin' as anybody else. Then when he got through college an' I give 'im a place in my business he's stood with the best folks in the town, an' it would go hard with 'im—to have his own daddy at the coal mines."

"I know all that, Mr. Hillyer. I've thought of it twenty times during this trial. I hardly slept last night trying to make up my mind what to do in case the jury didn't recommend Buckley to mercy. Well, they came down on 'im like a load of bricks, an' I'm not going to let George suffer for 'im. Why, the old rascal can't be cured of his dishonesty. Didn't you hear what Bradley said about his constantly stealing from his neighbors, many of whom never made any charge against him out of respect for Mrs. Buckley and George? No, sir; his son, who is my friend, shall not sacrifice his savings for 'im."

"Then I'll pay it, Judge; you know I am able."

"You shan't do that, either," said the judge firmly. "Even if I'd consent to let as old a man as you be out of pocket for such a hopeless reprobate, George would find it out and insist on repaying you in the long run. No; five years in the mines will do the old scamp good, and I'm going to secure his transportation."

"You think that's final then, Judge?" Hillyer had turned quite pale, and the quivering hand which had clutched his beard stayed itself in its downward progress.

"Yes, that's final, Mr. Hillyer. I wish I could help you, but I can't. I'll settle Buckley's hash in about two minutes after I give him a sound lecture. Right now the old devil would cut the throats of several of the state's witnesses if he was at liberty."

"Then I'll go back to the store an' tell the boys," Hillyer sighed as he moved to the door, a dead look of disappointment in his eye.

As Hillyer was making his way through the courtroom to the outer door the wife of the condemned man reached out her hand and stopped him. She had clutched the tail of his long frock coat.

up his mind to send the old man off for five years."

The woman nodded slowly. "Well, I reckon it's as good as we kin expect," she said. "If it had been a fine, George would 'a' had to pay it, an' I'm agin that proposition. He's worked hard to make his little start, an' it ain't right fer 'im to have to give it up when—"

"—Mr. Hillyer, I've heard that pore boy beg an' beg his pa to change, an' ef he's predicted this thing once he has fifty times."

"I knew that, too," replied the merchant, with a dark frown. "But George is jest so situated right now, Mrs. Buckley, that he'd sacrifice all he expects to make in the next ten years to avoid the disgrace of the sentence. He holds his own with the biggest folks in town, an' this is simply awful. You know how some of these blue-blooded families look on a thing like this."

"Just about as sensible as they look on most things," retorted Mrs. Buckley philosophically, "an' I don't see no use in humurin' 'em. They may know a man's a thief, but ef he hain't publicly branded they don't care. But David has broke the law; that ain't no change to be made in 'im, an' I'm agin lettin' it hamper George, no matter what these shallow minded aristocrats think. What's botherin' me is another thing."

"You say it is, Mrs. Buckley?" And the merchant stared expectantly.

"Yes, Mr. Hillyer. George hain't got but one weakness, an' that is, once in a long while, when he is in the mood, he will take a drink or drown his trouble. I reckon he hain't tetch'd a drop but once since he's been with you."

"An' that was the time they threatened to jail yore husband fer pennin' up Wilson's hogs, an' we succeeded in squasbin' the charge."

"Yes, that was the time—the old woman pushed back her gingham poke bonnet and looked straight into Hillyer's eyes—"an' I am anxious to find out of this thing, has made him?"

"Not yet, Mrs. Buckley. Hillyer's voice had fallen very low; it was almost dead. "But I've been that afraid it would sleep at night. He's in a awful state of mind, Mrs. Buckley, an' when I go back an' tell 'im the judge's decision I don't know what he'll do. A fine piece of metal will bend jest so far an' then it'll break."

The old woman nodded again slowly and then said: "Well, I'll go back inside. This is a new wrinkle on me. It's considered right an' proper fer folks to go to the grave with their kin, an' I reckon that's the talk of I shrik-an' I reckon that, but tell George I'll come down to the store after awhile."

"All right, Mrs. Buckley. I'll tell 'im."

As Hillyer turned toward the gate to reach the little street which stretched out, lined with cottages and brick law offices, to the red brick freight depot at the far end, one of the loungers on the grass rose and slouched toward him.

"Have they sentenced Buckley yet?" he asked. "I'm a witness on that barn burnin' case, an' ef it ain't a-goin' to be called to task I'm a-goin' home."

"It's next on the docket," the merchant informed him.

"The man had another question ready. "What's cotton bringin' today?" he asked. "I've got a big white bale ready fer the gin."

"Seven and three-eighths," answered Hillyer, and he walked on. On the main thoroughfare of the town he had to pass several brick stores where the clerks and merchants stood amid the heaps of their wares on the narrow brick sidewalks, and many of them asked about the Buckley trial. Hillyer made short but considerate replies and hastened past. On a corner of one of the streets running back to a railroad sidetrack, in the rear, stood his warehouse. Here he found his negro porter busy with rattling floor trucks loading a box car with bags of grain. The office was a commodious room cut off in one of the corners of the big brick building next to the street. It contained a long walnut counter full of drawers, with shelves overhead for old ledgers, commercial reports, dusty letter files and wired bunches of bills, receipts and canceled bank checks.

George Buckley, a handsome, dark eyed young man of twenty-seven or eight, sat on a high stool writing in a ponderous ledger. Turning his head and seeing who it was, he removed his heels from the rung of the stool and turned round. There was a steady stare in his eyes as he fixed them on Hillyer's sympathetic, almost shrinking face.

"You did not succeed," he said, his lips tightening.

"No; he'd already made up his mind, George," replied the merchant.

George Buckley turned suddenly and bent over his ledger and took up his pen, but he did not dip it in the inkstand. Hillyer could not see his face, but he noticed that the hand holding the pen was quivering. Suddenly Buckley laid the pen down, and Hillyer heard something resembling a sob or a gasp escape him, then the young man stood down on the floor and reached for his coat and pulled it over his head. He was deathly pale, his eyes were flashing strangely.

"George, where are you going?" The old man caught his arm, but Buckley wrenched it from his grasp.

"Let me alone, Mr. Hillyer," said he. "For God's sake, let me alone!"

Hillyer, but he didn't put no letter in our wait to git any. It looked to me like he didn't know what he was goin' ur what fer. Den he come on down by Hillhouse's bar. He stopped dar an' looked in, den he come on slow like an' walked back an' went in. I went round to de back end an' watched. He was at de counter pourin' him out a dram, Marse Hillyer."

"You say he was, Jake?" said the merchant. "Jake, in the mornin' I want you to truck all that western wheat over on the other side. It's too damp where it is."

"All right, Marse Hillyer."

A moment after the negro had left the office George Buckley came in and resumed his seat at the counter. He opened the big ledger, dipped his pen and began to write. Hillyer watched him cautiously. His hand seemed steady enough, but his cheeks were



"He's in a awful state o' mind, Mrs. Buckley."

flushed and his hair dishevelled over his brow. Just then Mrs. Buckley came into the office. She took off her bonnet, showing smooth, gray hair and a deeply wrinkled brow and cheeks, and stood for a moment behind her son. Hillyer fancied that their conversation might be of a private nature, and, taking up a grain sampler, he left the room. The sound of his heavy boots and George Buckley's attention, and leaning round he saw his mother. Her sympathetic eyes fell beneath his wild glare.

"I reckon Mr. Hillyer's already told you," she began.

"Yes, he's told me."

"Well, that ain't but one thing fer sensible folks to do," faltered the woman, "an' that's to make the best of it an' go on tryin' to do our own duty."

"Yes," he nodded vacantly, "you're right, mother. Are you going home tonight?"

"No. I loved it ud look more respectful to stay till they tuck 'im off in the mornin'. The sheriff's wife axed me to spend the night with her in the jail house, so I could be nigh 'im."

George Buckley shuddered visibly, but he said nothing. It gave Mrs. Buckley the opportunity she was looking for.

"George, I reckon bein' young as you are an'—an' mixin' with folks here in Darley that hain't never been in such a mess, it goes harder with you than it does with me, away out thar in the mountains, but I wish you wouldn't take it so hard. You can't help yore pa's doin's. No, you can't, an' no right minded folks ain't a-goin' to blame you. As fer me,—she paused an instant as she began to roll her sunbonnet in her fat, red hands—"why, my boy, I feel jest like a awful load was tuck off me. I can't help it. It may not be human—I don't know—but I feel jest that a-way. You think yore cross is hard to bear, but fer fifteen year I've hardly slept a sound night's sleep, expectin' an' expectin' the officers of the law to ride up an' holler at the fence. An' keepin' his secrets—"

law, that's the worst of it, fer he would tell me every blessed bit o' devilment he ever was in. It all began away back fifteen year ago, when he fell off his wagon an' struck his head agin a rock. He never got over that; it made 'im as ill as a snake an' mad at everybody, even his best friends. George, I want to tell you how he did once when—"

"Don't, don't, don't!" the young man cried. I know enough. I don't want you ever to speak to me of his crimes."

"Well, I won't, then," promised the woman. "I've heard so much of his doin's that it don't horrify me as much as it would you. Well, I'll go on back. I'm goin' to Webber & Land's an' buy him a change o' underclothes an' some socks."

When she had reached the big entrance of the warehouse she saw Hillyer in the center of the building, walking back and forth, his gray head hanging low, as if in troubled meditation. Turning as if from a sudden impulse, she went and joined him. The two faced each other.

"I smelt liquor on 'im," she said tersely. "I stood nigh to 'im; he's had 'im a dram, Mr. Hillyer."

"Yes, he's had a drink or two, Mrs. Buckley."

"What'd he git his whisky?"

"Jake followed 'im an' seed 'im at Hillhouse's bar. I hain't said a word about it. It don't do one bit o' good to preach to a man all upset in mind, an' half full at that."

"No, yo're plumb right, an' nobody kin drive George. I'm powerfully afraid this is goin' to be his downward star, Mr. Hillyer."

"Don't say that!" The words were spoken almost in a groan, and the merchant's sympathetic face seemed wrung with inward pain. "Don't say that," he repeated, under his breath. "We mustn't lose hope—we mustn't do that."

report got out that since George got his schoolin' an' you tuck 'im in with you that he was ashamed of 'em. They kept this talk up, an' when he got to goin' here an' run with Lydia Cranston it got worse, an' some of 'em, lowed that the girl didn't know what sort o' scrub kin George had. This got to George somehow, an' one day when I was at Grove Level camp, ground with some of my neighbors, George fetched 'er out along with some other couples of town folks. An' when he seed 'ime a-settin' in front of Mrs. Fellows' tent with some more women be-fetched; the girl right up to me. He was sorter pale an' excited, but he ratched down an' tuck my hand an' lifted me up, an' says he, 'Miss Cranston, I want you to make the acquaintance of my mother—no that wasn't it exactly. This was it, 'Miss Cranston, I want you to meet my mother, an' me 'n' her shook hands. It was awful, Mr. Hillyer. I've got a little more sense 'n a Jay bird, an' I seed through it. I seed, moreover, that while she was a perfect lady, she was sorter set back. She got red in the face an' was all flustered in what she said, but she stopped that talk out our way an' showed what he was."

"Yes, he's all right, Mrs. Buckley."

The old man swallowed.

"Maybe," ventured the old woman tentatively, "maybe he's in love with that gal, Mr. Hillyer, an' knows she hain't the sort—that her folks hain't the sort—to overlook a—"

"That's just it, Mrs. Buckley," said the merchant with firmness, "an' that accounts for his misery an' the whis-key. This thing has hit 'im away below the belt. Thar's no two ways about it. I'm dead afraid it's goin' to undo all that's been done."

The old woman raised her eyes to the troubled face before her and stared steadily. "Let's hope not," she said. "Shorely the Lord will show us some way to—"

Hillyer dropped his eyes, and, turning toward the door, the old woman slowly shambled out.

### CHAPTER II.

IT was now about sundown, and Hillyer started home. He passed the postoffice, went into the little building, looked absently into his lock box, and then, taking a street that led past the town square and several of the most pretentious houses, he soon reached his house, which was a two story brick building with an old fashioned white veranda and an L. The house, like many others in the place, stood on a big lawn shaded by large oaks, magnolias and mulberry trees. A wide walk bordered with stunted rosebushes of some cheap variety and covered with gravel reached from the gate to the steps. Along the side fence was a row of beehives, and frisking about in the yard was a young calf.

Mrs. Hillyer was in the sitting room, her niece, a rather plain girl of thirty, Miss Hortense Snowden, who had been living with the Hillyers since the death of her parents, twelve months before. They both rose at the sound of the merchant's step in the wide, uncarpeted hall, and when he had entered they stood waiting for him to sit down before resuming their seats at the open fireplace, in which some dry brick logs on old fashioned brass headed dog irons were cheerfully ablaze, furnishing the chief light of the shaded room.

"Well, anybody would know from his looks how the case come out," said Mrs. Hillyer as she sat down and spread out her calico skirt. "An' ef it had 'a' been dark I could 'a' read the news in the way he put his feet down in the hall." She was a short, cheerful looking woman past fifty. Her eyes were almost black, very keen, and they flashed at all times with a merriment that seemed as much a part of her as electricity is a part of an electric battery. Her hair was abundant and reddish brown and fell in intractable waves over her brow and ears.

"Yes, it not only you might nigh had a spasm over it," replied Mrs. Hillyer. "Lawsy me, ef I never found anything to worry about till I worried over the head of that old scamp I'd go to my grave without a gray hair or a wrinkle. That's the trouble with you an' George both. You are an' carryin' out the Scriptural injunction not to kick agin the pricks. I don't know exactly what the good book says 'bout it. I disremember. In fact, I don't know that I ever run across it in print myself, but you eat it's thar. My father, who you an' s'lep' with the Bible in his hand, used to always keep sayin', when folks was continually a-complainin', 'Don't kick agin the pricks.' An' that was right. Ef you set down on a board was right. Ef you set down on a board with a tack in it, the harder you set with a tack in it, the gittin' an' that's so with 'im. It's full of tacks, an' don't you forget it. The Lord put old Buckley in jail to keep 'im in a bunch of his kind, so the devil wouldn't root around among good folks so much to keep up with 'im. But—Oh, no! You ain't a-goin' to put up with it, an' right now yore face is sour enough lookin' to spile cream in the middle o' December."

"I was thinkin' about George," said Hillyer softly. "It's mighty nigh killin' 'im."

"That's so, Aunt Martha," spoke up Hortense Snowden. "It's awful on 'im. Why, just think of it. The best people in Darley receive him an' like him. He was rising rapidly, but a thing like this, as proud and sensitive as he is, will almost kill 'im."

"You kin laugh an' make sport as much as you want to," said Hillyer, "but you needn't kick agin nothin' unless you want to, but it's jest like Hortense says. He won't be able to face the music. He's all right when he ain't driv' too far, but this has already started 'im to drinkin' agin."

"Oh, uncle, you don't mean it?"

"Yes, it has," groaned the merchant, "an' the Lord only knows what it's goin' to end."

"Huh! I say, then, George Buckley hain't the man," said Hillyer, "I wish I could catch 'im takin' a dram on account o' this thing. I'd give 'im a talk that ud make 'im—"

"Go git blind, soakin' drunk," interrupted Hillyer as he rose and went out through the kitchen to the stables to see if his favorite horse had been attended to. When he was gone, his wife got up and punched the fire with the poker.

"I reckon you think I'm hard hearted," she said to her silent niece, "but, Hortie, it's the only way to git on with 'im. You don't know nothin'. I never let yore folks know what I've been through. I'd 'a' been crazy or dead long ago ef the Lord hadn't showed me how to make light o' serious things. I've had a heap o' tough times, but I

[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.]

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