

THE CHRONICLES OF AUNT MINERVY ANN

wuz en'tainin' nigger gals an' a Yankee 'oman in his parlor, dey'd all been down on 'im. An' den——"

"What, then?" the lady of the house asked, as Aunt Minervy Ann paused.

"Dey'd 'a' been weepin' an' whailin' in de settlement sho. Ain't it so, suh?"

It was natural, after Aunt Minervy Ann had narrated the particulars of this episode, that her statements should dwell in my memory, and sally forth and engage my mind when it should have been concerned with other duties. One of these duties was to examine each day the principal newspapers of New England in search of topics for editorial comment.

An eye trained to this business, as any exchange editor can tell you, will pick out at a glance a familiar name or suggestive phrase, no matter what its surroundings nor how obscurely it may be printed. Therefore, one day, weeks after Aunt Minervy Ann's recital, when I opened the *Boston Transcript* at its editorial page, it was inevitable that the first thing to catch my eye was the familiar name of "Mary Ellen Tatum." It was printed in type of the kind called nonpareil, but I would have seen it no sooner nor more certainly if it