

SENTENCED TO BE SHOT.

Farmer Owen's son had been found asleep when doing sentinel duty, and he was sentenced to be shot. A telegram had been received by his father, saying that the sentence would be carried out in twenty-four hours.

It was like a message from the dead. Mr. Owen took the letter, but could not break the envelope, on account of his trembling fingers, and held it toward Mr. Allan, with the helplessness of a child.

The minister opened it, and read as follows:

"DEAR FATHER: When this reaches you—I shall be—in—eternity. At first it seemed awful to me; but I have thought about it so much now that it has no terror. They say they will not blind me nor blind me, but that I may meet my death like a man.

"God be thanked!" said Mr. Owen. "I knew Bennie was not the boy to sleep carelessly at his post."

"They tell me to-day that I have a short reprieve—time to write to you," our good Colonel says. Forgive him, father, he only does his duty; he would gladly save me if he could.

Late that night a little figure glided down the footpath toward the railway station. The guard, as he reached down to lift her into the carriage, wondered at the dim-stained face that was upturned toward the dim lantern he held in his hand.

A few questions and ready answers told him all, and no father could have cared more tenderly for his only child than he for our little Blossom. She was on her way to Washington to ask President Lincoln for her brother's life.

The next morning they reached New York, and the guard hurried her on to Washington. Every minute now might be the means of saving her brother's life.

"Well, my child," he said in his pleasant, cheerful tones, "what do you want?"

"Bennie's life, please, sir," faltered Blossom.

"Bennie! Who is Bennie?"

"My brother, sir. They are going to shoot him for sleeping at his post."

"Oh, yes; I remember. It was a fatal sleep. You see, child, it was a time of special danger. Thousands of lives might have been lost by his negligence."

"So my father said," replied Blossom, gravely. "But poor Bennie was so tired, sir, and Jimmie so weak. He did the work of two, sir, and it was Jimmie's night, not his; but Jimmie was too tired, and Bennie never thought about himself, and he was tired, too."

"What is this you say, child? Come here, I do not understand." And the kind man, as ever, caught eagerly at what seemed to be a justification of an offense.

Blossom went to him. He put his hand tenderly on her shoulder, and turned up the pale, anxious face toward his. How tall he seemed! And he was President of the United States, too.

A dim thought of this kind passed for a moment through little Blossom's mind; but she told her simple, straightforward story and handed Bennie's letter to Mr. Lincoln to read.

He read it carefully; then, taking up a pen, wrote a few hasty lines and rang his bell. Blossom heard this order given:

"Send this dispatch at once."

The President then turned to the girl, and said: "Go home, my child, and tell that father of yours, who could approve his country's sentence, even when it took the life of a child like that, Abraham Lincoln thinks the life far too precious to be lost. Go back, or—wait until to-morrow; Bennie will need a change after he has so bravely faced death; he shall go with you."

"God bless you, sir!" said Blossom.

Two days after this interview, the young soldier came to the White House with his little sister. He was called into the President's private room, and a strap was fastened on his shoulder. Mr. Lincoln then said:

"The soldier that could carry a sick comrade's baggage, and die for the act so uncomplainingly, deserves well of his country."

Then Bennie and Blossom took their way to their Green Mountain home. A crowd gathered at the railway station to welcome them back; and as Farmer Owen's hand grasped that of his boy, tears flowed down his cheeks, and he was heard to say, fervently:

"The Lord be praised!"

"PERFECTLY LOVELY" PHILOSOPHY.

A few days ago a Boston girl, who had been attending the School of Philosophy at Concord, arrived at Brooklyn on a visit to a seminary chum. After canvassing thoroughly the fun and gumdrops that made up their education in the seat of learning at which scholastic efforts were made, the Brooklyn girl began to inquire into the nature of the Concord entertainment.

"And so you are taking lessons in philosophy. How do you like it?"

"Oh! It's perfectly lovely. It's about science, you know, and we all just dote on science."

"It must be nice. What is it about?"

"It's about molecules as much as anything else, and molecules are just too awful nice for anything. If there's anything I really enjoy, it's molecules."

"Tell me all about them, my dear. What are molecules?"

"Oh! molecules? They are little wee things, and it takes ever so many of them. They are splendid things! Do you know there ain't anything but what's got molecules in it. And Mr. Cook is just as sweet as he can be, and Mr. Emerson too. They explain everything so beautifully."

"How I'd like to go there!" said the Brooklyn girl, enviously.

"You'd enjoy it ever so much. They teach protoplasm, too, and if there is one thing perfectly lovely it's protoplasm and molecules."

"Tell me about protoplasm. I know I should adore it."

"Deed you would. It's just too sweet to live. You know it's about how things get started, or something of that kind. You ought to hear Mr. Emerson tell about it. It would stir your very soul. The first time he explained protoplasm there wasn't a dry eye in the house. We named our hats after him. This is an Emerson hat. You see the ribbon is drawn over the crown and caught with a buckle and a bunch of flowers. Then you turn up the side with a spray of forget-me-nots. Ain't it just too sweet? All the girls in the school have them."

And the Brooklyn girl went to bed that night in the dumps because fortune had not vouchsafed her the advantages enjoyed by her friend, while the Boston girl dreamed of seeing an ascidian chasing a molecule over a differentiated back fence with a club for telling a protoplasm that his youngest sister had so many freckles on her nose that they made her cross-eyed.

MIDNIGHT IN A PRISON.

There is something very solemn in a large convict prison at midnight. A faint sound of healthy slumber comes from the cells where the convicts sleep. Perhaps there are a thousand, perhaps only five hundred, undergoing punishment; but whatever may be the number, one is conscious that nowhere else save in a convict prison could so many human beings sleep with so little to interrupt the sense of calm repose. In the same number of people taken from the ordinary world, there would be slight sounds arising from nightmare following on indigestion—perhaps from some reminiscence troubling the conscience on the question whether the strong steps taken for payment of that bill were not in the circumstances slightly harsh, or some other disturbing recollection; there might also be uneasy thoughts and dreams creative of restlessness. None of these troubles disturb the sleep of the habitual criminal. This is not because his conscience lies easy on him, but because he does not possess the article known to the rest of the world as a conscience. Hence he neither enjoys the satisfaction of its healthy and genial condition nor the trouble attending on its inflections, and it is with him essentially that the "Prayer for Indifference," by Greville, as it may be found in the old "Elegant Extracts," is granted.—Blackwood's Magazine.

AMERICAN WOMEN.

It may well be a source of national pride that all which is justly said of the self-sacrifice and of the thoughtful and tender devotion of Mrs. Garfield to her husband during his long and distressing illness, might be said with equal justice of almost every American wife under similar circumstances. Indeed, nothing less is expected of American women; and though they attract little or no attention, such instances of wifely care and watchful affection are of constant occurrence, in the palatial mansions of the rich and in the humbler dwellings of the poor and lowly; so that when Mrs. Garfield is praised, the high eulogies pronounced upon her belong not to her alone, but are tributes to the character, the disinterestedness and the fidelity of American wives in general. Indeed, so much is the exercise of all these womanly virtues looked upon as a matter of course, that the public would be greatly shocked at the manifestation of any lack of them in a case where the sufferings of a husband had been so terrible and prolonged. Many a common laborer, living from hand to mouth on his daily earnings, possesses the priceless treasure of a wife just as devoted; while it is fortunate that the conspicuous example of a President's wife has brought these common but high qualities of American women so prominently before the world.—N. Y. Sun.

A BOTTOMLESS PEAT-BED.

On the extension of the New England road from Brewster's to the Hudson there is one of those peat-beds like the one which, near Wallingford, has caused the Consolidated road so much trouble. This one, west of Brewster's, required over 600 car-loads of earth to fill it before a foundation could be had for the abutments of a bridge across the shallow pond. For this structure, piles, one upon another, have been driven 110 feet into the peat, and the longest goes down 114 feet below the surface. A 3000-pound weight has been used in driving them, and, at the last fall of this immense hammer, a fall of 20 or 30 feet would drive the piles only half an inch, so great was the friction on the sides of the piles. As it was, bottom was not reached after all; the friction on the piles sustain them. Some 70,000 or 80,000 cubic yards of earth have been dumped into this pit.—Hartford (Conn.) Times.

SWEARING-OFF YOUNG.

"Give me a match," said a wee little boy to Mr. A. L. Davis.

"What do you want a match for?"

"Don't you see?" said the urchin, rolling up some paper. "I want to light my cigarette."

"You ought not to smoke."

"Well, give me a bit and I'll swear off!" He got his bit, and has thus far kept his word.—Woolie-Woolie Watchman.

SMOKE ON TAP.

We understand that some enterprising young men in a Western city, acting on the plan of the steam supply companies, are forming a company to supply smokers with tobacco smoke. They will start up with a capital of \$10,000, \$5000 of which will be invested in a large meerschaum pipe, something like a cauldron kettle, to be centrally located, from which service pipes will reach in all directions. Pressure will be applied, and the cool, pure smoke forced through all the ramifications of the system of tubes. It is claimed by the projectors that the plan possesses features that will bring it at once into favor with smokers, and that it will be much cheaper, besides doing away with the trouble and annoyance of keeping a pipe, a tobacco pouch and matches. It is estimated that the average smoker consumes an hour's time each day in keeping a pipe in order, in borrowing tobacco and hunting up a match, which is liable to go out, which amounts to fifteen days' time in a year, and this at three dollars a day amounts to an aggregate of forty-five dollars. All this will be saved by having a convenient coil of tubing and a nice amber mouth-piece, which the smoker can take up at any time and find already lighted and "going." It is also shown that a man who smokes a pipe smokes more than is good for him, as he always smokes it out from force of habit, while, by the new plan, he will only take a few whiffs to take the rabbit fur out of his mouth and clear his brain, when he will lay the subject aside for future reference. The company will guarantee first-class tobacco—no dog-leg brand or "dry removal" stuff from the sewer being permitted to be thrown into the fire at the central office—and the smoke will be thoroughly denicotized by passing it through a tank of rose-water, thus avoiding that unpleasant sensation caused by tipping up a pipe carelessly and getting a taste of something like Lake Superior whisky, or oil of vitriol. Nothing will be left undone for the comfort of patrons, and a gentlemanly collector will call once a month and take the meter. There does not seem to be any possible chance for the failure of the scheme, and it is destined soon to rank alongside the telephone and milk wagon, as one of the conveniences and luxuries worked out for humanity by the inventive genius of the nineteenth century. It will be nothing less than a giant stride in tobacco smoke progress.—Exchange.

A weeping widower fell into his wife's grave during a funeral at Decatur, Ill., and as he climbed out his language was so shockingly profane that the clergyman felt compelled to reprove him.

Time never rests heavily on us when it is well employed.

Rescued from Death.

The following statement of William J. Coughlin, of Somerville, Mass., is so remarkable that we beg to ask for it the attention of our readers. He says: "In the Fall of 1878 I was taken with a violent bleeding of the lungs, followed by a severe cough. I soon began to lose my appetite and flesh. I was so weak at one time that I could not leave my bed. In the Summer of 1877 I was admitted to the City Hospital. While there the doctors said I had a hole in my left lung as big as a half dollar. I expended over \$100 in doctors and medicines. I was so far gone at one time that a report went around that I was dead. I gave up hope, but a friend told me of Dr. Wm. Hall's Balsam for the Lungs. I laughed at my friends, thinking that my case was incurable; but I got a bottle to satisfy them, when to my surprise and gratification I commenced to feel better. My hope, once dead, began to revive, and to-day I feel in better spirits than I have for the past three years. I write this hoping you will publish it, so that every one afflicted with diseased lungs will be induced to take Dr. Wm. Hall's Balsam for the Lungs, and be convinced that consumption can be cured. I have taken two bottles, and can positively say that it has done more good than all the other medicines I have taken since my sickness. My cough has almost entirely disappeared, and I shall soon be able to go to work." Sold by druggists.

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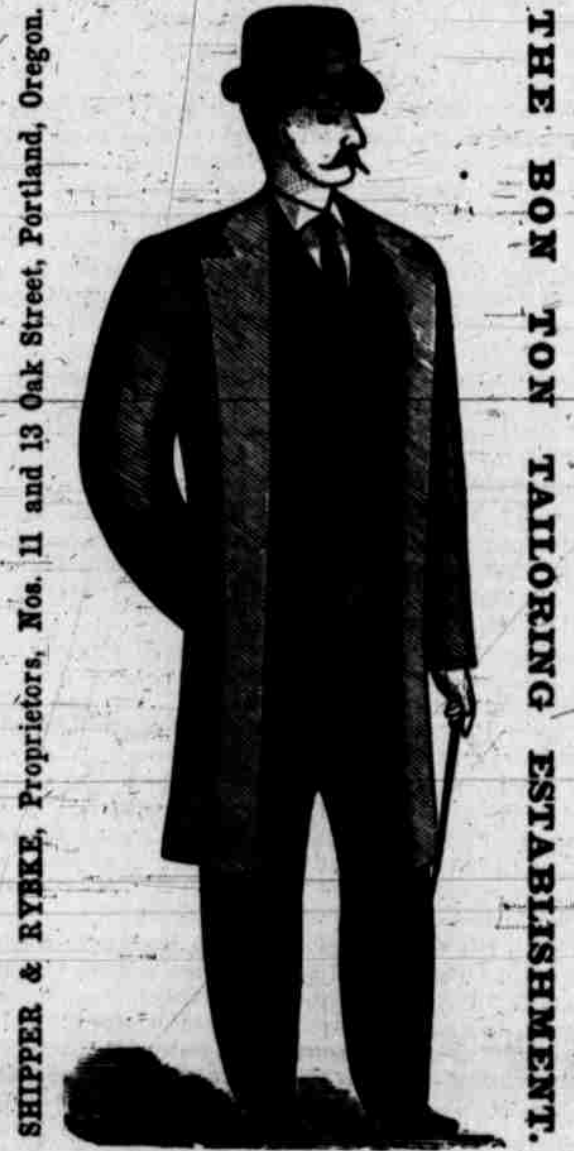
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