

The Black Flag by Mabel Jacques.

FROM the anteroom footsteps could be indistinctly heard crossing the carpeted floors. A door closed. Again a few steps, the rustling of some papers, then—silence.

The man seated before the desk noticed, unconsciously, these sounds; the lines about his mouth and eyes denoted that deadly weariness which comes from unusual mental taxation.

Gradually, in the stillness, his face relaxed; his features assumed a dreamy, unconscious expression. His gaze remained fixed upon a cold, gray building at the end of the long, wide avenue. From the roof of this state prison a bare, slender flagpole gleamed white in the morning sun. Soon this pole would have a black flag flapping at its top, he reflected.

Up to now there had been the ceaseless rush of the affairs of state, with an additional annoyance—the incessant pleadings and demands from many sources for the life of a man whose death sentence for an inexcusable murder was that day to be carried into effect.

Owing to his clemency, the execution had already been delayed several hours; but, powerful as was the influence that had been brought to bear, his sense of justice and his apparent duty toward the demands of the public had triumphed, and the last person to leave the Governor's private office had been the messenger carrying the former's refusal for any further postponement of the sentence.

Within an hour or so other demands of office would begin. Again he would be the alert man of the world, perhaps a little more courteous and a little less strenuous than during the day, but ever the keen, alive diplomat, hated, feared and loved.

Now his mind unconsciously reviewed the events of the last few hours. Hardly realizing it, the dominant thought was that regarding the doomed man.

Mistily there floated through his brain a question as to the sensation of the condemned as the last minute of his life drew near. Was he resigned? There came to him a sudden thankfulness that he was blessed with no offspring. How terrible must have been this day to the prisoner's mother! How lucky the father was dead!

Again and again his wandering thoughts were drawn back to the woman. He had been a little curious about her. A trifle surprised, also, that she had never come to him.

Week after week the papers had published the most minute descriptions of the legal training she was undergoing, ostensibly, to quote the press, "if all else failed, to logically argue the matter to a finish with the Governor."

Able attorneys throughout the country admitted candidly that her ability and aptness were quite phenomenal. But expectant as the Governor had been for a visit from her, she had failed to appear, her legal training possibly showing her the fruitlessness of such an attempt.

The Governor's abstracted gaze left the Western sky and, swinging around in his chair, he turned on the desk light. Before him lay a pile of marked newspaper copies. Picking one up, he started to read.

Suddenly he raised his head; he had heard the door of the anteroom open, and there was some one approaching.

the door of his private office—a light, quick step across the floor.

Where was Saunders, the secretary, whose business it was to see that no one intruded at this hour?

Evidently the man had slipped from his post, for the person crossing the room came unannounced.

A peculiar fascination seemed to be directing the Governor's well-trained ear toward those footsteps. As they stopped he sat expectantly, awaiting with unusual interest the timid knock which he felt sure would come.

There was silence as its faint echo died away, while the Governor quietly peered out into the darkness of the room.

The knock was repeated, a trifle more boldly. The man hesitated, then rose. Why did he do so he could not tell.

"Come in," he said, then sat down.

He saw the door open in answer to his summons. A frail, quietly dressed woman entered. For the moment, he was only aware of the harmony of color which her appearance presented. The soft blending tones of brown, beginning with the drooping dark brown hair which, with her veil, shaded her face, and ending with the dainty tan shoes.

At first he thought her very young; then, as she advanced into the room, he found that his first impressions were wrong; she was a woman in the prime of life.

"Madam," the Governor said, rising as he spoke, "I fear that you have made a mistake, unless my memory and that of my secretary are greatly at fault. I remember no appointment at this hour."

There was in his voice a certain firmness, but it lacked the tone of finality with which he would, under like conditions, have dismissed an intruding office-seeker.

As he spoke the man, ever alive to minute details, saw the woman's grasp tighten about the handle of her umbrella. He noticed, also, the sudden straightening of her slight figure as she began to speak.

"I know that such an intrusion is unheard of, and possibly unwarranted, but the urgency of the matter may perhaps lead you to pardon my actions."

"What is your errand, madam?" There was a note of perplexity in his question, not from curiosity regarding her errand, but because he was aware that she was disguising her voice.

"I came," she answered slowly, "to ask you for the life of my son."

The Governor glanced up quickly as he asked, "And your son is—"

"Howard Farrell!"

The ticking of the little clock on the desk was the only sound. The woman knew that each tick was lessening the time of life the state allotted to her son.

Suddenly the courteous side of the man asserted itself.

"Won't you be seated?" he asked solicitously, motioning toward a chair.

The woman hesitated, then moved forward and sank into the rather well-covered haven, for she was weak and exhausted.

There came to the man, as he watched her, a vague idea that he had seen her do all this before. It left in his mind a curious uncertainty even as he answered her firmly, but kindly: "It is impossible, Mrs. Farrell; I have heard the door of the anteroom open, and there was some one approaching."

you the greatest sympathy; but the laws of our country, and the protection of our fellow beings, compel me—as I am sure it would any other in my position—to refuse a commutation to life imprisonment for your son."

Against the vibrant silence, was she going to launch her well-learned arguments upon him, while thinking to disarm him by her quiet, womanly manner? Was the pathetic little figure only playing a part, and would it suddenly draw itself up with majestic mien and hurl crafty, legal phrases which would take him unawares? Even her next words placed him quickly upon the defensive.

"And if you were in my place, the parent of the boy, but still the Governor of the state, would you then think of the laws of your country, of the protection of your fellow beings?"

She spoke rapidly, glancing at the clock as she did so. But there was a change in the tone of the voice; it was less constrained, more natural.

The change did not pass unnoticed by the man, stirring as it did vague, uncertain recollections.

"Madame, being a father would cause me to be no less a Governor, though perhaps not being a parent makes impossible the analysis of one's feelings, and the actions which they might prompt under such conditions."

The woman was keen to perceive the assurance in his first words, but aware, also, of the doubt which crept into the last. She rose and walked toward him, and the strong, intellectual statesman felt a quiver pass over him.

When within arm's length she stopped.

"Do you never regret having no children?" she asked.

"At a time like this I do not," he replied, looking steadily at her, trying to see all that lay behind the veil, for the voice, now free from all restraint and disguise, was coming to him out of the past—out of his past—not alone stirring vague recollections, but bringing definite thoughts and memories to him, throwing them out in clear relief.

"Nothing can make you change your mind?" she asked, drawing a step nearer.

"Nothing!"

Still nearer she came; then she raised her hands quietly to her head and lifted her veil.

The movement revealed a wonderful face, fragrant, beautiful, filled with an indescribable something! But it was none of these that made the man rise quickly from his chair and reach blindly for his desk, peering at her as he did so.

"You—you—are—"

He stopped as if something was choking him.

"—am," was all she said, and that slowly, almost vaguely; but her eyes reflecting the steadfast purposes of her mind, never left his face.

In the twinkling of an eye there flashed across his brain his boyhood marriage to this pathetic figure in that old seaport town on the Atlantic Coast, ages and ages ago—his subsequent desertion of her in a quest for Western gold, the news of her death, and now—she stood before him—his wife!

The man was breathing quickly, his hands clenched the back of a chair as if for support. Suddenly, turning to ward his desk, he selected a paper. On the front page, under glaring head-



lines, was a portrait of Howard Farrell. Placing it beneath his desk light, he eagerly searched the face, then the paper dropped from his hands.

"He is—!" he gasped.

She nodded her head.

"Yes," she answered, and then he seemed stricken into death.

For the brief fraction of a second she waited; then slowly, distinctly, with her voice modulated, she continued:

"You know now, though you never would have known had it not been for this. Your message—when over the wire some time ago: there is still the telephone—'Each low, distinct word she uttered seemed to beat through the listener's mind with the force of a trip-hammer. 'You are, though, no less the Governor because you are likewise a father, and—the laws of your country, the protection of your fellow beings and—what are they in comparison?' She raised her hands to him piteously, but flung the words at him rapidly."

"Every living thing in this world protects its young. What are you as a Governor compared to what you should be as a father? They're going to choke our boy to death—no, merciful heav-

ens, can you let them do it? Punish him, but—not that, not that! Why, even the primitive savage gladly lays down his life for his own flesh and blood, and you—her voice rose to a half scream—"merciful heaven, is this a man of stone? Why did I bear him a son that—"

"Stop!" His great voice rang out like a clarion, and she lay back against the wall, silent, spent and breathless.

And the Governor of the commonwealth towered in the room a graven image, with nostrils distended, and with a gleam in his eyes which only comes to the man who has produced and owns a son.

Little by little, she began to be moved by the greatness of the mental struggle through which he was passing, the tremendous concentration of thought, his manifest duty to the state and to his conscience, and that God-given natural instinct which both brute beast and humans have to protect and save their young.

Then over his face came that wonderful mystical light which only shines in the face of a man when he realizes at last that he is a father.

A deep, hoarse cry left his lips, and

it came from his innermost soul. His conscience, his duty as Governor, what he owed the state and the Nation, all in left him as chaff before the wind. Nothing remained but the one fact—it was his boy and he would save him if it drove him to the depths of Hades for a million years!

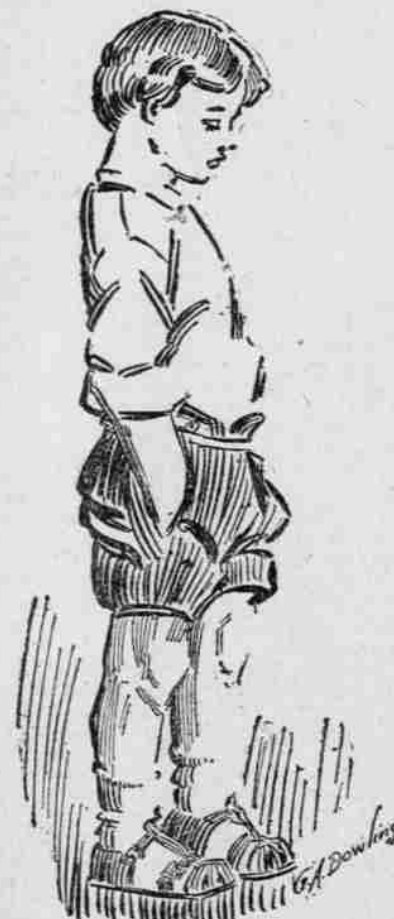
He plunged to the table and tore the

telephone from the hook. He yelled the number of the prison to the operator in a frenzied voice, and then, in the silent pause which intervened while the connection was being made, he looked out the window to see—

A black flag slowly rising to the top of the prison flagpole! (Copyright by the Frank A. Munsey Co.)

WHICH SHALL WE SPARE — THE ROD OR THE CHILD?

Do You Punish Your Small Boy to Correct Him or Merely to Give Vent to Your Own Impatience?



his character have been changed just by cowering him into submission for fear of physical pain?

For generations and generations parents have had the right to use corporal punishment upon their children, and they have made use of it rather freely. Have those who abandoned the rod done so for purely sentimental reasons, or have they realized that the rod does not produce the desired results?

With any form of punishment the first question should be: Does it fit the needs of the culprit? Most of us in punishing do little more than relieve our injured feelings. When we reach a point at which we think that our punishment must prevent the repetition of the offense, we feel that we have achieved a high plane for the treatment of our children.

And yet, however important it may be to prevent certain offenses from

being repeated, the most important consideration is, What is the effect of the punishment upon the development of the child's character?

If flogging or any other form of punishment which this principle could inflict would do no more than keep the boy from being defiant and insolent to his principal and teachers, it is hardly worth the pains.

Even in the treatment of convicted criminals we are learning that whatever lowers a man's self-respect can have no beneficial effect upon his future. He may not repeat the particular offense for which he was jailed, he may even abandon a criminal career, but he will forever after live upon a lower moral plane than he might have attained under different conditions.

In our relations to our children we should be able to do at least as well as the experienced penologists do in mod-

ern penal institutions. In these it is the aim to strengthen the character of the delinquent by building up his self-respect and his real concern for higher moral standards; they seek to convert a creature of impulse into one of principle, or at least of selected habits.

These ends are attained not by a system of penalties, though these have their place, but by giving the men and women occupations that engross their interests, and through these the individual learns to regulate his conduct with reference to a more and more remote end. In other words, the character is developed by strengthening the self-control and by the establishment of ideals.

When you stop Mary from speaking impudently to you by instilling into her fear of disagreeable consequences, you have succeeded in removing an unpleasant symptom of an

undesirable condition; but you have not eradicated the condition, which is perhaps disrespectful for you. In fact, you may have lowered yourself in her estimation with every successive application of the rod. Moreover, in enforcing an outward compliance with your wishes, out of harmony with her actual feelings, you have added the fault of deception to that of disrespect.

It may be true that there are some children who cannot learn certain lessons that we consider necessary (in order to adjust them to living among other human beings) unless these lessons come through the skin. But certainly this is true in relatively few cases, and then the rod should be applied only as a last resort—as a physical means in the end recommend a surgical operation, after medical methods have proved unavailing. We should use all other appeals before we

adopt the primitive one of physical coercion.

We often fail to realize that any kind of punishment is only a corrective. Children cannot be "trained" through punishment. Training requires the building up of positive virtues, while the most that punishment can ever do is to correct a fault—it cannot make children good.

Most of us have so little self-control that unless we disapprove heartily of corporal punishment, we are tempted to use it constantly as a cure-all—a panacea—for all kinds of offenses and for all kinds of children. In order, then, to protect ourselves as well as our children, we must keep even the thought of the "rod" in the furthest background of our minds. We must make sure that we have tried every other means before thinking of corporal punishment.



Yardstick Based on Length of King's Arm

HOW many Americans today know that the yardstick, three feet in length, was based on the length of a king's arm? How many know that the length of an inch had its conception in the mind of a ruler who decreed that three barley corns, dry and laid end to end, should constitute that unit of measurement?

Foot rules and yard measures are so common in these days that not one person in a thousand stops to consider how they had their origin. Yet the length of these measures was settled upon only after centuries of correction and contention and after a thousand years of attempt to find a common unit of measure.

The foot has been used by so many nations, both ancient and modern, that all scientists believe it was meant to be the length of the human foot.

The Greek foot, for instance, was supposed to be the length of the foot of the hero Hercules. However, Hercules was a large man; so their unit measured 12.14 of our inches. The Macedonians probably took their unit from the foot of some giant leader, for it was 14.08 inches in length. In the Middle Ages the foot in Geneva became 12.21 inches, and one foot has been discovered actually 22.22 of our inches in length.

The Germans a few centuries ago attempted to obtain a better unit by taking the average of a number of feet. A surveyor of the sixteenth century prescribed this rule:

"Stand at the door of a church on Sunday and bid 16 men to stop, tall ones and small ones, as they happen to pass out when the service is finished; then make them put their left

feet one behind the other, and the length thus obtained shall be the right and lawful rod to measure and survey the land with, and the sixteenth part of it shall be the right and lawful foot."

The foot thus selected, though undoubtedly capable of considerable variation, was less elastic than the inch of our early ancestors. It was provided by law in 1324, during the reign of Edward II, that the inch should have the length of "three barley corns, round and dry, laid end to end."

Barley corns differ much in length, even if round and dry; therefore it must have been possible to vary the inch at will. Strangely enough, however, this old unit based on the barley corn persists to this day in some parts in the numbering of shoes.

No. 5 shoes are a third of an inch—that is, one barley corn—larger than No. 28; and so with other sizes.

Our yard represents another unsuccessful attempt to find a satisfactory unit in nature. In the twelfth century Henry I decreed that the yard should be the distance from the end of his nose to the end of his thumb; we are not certain, however, in what position he held his arm and head when the measurements were taken. He went so far as to have a metal bar of the proper length made, and then copies were prepared, stamped and declared to be royal measures.

The earliest yardstick now in existence was prepared near the end of the fifteenth century in the reign of Henry VII. This stick, made of bronze, measures 33.924 of our modern inches in length, and was used as the English standard until 1588.

The new British standard of 1888

was called the Winchester yard. It was made of brass, and remained the legal standard until 1826. The bar is in existence today and offers ample evidence of the truth of the report made by a commissioner who examined it in 1742: "A kitchen poker, filled at both ends, would make as good a standard."

Nevertheless the officials worried along with it until 1826, for the simple reason that they could not agree upon a new standard.

The belief became common in the eighteenth century that such perishable things as the king's arm made unsuitable standards; but it was thought that a unit in nature might be found in the pendulum. Therefore a committee of Parliament in 1760 caused John Bird to prepare a standard based upon the seconds pendulum. This standard, which measured 36.00002 of our inches, was not adopted for more than 60 years. Finally, in 1824, it was provided that Bird's yard should become the legal standard on January 1, 1826.

Trying to Please.

(Washington Star.)

"Working hard"

"I should say so," replied the student. "My football was so poor that I'll have to see if I can do something to please father with my Latin. The only thing is that I can never get him to take the interest in books that he does in football."

Exactly.

(St. Louis Star.)

"Johnny," said the teacher, "who were the two strongest men of olden times?"

"Samson and Hercules."

"Can you tell anything about them?"

"Oh, yes. Samson was a regular Hercules."

Surgeon's Knife Is Wielded by Wireless

(Continued From Page 4)

Island questioned the Santa Marta at sea.

Back came the instructions. "You have Warren's medical book there, and you can go on the pages I mention. Describe the symptoms."

Keenan told of the condition of the wound and the circumstances, but he insisted on his fears when it came time to amputate.

"No amputation necessary," came back the message. "A lot of cutting according to directions and your man is saved."

Keenan howled this message to the trembling man and made ready for further directions. "Make a tourniquet," said the wireless. It was hard to believe that out of sight beyond the horizon a trained mind at another instrument was directing through space the way to save a human life.

With the aid of the beachcomber the tourniquet was applied, and a knife—Carew's own, which had caused the trouble—plunged in boiling water to make it clean. More brandy was served to him by the wireless man, and everything was ready for the operation. A native boy who acted as Keenan's helper ran after articles as directed.

By turning to the page he had been directed Keenan found a chart of the leg.

"Ready," he flashed to Dr. Irwin. The first direction came. He repeated it back and it was verified, so there could be no mistake. Each part of the lancing was gone over carefully under repeated instructions. Meantime the Santa Marta continued to plunge along on the blue Caribbean.

And when the cutting was over there

came the query from the ship to shore: "Have you any tar?"

Keenan had, and the instruction came to boil it and pour it on the new clean wound. It was rough surgery, but the best thing under the circumstances. Carew fainted under it and was revived.

"Tell him he's safe now," came the wireless.

The tourniquet was removed and the numbed leg, still horribly painful under the searing tar, was banded.

"Got plenty of brandy," asked the spark.

"About the only thing we have," Keenan pounded back.

"Let him have enough to forget his troubles," ordered the surgeon.

Now by rights all should have been over with the saving of Carew. But there remained the one touch that will be a long time finding its duplicate.

The following day the young naturalist appeared, dragging himself along with a cane in defiance of orders. He stopped by the wireless man, who had taken his instrument out under the trees.

"Forget it," he said when the other began to remonstrate, "I feel great. It's wonderful to know you're going to live after all. I want to thank that doctor."

So Keenan raised the Santa Marta again and the surgeon was called to the wireless room.

"Tell him I can't operate the key so it means anything," said Carew, "but if he will sit down at the instrument I'll make some dots with the thing and that will serve for the present. You know our hands will really touch when his has one key and I the other and the air between."

And so it happened that through the

air over the blue Caribbean there passed

sundry dots that meant nothing and

everything.

Intuition.

(Washington Star.)

"I cannot help admiring the intuition of the men who built my new house," remarked the querulous man.

"Intuition?"

"Yes. They seemed to know my limits as well as if they had studied my checkbook."

Undisciplined.

(Washington Star.)

"How do you know that man is not married?"

"He continues to think he can treat all this talk about votes for women as a joke."