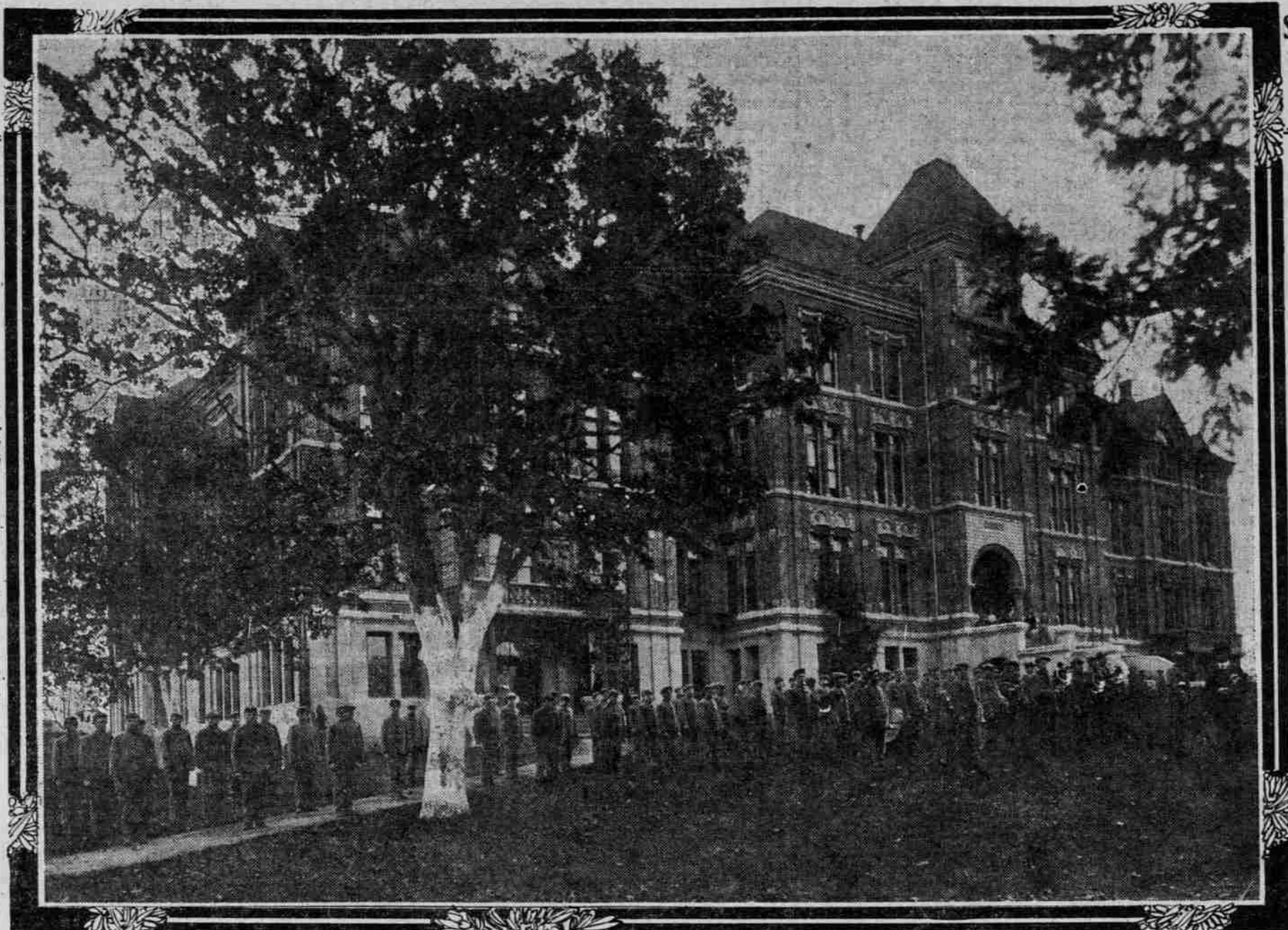


# Where Six Persons met Violent Deaths.

Marion County Farm That Has Been the Scene of a Succession of Tragedies

Site of the Oregon Reform School Which Fate Seems to Have Selected for Bloody Deeds



OREGON REFORM SCHOOL, Salem

**A**ROUND the picturesque rolling hills of an old farm in Marion County hang many weird tales of murder and sudden death.

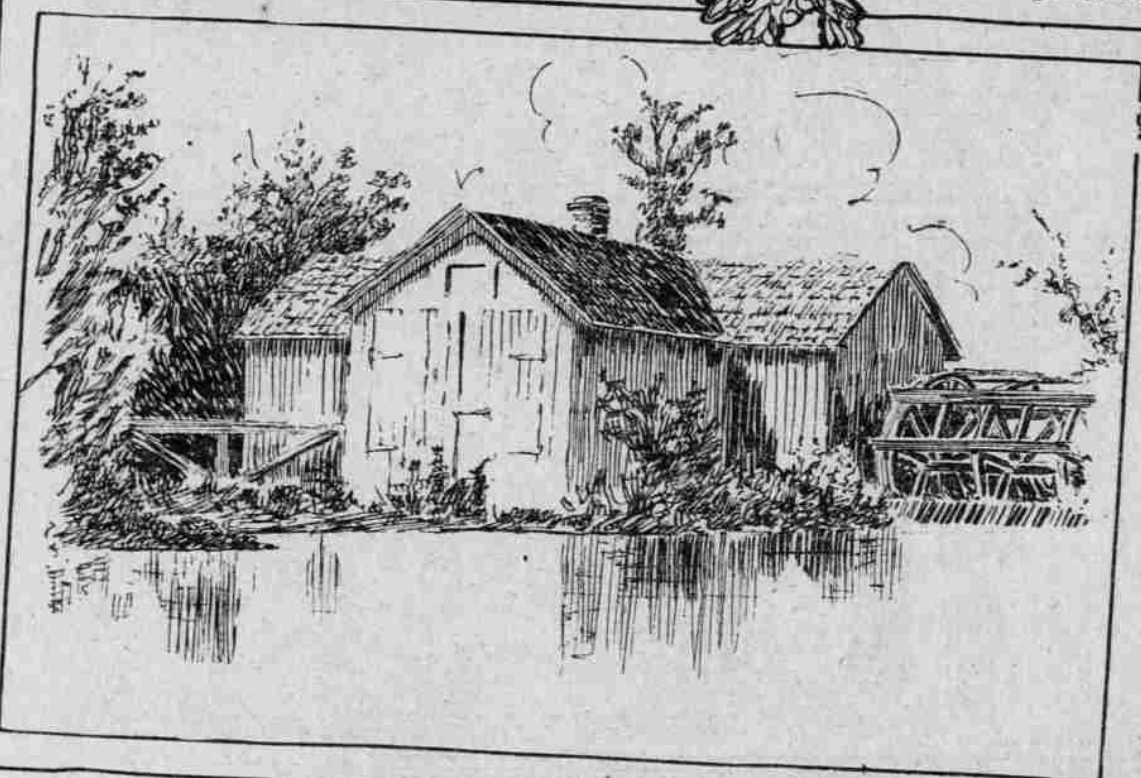
In passing through the valley on a Southern Pacific train, and viewing the massive brick buildings of the State Reform School, crowning the stately hill, 100 feet above, there is nothing to suggest the stern tragedies that have taken place upon the premises within the recollection of the older residents of the locality.

The farm comprises about 400 acres, stretching back upon the hills on the north and east, and down into the beautiful little valley of Mill Creek on the west. But it was in the early days of the railroad, and when farms were larger and homes more scattered than now, that the first black shadow fell upon the place, which was then the home of an old German named Conrad Warner, his wife and their family of six children, three of whom were here by a former marriage.

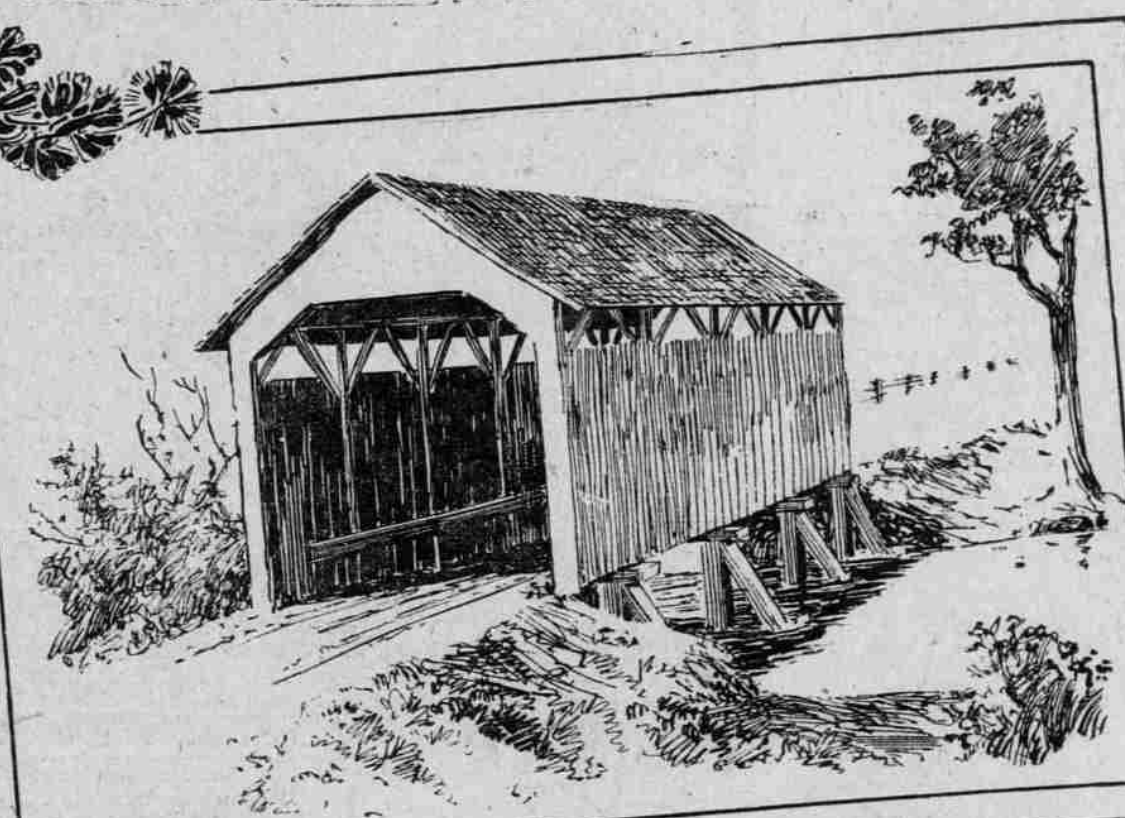
Not an enemy in all the land had old Conrad. Honest, busy and plodding, he went his quiet way, at peace with all his neighbors.

**The First Tragedy.**  
But one warm May day in 1874, old Conrad's team came walking home from Salem, six miles away, without a driver. The wife and mother, sitting at lunch with her children, saw them from the window, coming up the long hill, and ran to open the gate. She told the little boy to look in the wagon for the halter and she proceeded to unharness the faithful horses, wondering all the while what could have happened to her husband.

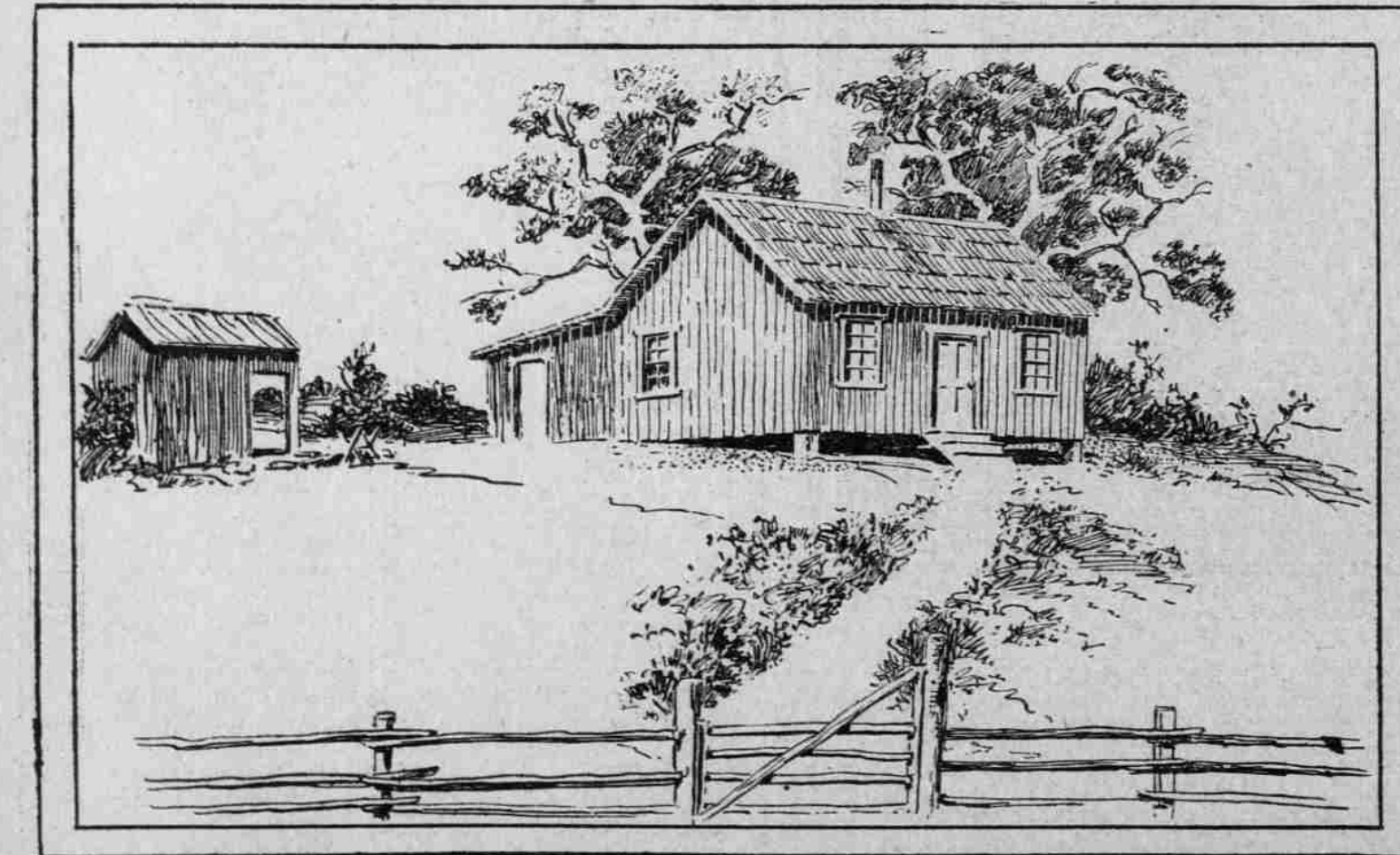
A scream from the child brought



WHEEL HOUSE WHERE BOY WAS DROWNED



COVERED BRIDGE WHERE FOURTH VICTIM IS BURIED



THE WARNER CABIN

her quickly to the side of the wagon, and there in the bottom of the wagon-box lay Conrad, shot straight through the heart.

The powder-burned clothes indicated that the murderer had sat beside him on the seat; but there was absolutely no clue by which to trace the guilty one; no way of knowing just where along the lonely road the tragedy occurred.

had swerved from the track, and shortly further on bloodstains were found in the dust. This was supposed to be the scene of the tragedy, as it was the most lonely along the road. But no human tracks were found. The few dimes in the murdered man's pocket were undisturbed, and a small blood-stained bag of candy told a pathetic tale of a last kind thought for his little ones.

Not the slightest clue has ever been

found by which to trace the murderer of this man. No motive could be suggested by anyone who knew him. The widow could tell of no enemy that had ever had cause, or fancied cause, to wish for the death of her husband. The horror of the dark crime lay heavily upon the community for many weeks to come.

The widow and her children took up the work of the husband and father, toiling early and late in the fields. In seed-

ing time or harvest a man was hired to do the heavier work. It was in this way that an Irishman named Murphy came to the farm. The older boys and girl found work away from home, the little girl died, and Murphy rented the place for a term of years, Mrs. Warner remaining in the house, retaining certain privileges, and cooking for the renter and his hired help.

Murphy was stockily built, with dark hair and piercing dark eyes. His face and

head bore many scars, but no word ever passed his lips as to where his previous life had been spent. He was intelligent and even scholarly in his conversation, but being addicted to drink, combined with the mystery surrounding him, he made few friends in the neighborhood.

It was in the early Summer of 1883 that Murphy came home from Salem late one night. He was accompanied by a hired man—a tramp—and both were intoxicated. They drove into the barnyard, quarrelling loudly, and before the team was unharnessed, a murder had been committed and 'Murphy's tramp' lay in the moonlight with one side of his head blown away.

Murphy walked into the house, somewhat sobered by the awful consequences of his drunken passion, and sitting down by the stove, took the revolver from his pocket and put a bullet through his own brain with such accuracy that he still sat in the chair when neighbors arrived, an hour later. A stream of blood ran almost across the little sitting-room, and for years no scrubbing would remove the stain. It was said that a ghost walked there on moonlight nights, and its groans were heard in the attic and bedrooms. At last this house was destroyed by fire and a rude board cabin was erected on the ruins. But still it was said the ghost remained and its rappings, groans and cries were not abated, for there were other tragedies yet to come.

**Mysterious Death.**  
The fourth victim of the strange fatality that has hung for so many years over this place, was an unknown man.

Where the swift waters of Mill Creek leave the shadow of the hill and turn to the northward at the old bridge and the older ford, a young fisherman in the early Spring of 1890 came upon the dead body of a man lying half in the water and half among the low willows that edged the gravelly banks.

The body was that of a stranger and well dressed, but whence he came and how he met his death there were none to tell. No money, watch nor papers were found in his pockets. Whether this was a murder, for the purpose of robbery or revenge, and whether committed on the spot, or the dead body conveyed from Salem in the darkness of night; or whether a suicide, or an accident,

are questions that were asked, over and over, but never answered. A casket was brought and a grave was dug there among the willows, and the unknown was placed in an unmarked grave.

A covered bridge now spans the stream at this point, the north approach of which is but a few feet from the grave. Teams pass here all day long, travelers camp and picnic parties lunch here, but rains and floods have leveled the ground and willows have overgrown the spot, and the grave of the stranger passes unnoticed.

**Suicide Drawn to the Place.**  
The place was sold soon after this, and Mrs. Warner and her two boys, now grown to manhood, moved away. Changes came fast, and the old farm with its broken fences and tumble-down buildings became one of the beauty spots of the state.

On the high hill, always called "The Knob," stands the Reformatory like an ancient feudal castle. Green lawns, white fences and trim outbuildings give a picture of a place undreamed of years ago.

But still the evil spell has not been lifted. Again, in 1894, did a coroner's jury assemble here to inquire into the tragic death of another unknown, who was found in the pasture near the railroad with his throat cut from ear to ear.

This man, it was shown, had taken his own life—probably through despondency. He was clearly a tramp, and had presumably grown weary of the long march and chose the coward's way to his existence. But what led him here? What unseen hand guided his last steps to almost the very spot where four other dead bodies had been found?

**Sixth and Last.**  
The sixth violent death took place two years ago, and but a few rods from the scene of the last mentioned.

One of the inmates of the school, a boy of 17 years, disappeared very suddenly from his post of duty in the pumping station, where the water supply for the school is forced up the hill by the power of a huge wheel turned by the swift current of the creek.

The usual search for runaways failed to reveal any trace of the lad, and not until a month had elapsed was any light thrown upon the mystery.

Then some other boys of the school fishing along the creek found the dead body of their missing comrade far be-

low the wheelhouse, where it had washed in the swollen stream.

Thus ends, so far, the list of fatalities, tragic and pitiful, that have shocked and saddened the hearts of the kindhearted residents of the neighborhood for half a life-time.

## Chicago's New Kicking Machine

The Chicago Cor. New York World. THE adjustable kicking and spunking machine, an exhibition this week at the Electric Show has planted its first series of kicks on the human form. There are four flying boots, which whirl in a circle, and Charles Gregory, the inventor calls it "The Remorse Motor."

Inspector Wheeler, of the Harrison Street Police Station, furnished the remorse victim in the person of a prisoner, Ed Bloom. He threatened to send Mr. Bloom to the workhouse for two months for smashing city ordinances, but being deeply interested in the kicking machine from a police point of view, offered Bloom his freedom if he would submit himself as a sacrifice to the machine.

Bloom elected to be kicked rather than go to the Bridewell. He balked when brought to the Coliseum and saw what what smoothness and precision the machine delivered kicks within the zone of punishment.

"That's all right, Bloom. Stand up and take it like a man," said the Inspector. A few scientists, anxious to learn if the kicking machine was superior to the clenched fist, the club or the beer bottle, watched the demonstration. Finally Mr. Bloom was put in range and held by two men. The inventor started it up at half speed, and Mr. Bloom sustained a few terrific awals and tried to escape.

He plucked up more courage and the machine was sent along at 20 revolutions a second. Ten seconds and Bloom was almost out. In that time he had received almost 1000 kicks. His clothing was torn, his flesh was bruised and his feelings injured. He was given his liberty, a new suit of clothes and some arnica.

"We put slippers on for small boys, about No. 8," said the inventor.

Turbine propellers are steadily growing in favor both in the British navy and the merchant marine.