

stepped forward to put the noose about his neck.

"Not yet," said Morton.

"What's the use of waiting?" said Dick. "The sooner it's done, the better. I want some supper."

"Get your supper then, and after supper we'll hang him."

"Oh, no. I couldn't eat my supper with a good conscience, if I did that."

"Listen to me, men," said Morton. "Why are you in such a devilish hurry? Can't you wait? There's time enough. The boy can't run off. A week hence is just as good as now, if the thing is the right thing to be done. Don't make a mistake. Let us be sure that this poor child is a criminal. He's not a man that we should fear him. Come, give him a fair trial."

Still there was no answer. No one dared to speak first, though perhaps many would have spoken second and third in favor of the boy.

"You might as well give up, Morton," said Dick. "There's nobody to stand by you. The boy's not worth the game. Give him up."

"I will not give him up, and, I will sell my life as dearly as possible."

He drew both pistols, and fronted the crowd like a lion at bay.

"That puts a new complexion on the matter. We don't want to kill you, but we'll have to, if you don't drop them things. I'll be damned if I don't see justice done! I never undertook to hang a horse-thief yet but what I succeeded."

"Hold on there!" said Paddie John, who hitherto had been a somewhat indifferent spectator of the scene. "It's getting serious now. I didn't care much for the boy, but I do for Charlie. He's my friend, and, as he has chosen to fight the thing out, I guess I'll take my stand with him; so you'll have to kill me, too, Big Dick, before you get that boy."

It makes an infinite difference when there are two instead of one. It begins to look like a majority. One man is a very insignificant spectacle, but two men will command a certain sort of respect; for one man may be crazy, but it is very seldom that two men are crazy together on the same subject. It is evidence of your sanity, when another man thinks exactly as you do.

"I guess I'll do the same," said Jimmy.

"Charlie's on the growing side, and I'll hoist his colors. I can shoot pretty straight, too. My prayers don't amount to much, but I've a couple bullets that can accomplish a good deal. They are as heavy as sermons, but a heap more penetrating. I think they'll bring conviction. I see the deacon's already on the anxious seat. He don't know which side to take, for he don't know which side is

coming out ahead. Pity he didn't have a revelation. The Bible always fails just in the nick of time.

Just when we want to know something, then it don't tell us. Well, my heart's about as good a judge as anything; so here's to you, Charlie. I think we can present a respectable opposition."

It seemed as if Charlie might win, but Big Dick was more determined than ever. He was one of those stubborn folk, rudely conscientious in his way, that only grow more stubborn the more you undertake to reason with them. He was thoroughly convinced that little Pete ought to be hung, and he was determined that he should be hung at the shortest possible notice. He was still backed up by a hundred or more men; but these men, most of them, did not feel like tackling with such determined fighters as Charlie and Joe and Jim.

"We are going to hang this boy, and it's useless for you to resist. Damn it, we'll kill you all, if need be. We won't have horse-thieves and murderers protected. I'll give you a minute to drop this thing. If you keep it up, by God I'll shoot you. Get ready, men."

There was heard on all sides, the ominous clicking of pistols.

But the minute wasn't half up before Bill and Jennie came upon the stage of action. Jennie had hastened to the cottage of Bill on the first alarm, for her woman's heart beat for the little fellow who was so hard pressed.

"Not to late," cried Bill. "We may have to fight, but I'll save him. Ah, Charlie; you are ahead of me. That's right, I'm with you. This boy shall not be lynched."

"He shall not," cried Jennie, who also drew forth a couple of revolvers. "I can shoot, too; and by the eternal, I will shoot."

Jennie was a Jacksonian Democrat and, though she couldn't vote, she could say, "By the eternal," and she could shoot as straight and quick as any man.

The sudden addition to Charlie's force made the crowd back of Big Dick hesitate still more. They hardly wanted to fight a woman. Besides, Tim Baker was one of Big Dick's nearest and staunchest supporters, but, when he saw Jennie on the other side, why, then, like a very obedient spouse, he took his place beside her. He knew better than to fight his own wife.

To be Continued.

A University Must Be Liberal.

We are indebted to the Forum for the following extract:

A University is not a school maintained for the glory or the extension of any denominational body. In its very definition a university must be alone and beyond all sectarianism. Truth is as broad as the universe; and no one can search for it between any artificial boundaries. As well ask for Presby-

terian sunshine or a Baptist June as to speak of a denominational university.

It is said that in America we have already some four-hundred colleges and universities, and that therefore, we do not need anymore. Quite true; we need no more like these. The splendid achievement and noble promise of our universities is not due to their number. Many of them do not show this promise. If such were to close their doors tomorrow, education would be the gainer by it. Many of the four-hundred, as well known, are not universities in fact or in spirit. Most of the work done in the best of them is that of the German gymnasium or preparatory school. The worst of them would in Germany be closed by the police. But in a certain number of the strongest and freest, the genuine university spirit is found in the highest degree. For more of these good ones there is a crying demand. A school can rise to be a university only when its teachers are university men; when they are men trained to face directly and effectively the problems of nature and of life.

A university could not be otherwise than free. Its faculty could respond only to the noblest influences. To a university men and women go for individual help and training. A pretender in a university could not give such help. His presence is soon detected by his fellows and by his students, the latter he could not harm, for he could not retain them. By the side of his fellows he could not maintain himself. No body of men is so insusceptible of coercion or contamination as a university faculty. A scholar is a free man. He has always been so. He will always remain so.

A university is simply a contrivance for making wisdom effective by surrounding wise men with the conditions most favorable for rendering wisdom contagious.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

A Melioristic View.

It is often asserted that there is and has been during the last quarter of a century a marked moral decadence. One writer says: "It is really not worth one's while to live any more, swept along in the current of licentiousness and immorality which now obtain. There is no longer to be found that high sense of honor and purity which once could be seen in some lives in every community, and which served as an example for the young, at least, to emulate. Life has been lowered to the love of animal enjoyment and all high ideals sacrificed to the dominant idea of getting all the pleasure one can without regard to the consequences to others or one's self. To be a good man nowadays is to be a dreamer without influence, or a fool, in the opinion of the world. What is of

the most importance, it seems, is to accumulate property."

This is a strong arraignment of the spirit and methods of the present day. It is, so far as it relates to a large number of men and women, not too severe, but it is most too sweeping and rather more pessimistic than the facts will warrant.

Human nature is about the same in any generation that it was in the preceding generation. People do not change suddenly, though at one time there may be manifestations of the lower nature which at other times are restrained, or which display themselves in other ways, under other forms. Men and women are as good now, probably, as they were a quarter of a century ago. There is a vast amount of moral worth which does not appear on the surface and is not as readily seen in public as is much that is open to criticism. Greed is aggressive, vanity flaunts itself in the face of everybody and vice is often utterly shameless; and thus the bad of human nature obtrudes itself upon the public when the virtues and the innumerable acts of disinterested kindness that make life worth living are practiced in private and make no show whatever. A bank robbery is proclaimed throughout the land, but the honesty of thousands of bankers whose names do not come before the public associated with dishonesty, nothing is said. A man or woman whose name is brought into the divorce courts is a subject of common talk, but of the thousands of husbands and wives who live happy, harmonious lives, nothing is said. A murderer's career usually becomes a matter of general knowledge, but of the millions who have never committed murder the world at large knows nothing. And so, though the papers are full of accounts of crime and vice, sensational reports of which are often dished up for prurient tastes, yet in spite of this fact a large proportion of the population in every community is intelligent, self-respecting and honorable.

Still it must be admitted that there is the dark side of life, and the question is how the tendency to greed, selfishness and sensualism can be overcome. The work of reform is not one that can be accomplished in a day. It may be aided by educational methods and by whatever will lead to the improvement of the social environment and lesson temptation to evil doing. Virtue is a plant of slow growth, and the time when men and women will have noble aims and high aspirations and will realize in character and conduct lofty ideals of life, is not near at hand. But if we cannot look through the sunny Claude Lorraine glass of optimism, we need not be pessimists. We may, to use the word coined by George Elliot, be meliorists, believers in the improbability of human conditions and workers for human amelioration. B. F. UNDERWOOD.