

THE
ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

A MAGAZINE OF

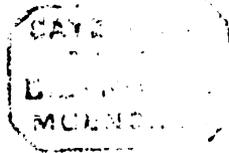
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THE
ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

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SEPTIMIUS FELTON; OR, THE ELIXIR OF LIFE.

VI.

IT is not in our power, nor in our wish, to produce the original form, nor yet the spirit, of a production which is better lost to the world: because it was the expression of a human intellect originally greatly gifted and capable of high things, but gone utterly astray, partly by its own subtlety, partly by yielding to the temptations of the lower part of its nature, by yielding the spiritual to a keen sagacity of lower things, until it was quite fallen; and yet fallen in such a way, that it seemed not only to itself, but to mankind, not fallen at all, but wise and good, and fulfilling all the ends of intellect in such a life as ours, and proving, moreover, that earthly life was good, and all that the development of our nature demanded. All this is better forgotten; better burnt; better never thought over again; and all the more, because its aspect was so wise, and even praiseworthy. But what we must preserve of it were certain rules of life and moral diet, not exactly expressed in the document, but which, as it were, on its being duly received into Septimius's mind, were precipitated from

the rich solution, and crystallized into diamonds, and which he found to be the moral dietetics, so to speak, by observing which he was to achieve the end of earthly immortality, whose physical nostrum was given in the recipe which, with the help of Doctor Portsoaken and his Aunt Keziah, he had already pretty satisfactorily made out.

“Keep thy heart at seventy throbs in a minute; all more than that wears away life too quickly. If thy respiration be too quick, think with thyself that thou hast sinned against natural order and moderation.

“Drink not wine nor strong drink; and observe that this rule is worthiest in its symbolic meaning.

“Bask daily in the sunshine, and let it rest on thy heart.

“Run not; leap not; walk at a steady pace, and count thy paces per day.

“If thou feelest, at any time, a throb of the heart, pause on the instant, and analyze it; fix thy mental eye steadfastly upon it, and inquire why such commotion is.

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RED REMINISCENCES OF THE SOUTHWEST.

THE MORRISONS.

FROM the hour I saw the three Morrisons, brothers they were, Sam, Bob, Tom, hanging in a row from the same limb, I have never been able to pass a tree of that kind without seeing again upon its peculiar boughs the same sepulchral fruit! Long before the Morrisons were hung, I used to pass, upon certain journeys of mine, a tree of the same diabolical convenience of lower bough by the roadside, two yards or so of the rope still dangling therefrom with which Judge Lynch had hung his man. In this case the criminal had killed a teamster while gambling with him by the camp-fire one night, burying the body beneath the turf upon which they had been seated while at their cards. In less than twenty-four hours after the murderer, hung upon the limb of the live-oak just overhead, had been laid beside his victim exactly beneath. It was somewhat monotonous to me, those long rides upon horseback day after day, but for miles before and after passing that spot there was food for reflection sufficient to diversify the same!

After witnessing the actual executions of the Morrisons the idea of death by violence connects itself in my mind inseparably and forever with the live-oak! The cypress brings to mind monumental marble; the willow recalls the winding funeral, the tolling bell, the officiating clergyman, the widow weeping, her orphans beside her. But with the live-oak comes the roaring mob; the struggling criminal; the frightened negro, compelled to climb the tree and adjust the rope; the exceeding anxiety of Judge Lynch in his successful effort to distribute himself into as many different persons as possible; the leaving, when the deed is done, so much more rapid than the coming together; the dead swing-

ing with that motion peculiar forever to the hung, revolving to the right and to the left as they swing!

May a very slight contribution, in these days of Buckle, Draper, and Darwin, be made just here to science? Why is it that there is no species of tree, east of the Mississippi, from where the Ohio strikes it, upon which a man can be hung? The elm and the hickory, and all those species of oak peculiar to that region, lift their boughs too vertically as well as too far out of reach for this. As to the maple and the pine, you could not bend them from their towering pride to such service as this, however desperate the needs of the criminal in your hands. There is a wonderful association of things, if we could understand it! Just where the earth bristles with the cactus and the bayonet-plant is found grass, too, studded upon every blade with thorns; the very cattle running into enormous horns; the least frog covered, too, with spikes; the very fish sprouting the same from snout to extremity of tail! Possibly the law of association which explains all the rest will explain likewise the intimate union of Lynch law with trees upon every hand so exactly adapted to and ready for the purposes of that Rhadamanthus!

I cannot recall, there were so very many cases of the kind, exactly why the Morrison brothers were put to death. Very likely they deserved death, had it been inflicted after fair trial by law. And this was to me the part of their execution most shocking, that, in being hurried through the streets to execution, the languid governor of the State, smoking his cigar upon the sidewalk as they passed, could have laid his very hand upon them as they were led by him, in arm's reach, to illegal death. He merely smoked his cigar and continued his

conversation ! Poor man, the feeblest among the sons of men, he rises before me as from the dead while I write these lines ! Tall, thin, sandy haired, colorless of eye, consumptive, no man ever came in this life to larger heritage of astonishment than did this man when, by some sudden legerdemain of politics, he found himself governor of the State ! He may have been an excellent man in every sense before ! Placed upon that giddy eminence, he endeavored to stimulate himself up to the needed energy and manhood by perpetual drink, soon making an end of himself, the pale moth of a very brief moment ! As those miserable Morrisons swept by, appealing in vain to him as the representative of the law, had he but had soul or even brandy enough in him for the emergency, what a name he could have made for himself ! Five minutes' speech upon the goods-box lying by him as he stood there would have rallied a *posse* more than enough for his purpose. Had the man thrown down his cigar and planted himself in the path of the mob, he could, single-handed, have stayed their crime until the law could have come in to decide in the matter. It would have made him the most popular man in the State ; it would have guaranteed, had he lived, his re-election. From the days of Aaron swept away by *his* mob, how many leaders have failed, in the same way, to rise instead upon the crest of the billow ; their very elevation upon and above the rolling mass being the measure, in that case, of the depth beneath it under which they would otherwise have been, and alas, were, submerged and drowned !

And there is the case of those

BURROWS BROTHERS.

A world of wisdom, believe me, and in reference to just this matter, is to be learned from the case of Saul Duden and the Burrows brothers. That wisdom lies in coming to know that Nature has the power of righting herself in the end ; *vis medicatrix naturæ*, the doctors call it in the instance of

disease. Divesting the fact of its drapery, the God who made the world governs it also ! By human law where that exists. Where that does not exist, or exists in crippled condition, he rules men by principles within themselves underlying all human arrangements and as eternal and essential as himself.

Saul Duden, for instance. I am forced to begin with Saul. If one only knew the facts, no doubt the links of the chain of cause and effect could be traced back from Saul to Adam. Beginning with Saul, the case was this. One sultry afternoon I am told that Saul is shot, is dying, and wants to see me. His widowed mother is a member of our church, and I hasten to her house to find Saul lying upon a pallet in the hall which runs through the centre of her house, as it does through the centre of every house in all that region. Yes, Saul is shot, is dying ; one glance at his pallid face as he lies reveals that. The first rush of the curious crowd is over, and his miserable mother sits upon the pallet, his head in her lap, weeping convulsively. On the other side of Saul, who was some twenty years old, an hour before in burly, square-shouldered health, lies a young girl. I do not observe who she is, in my anxiety for the departing soul ; for we all know how very, very far from being a Christian Saul has been up to date. And in reply to my earnest efforts in view of this, Saul, whose glazing eyes are fixed eagerly upon me, beckons me to put my ear to his lips. Surely he is anxious to tell me of his sincere repentance, of his hope in the Saviour pressed upon him !

As I stoop down he takes in his own the hand of the weeping girl lying beside him and only says, "Marry us ! Soon 's you can !"

Equally prompt, I reply, "No, Saul. Not now. If you get well !"

Because in the instant it all flashed upon me that his widowed and aged mother would need every cent of his property, which would, if I did as he asked, go to his wife instead ; pro-

vided a mere ceremony, without license from court, would have been legal ; concerning which I am not certain.

The girl weeps silently, the mother also. A brief prayer is put up to the One who alone can help in a crisis so tremendous and so swift as this, and I open my eyes to see that Saul has gone with it to God ! No syllable ever passed between the survivors and myself afterward in reference to the refusal of Saul's request. It would be more artistic to describe the betrothed as lingering on in widowed maidenhood till death. Only she did nothing of the kind. In a year she was married, lives to-day with a home full of children, and very happily, indeed, so far as is known.

And his broken-hearted mother lived on too. I often asked myself, For what ? For she was very poor, in wretched health. The day I heard of the killing of the Burrows brothers I thought I understood why ! These two brothers, Burrows by name, had stood side by side, emptying their revolvers together into the body of Saul Duden ; the nature of the quarrel being something I have wholly forgotten as irrelevant in comparison with that wherein lies the pith of the matter. Side by side they stood while killing Saul. Side by side were they killed !

It was years, however, after Saul's death. The community had forgotten the whole affair, because, as a matter of course, the brothers had been acquitted. Quite an established ritual for all such cases as that. First, a storm of indignation against the murderers, nothing but hanging from the nearest tree the course for them. Second, the rescue of the murderers by personal friends in temporary alliance with friends of law. Third, and last, the utter cooling down of popular feeling ; reaction, in fact, in the other direction, easily followed by legal acquittal.

And, restored again to society, the elder of the brothers makes, years after, dishonorable advances to a married lady ; mistakenly encouraged thereto, as he pleads in dying, by a remark

from the lady of a meaning wholly different from that which he attaches to the same. The sequel is very swift. The husband is rapidly recalled, from the point across the continent to which he had gone upon business, by a letter from his insulted wife. Coming, the evening of his arrival, upon the brothers in the streets, he shoots down one. The other, standing beside him, is also shot down, lest he avenge his brother's death, dying in total ignorance of the meaning of the matter. Side by side they slew Saul Duden ; upon the very spot in the street where that slaying took place so long before, side by side are they slain. As if it had been but for that she was waiting, the aged mother of their former victim hears of their death and dies.

There was a man in my knowledge, who pointed out to a crowd, with the glee of a marksman who takes pride in his accuracy of aim, how exactly his ball had hit and killed a certain man they were lynching, but who had escaped from them and run. Next week this same marksman was as accurately killed by a ball in precisely the same vital spot of *his* body. So with the retribution in the case of these brothers. Yet how shall we account for the fact that a ball from the weapon of the exasperated husband, in the act of slaying them, misses its aim to pass through the brain, as it did, of a boy of twelve years old, hurrying by on an errand for his aged and widowed and poverty-stricken mother, of whom he was the sole dependence ? Enough of manifest purpose in events to prove beyond all hesitation the government of the Great King ; sufficient inexplicability in that Providence to remind us, likewise, that all is the interweaving of threads which reach from beginning to end of the life of the race, to be comprehended perfectly now only by the Being that, of all apparent complexity, will bring before the eyes of the universe the perfect design at last ! Where it is unbounded wisdom which weaves, be sure it is love as infinite which colors, too, all the mani-

fold threads of the glorious result! It is greatly to be doubted whether Goethe got his catechism, longer or shorter; yet of the imperial robe now making for the King of kings, even Goethe can sing, as uttering the words of the Worker:—

“Thus at the roaring loom of time I ply,
And weave the garment thou seest me by!”

Possibly one mode, be it cause or result, by and in which the manifold threads of existence are woven into one, may be found in that subtle law of association which defies all analysis.

TWO INSTANCES THEREOF.

The writer happened one bright day to arrive from a distance upon a visit to a certain distinguished and greatly beloved clergyman, it matters not of what city or State. He was received, although unexpected, with the cordiality natural to said clergyman, and from which he derives in large measure his great success. It was impossible, however, not to remark the extreme nervousness of my excellent host even from the first. His parlor was immediately over a business office and upon the leading street of the city. As we conversed, my friend walking up and down the room, the voices of some children passing by upon the sidewalk beneath the open window were heard. I should not have noticed it at all, had not my host hastened across the room at the sound, put his head out of the window and called in sharpest tones, “Silence there! cease that noise this instant!” which command, as they were merely laughing and talking along the public street, must have amazed them as much as it did myself. The next moment he said to me, in much the same tones, “This is Wednesday. You must take charge of my lecture to-night!”

For certain reasons I began to decline.

“Silence!” thundered my friend. “You *shall* do it!” And so I did, heartily forgiving my reverend brother, or rather father, when I learned next day that, while conversing with me, his

son, also a person of distinction, although in a different line from his father, was during all that day engaged in another city in the punctilious preliminaries and carrying out of a duel, from which, however, he escaped, un-killing and un-killed. No doubt the father had some knowledge, greater or less, at the time of what was going on. But it was not the natural anxiety shown, it was the kindred *fierceness* rather, the heat in the veins because the same blood, though miles away, was in boiling rage! Since science encourages you to believe in an otherwise wholly unknown ether, by whose undulations light is conveyed to us through measureless and empty abysses from the farthest suns, why may there not be, perhaps by the same medium, subtlest communication, quite around the globe, of kindred flesh and spirit?

Leaving the analysis of the mystery to yourself, let one instance of it be related which came under the immediate knowledge of the writer. It has reference to a lady remarkable for noble *physique*, perfect health, and vigorous common sense. One night, for the first time in her life, she suddenly awoke from deep and healthy sleep in anguish of mind, declaring that her lover, then at a distance and to whom she was shortly to be married, was dying in agony! In vain the whole household reasoned with her that he was known, almost up to date, to be in health as well established as her own. During all that memorable night she walked the floor, weeping and exclaiming in agonies only less than if she were herself dying. By morning she had settled down into a sullen certainty of the death of her lover. Although the writer is by no means as old as you might gather therefrom, this was before the days of the telegraph, there being, thus, no means of proving or disproving the apprehensions of the afflicted lady. Two weeks after a knock was heard at the door, but one of many every day. Immediately the lady arose in her fixed sorrow and said in accents of entire certainty, “It is the messen-

ger to tell me of the death of John!" — her lover.

It is but relating simple fact to say that this was the case! During all her night of suffering, her far-away lover, suddenly attacked by the cholera, a disease of the very existence of which in the country she had not heard, lay in the agonies of collapse and death!

But this was death merely, while murder is the precise theme in hand. In direct connection with that, then, allow the mention of another instance of that mysterious power of association which so aids to blend the life of the race into one; this case also coming under the direct knowledge of the writer.

One night I arrived at the hotel in a certain city in company with a fellow-traveller, both of us exceedingly fatigued by the ride of days and nights in a stage. Shown, soon after supper, to my room, I tumbled into bed, and by the same act into the deepest depths of sleep. Waking late next morning, entirely refreshed, I went to the room of my friend, in a distant part of the building. To my surprise I found him pacing the floor, not having slept, he assured me, at all during the night! A more haggard man one does not often see.

"I *could n't* sleep!" he said emphatically. "I never was so tired and sleepy in my life as when I came in here. I can't tell whether it is in the bed, in the room, or in me! I opened all the windows, unmade and made over again the bed, said the multiplication-table over backwards and forwards, dozens of times, and walked the room as if for a wager! I thought there might be something in the points of the compass, and have made my bedstead box all the points of the compass around and around. Something horrible in the room or in me! Not a wink of sleep the entire night. I would n't pass such another night for thousands!"

"Pshaw, I know the reason!" I said; and, turning down the disordered bed-clothing, I entered upon certain rapid entomological researches. Nothing of

the kind. Yet, as I tossed the sheets back, my eye caught certain faint marks upon the pillow-case. I glanced eagerly at the curtain of the window near by, at the wall! The same very faint stains! No wonder! And I gave my astonished friend ample explanation in two words, "Judge Jaynes!"

"You unprincipled individual!" I thundered at the negro servant who answered the bell. "Tell the truth. Isn't this the room in which Judge Jaynes —"

"Law, massa, yes. But how did you find it out? We whitewash an' whitewash! Scrub? We scrub de carpet, de curtains, de bedclothes, till dey scrubbed nearly to nothin'. Law, massa, how *did* you find it out?" Superstition largely developed in eyes and accents. You see, he was only a negro, superstition is the word for *him*; we who are white and exceedingly advanced in the sciences are, of course, superior to all that!

Yet, so far, I have written but the unvarnished facts of the case. The rest of them are these. Everybody had read with horror about Judge Jaynes. You could not have induced any man living to pass the night in that room, knowing it to have been the one in which it all took place. My friend and I were but strangers, the wayfarers of a night. No fear of our finding it out.

For Judge Jaynes was a man of great former eminence and ability and natural ambition; I dare say an excellent man in many senses of the term. I saw him but once, at the seat of government of the State, and during the exciting election in the Legislature for United States senator. Dressed, as I had observed when introduced to him, in a perfectly new suit of broadcloth, and exceedingly agreeable in his manner, as well as of grave and senatorial demeanor, I needed not the information that he was a candidate for the Senate. Yet who would have dreamed of the catastrophe brewing under the cold exterior of that gray-complexioned, white-headed, Quaker-

mannered man? However, of all lands on earth, it is from under the snows of Iceland that Geysers spout their boiling torrents and that volcanoes rage. Once before he had rendered great service to the State, and would have made, I dare say, as good a senator as the one, — I have n't the least idea who it was — who was elected. Whatever other causes may have conspired with this I know not; hundreds who read these pages could tell far more about *that* than myself. Everybody knows that, soon after his return, defeated, from the capital, he blew out his brains with his own hand, after retiring to bed at his hotel one night; and was found in bed in the morning, lying in his blood. But everybody does not know the experience of my friend therein, as herein recorded with more than stenographic fidelity. Nor lives there a human being who can explain *why* my friend was kept wide awake as he was. Superstitious? O no, not for the world! All that we leave to low and uneducated people. It is purely a question of icy science. As a matter for dissection upon the open table in broad day of the most positive Positivism, will some *savant* please say *why*, in utter ignorance of the history of his room, my friend passed such a night there as he never did before or since?

Doubtless there is, also, sufficient reason why such an experience happened to us and through us, in a sense, to every person who reads this truthful statement of the same. Yet, in all the wonderful interweaving of men's experiences into one, there is something remarkable in the way in which the million-fold threads not only cross, but sometimes exactly *miss* one another!

One day the writer rang at the door of a certain stately house upon Fifth Avenue, New York, upon a visit to a friend. He had barely been admitted when a crash upon the doorstep he had just quitted announced the fall of a shutter from the fourth-story window overhead. Upon the exact spot on which he had stood waiting for minutes to be admitted lay the

fragments of the thoroughly shattered shutter!

But it is intended that all the personal experiences herein related shall be strung upon the scarlet thread of murder. The case, then, of the

JACKSON SLAUGHTER

may illustrate this matter of the close and amazing misses as well as the very palpable hits of life.

One morning the writer awoke with a very clear sense of its being his immediate duty to visit, in a pastoral way, the house of Mrs. Jackson. Not that there was not a Mr. Jackson, the husband, but that, by a singular usage in that section, you always spoke of going to the house of *Mrs. Smith* or *Mrs. Jones*, instead of that of *Mr. Smith* or *Mr. Jones*; because, it was explained, the law of the State exempted the homestead from legal seizure for debt, regarding it as the peculiar property of the wife, never to be alienated without her entire consent. Besides, Mrs. Jackson was a member of the church and an excellent woman; while, I fear, Mr. Jackson was very much the reverse, very profane, never at church, a man of stormy character at home and abroad.

The home of Mrs. Jackson being distant about two miles in the country, I was rather annoyed, after having got some hundreds of yards upon my way thither, by being recalled; one of the children hurried after me for the purpose, to attend to some forgotten but indispensable matter about the house. After exactly twenty minutes, by my watch, of detention, I started once again; that twenty minutes being my preservation, as by the hand of the little one who recalled me, from, in all probability, a terrible death! For, just as I arrived at the Jackson house, the negro cook, after laying the dead body of Mrs. Jackson upon one bed, and that of Laura Jackson, also dead, upon another, had succeeded in lifting Mr. Jackson, bleeding to death, upon the floor of the hall which divided the two rooms of the log-house.

It is all a story easily told. A runaway negro had come in a starving condition to the house the night before. Mr. Jackson had managed, it is not known how, to secure "the boy" in an outhouse, intending to get word to his master next day and thus secure the reward. The runaway had succeeded, soon after breakfast, in obtaining — that, also, was never explained — a large knife; had cut his cords, forced the window of his prison, and was in the act of leaping the front fence, when Mr. Jackson sprang upon him. But the negro was a Hercules in size, and then, his terrible knife! Mrs. Jackson, and afterward Laura, a girl of sixteen, rush to his assistance! About twenty minutes from first to last, and the negro leaps the fence and disappears in the Postoak woods, leaving the dying and the dead behind! Just twenty minutes, as the dying man himself told me! As it was, a negro passing by and seeing me leaning upon the floor of the hall beside the dying man, gallops to my house, calls my household to the fence, and with the unspeakable eagerness of every soul of us to impart news of any kind, informs them that I have been murdered! Yes, somewhat, to some degree, we *do* know in reference to matters taking place, however far away from us; provided they be matters of a decided nature and connected with those in whom we are most interested. Not for a moment, at least, did a member of the household believe the tale; it met with a total unbelief instead, which drove the messenger off in something of disgust in search of listeners more sympathetic.

Not always, however, do we find this singular knowledge in regard to the absent. Was it not but a few weeks since that Mrs. Smith was telling me about the manner in which she had received the tidings of the death of her husband, who had dropped dead of heart disease while away from her? Not the slightest suspicion of the fact, even when friends tried to break the terrible news to her.

"And when, at last, they said, 'Mrs.

Smith, your husband is dead!'" the lady told me, "I had no sense of personal pain at all! My one thought and feeling was of pity for myself, as if I was but a friend of the widow. I only said, 'Poor, poor Mrs. Smith, you and your fatherless children, what will you, will you do!' Days upon days before I could realize that my husband, who had left me but a few hours before in perfect health, was indeed and actually dead! I almost fear the shock has injured my reason," the poor lady added; "but I find it impossible to realize it *now*. I know it, but have a singular deadness of feeling in regard to it!"

Even as Dr. Livingstone tells us he had only a singularly dreamy sense, pleasurable even, when lying in the paws of an African lion, the very violence of the shock deadening all pain! Or just as a person, who had accidentally shot a companion while hunting, told me, "The report of my gun sounded to me as if it were miles off; even while my friend lay bleeding beside me, it seemed as if he and the whole accident were in another country!" So mercifully is the edge of sorrow blunted in proportion to its very violence! All of which is a digression, excusable only upon the principle that what one writes most naturally will be read most easily.

And to return to that house spotted throughout with blood. Mrs. Jackson and her daughter had been killed with the knife on the spot. But Mr. Jackson lying there in the hall, his head propped up against the log wall, his life steadily flowing away, the soul passing rapidly from earth! So far as human eye can discern, no readiness whatever for that other life, so like yet so exceedingly unlike this! Suppose upon *you*, there beside that bleeding man, devolved the effecting in him all the essential change. For nature is so wretchedly unritualistic as to allow quite a number of most important matters to take place wholly outside any church, never a bell tolled, a candle lighted, an organ touched, a surpliced clergyman ready thereat!

With that man's eyes fastened on yours, hungry for life and for eternal life; during that tremendous ten minutes only God and you left to him, and God himself only through you, — what are you to say to him? How would a few of the most striking apothegms from the profoundest of the moral philosophers of the day do for the nonce? If you only had the latest volume of the most popular sermons in hand, while he dies so fast, suppose you try to satisfy those thirsting ears with the most brilliant passages therefrom! Quite a sensation they made in the congregation when delivered; not a man there but soon to die also, liable, too, to die any moment. Though you had climbed the sciences quite past the God of vulgar belief, just there and then, and by an instinct as irrepressible in you as the wail of a babe for its mother, you would have called upon that God, though to you only some twenty centuries less obsolete than Jupiter, for help! Yes, and though you rank Jesus but as a later Socrates, not only would his simplest words, in preference to all others ever spoken on earth, have forced themselves through your lips there, but your cry to God would have been a cry to Christ! Nor would it have hurt you to have been thus driven, as in the very rescue of the drowning, through all the roaring and ever-changing froth of things, to the primal facts! Amazing how the whole world revolves, in moments as supreme as these, and exclusively upon its two poles, — sin, Saviour!

Let this be added. Betrayed under a haystack by the negro cook, the cause and dire effect, too, of his visit to the Jacksons, the murderer is right swiftly taken and hung. Whether by Judge Lynch, just then upon the Supreme Bench there, or by his half-brother, Judge Law, cannot now be remembered. What does it so much matter at last? The entire case and all the parties involved have gone up, as do all cases and parties by the universal appeal, to the last as He is the highest Judge of all!

As no house is a complete house without a child or two therein, so not even a paper for a magazine, notwithstanding it be upon a topic as red as this, can be considered true to nature without

A CHILD OR SO.

As I passed on my way home from the scene of blood, the path lay over a certain spot which brought kindred memories to mind. The fact is, after living long in one neighborhood, it becomes to you like a book of memories; scarce a part thereof but is as a page recalling to you, whenever you pass it, some definite event, pleasurable or the reverse. The spot now alluded to was in sight from my back yard. One morning I ran from the latter to the former, called thither by the crack of a revolver, followed by such a scream as one hardly hears twice during life. When I arrived there was nothing there but a negro girl of twelve lying upon the ground, and a girl of the same color and age screaming beside her. A brief examination shows that the one upon the earth is dead; but the perplexity is, where did the bullet strike? Guided by the blood oozing from the lips, the mouth when opened shows that the ball struck the palate, passing out through the spine, causing instant death. While "making a mouth" at a certain white boy on the other side of a fence near by, the bullet from his revolver, with singular accuracy of aim, had entered the opened lips. It was said to have been "an accident." The boy was sent abroad to school, and further this deponent knoweth nothing! Doubtless the pain endured by the parents of the child, who came screaming over fence and field to the spot a moment after my arrival, was less than that endured by the parents of the boy, possibly by the boy himself as long as he lives.

Since the plural is used in the heading of these lines, let but one other case be mentioned, — Albert Johnson. If, while a boy is bathing, another boy hides his clothes, it is not considered wonderful if the first boy, after finding

them, seizes an early opportunity to retaliate in some way. But suppose the boy has heard all his life of killing as the frequent retaliation for wrong, as Albert certainly had. And suppose, as was the case with Albert, your little son has owned and used a revolver from his earliest years. Possibly even your darling boy might have done as Albert Johnson did, take the revolver from the clothes when found, and shoot his aggressor dead as he comes up the bank, dripping and laughing from his swim! Amid the natural horror inspired by an event so almost unprecedented was mingled the perplexity of the question, What in the world is to be done with a murderer not ten years of age? A problem which ultimately solves itself by the doing with him, in the upshot, nothing whatever!

A PROPHECY

must be inserted here, though it be driven in like a wedge, to make this article as complete and truthful and therefore strong as possible!

There is another form of murder from any mentioned here, no drop of blood about it, entirely deliberate, prompted by a passion colder and stronger than anger, possibly more disastrous in the result, and disastrous to a larger number than merely to the slayer and to the slain. No man denies that the politicians have halted this government upon the highway as with pistol and bludgeon, and, with the gauziest of crape over their faces, are rifling it of its property! And men are despairing of a rescuer. Here, then, let this prophecy be made. There is a certain section of this Republic in which passion has prompted to many a deed of blood; yet, in that section, the passion for plunder is *not* the characteristic. Rather a scorn for gold gained by corruption! If this Republic is to be rescued from the hands of its public plunderers, may it not be by the arrival, just in the emergency, of men in places of power with, at least, other forms of passion than that of greed? If the North rescued

the South from one evil which was destroying it and the nation, in the unceasing and eternal compensation and balance of things may it not be possible that the South may one day rescue the North and the nation from that evil which now has its harpy clutch upon its vitals? Laugh at "chivalry," if you please; in corruption there is nothing to laugh at at all! Rather Don Quixote himself, than Sancho Panza with his clutch and his entire soul in the pots and pans of Camacho the rich! But is it not by the unity of the two, mutually correcting each the other, that the perfect result is reached?

As illustrative in the winding up thereof of a certain force adequate to the compelling of this same in the case of the Republic, allow me right here to introduce to your better acquaintance my former foe and friend,

TIGE CLARKE.

And long, lean, gaunt, ever on the move, terrible exceedingly is the particular Mr. Clarke, who wears, as a deserved compliment, this quite other than Christian name given him by some admiring jackal. Nothing in nature more like him than a hungry tiger, pacing forever up and down behind the bars of his cage, with now and then a tremendous bound against said bars, always more than ready for mischief. Juvenal paints just such in Rome as wholly unable to sleep at night, unless after doing somebody a deadly mischief. Many a man had Tige Clarke killed before I knew him. His first victim may possibly have been slain in self-defence; as may possibly have been the case with the tiger's. Certainly ever after there was a craving for blood with Tige Clarke, and a craving after blood shed in new ways. At least, there was singular variety in his "difficulties"; a dead man being the invariable result, but always killed in a way unlike that of his predecessor. Somehow, such men, like the salamander, make the fire in which they live a sustenance also, for no man ever saw axe or hoe in Tige Clarke's hand; as

natural as a hammer to the hand of a carpenter, a book to the grasp of a student, was bowie-knife and revolver to the horny palms of Tige; these and cards being, literally, the tools of his trade.

But one day Tige finds himself in the gutter of a certain town, riddled with balls and slashed with a knife, the result of an effort upon the part of a sturdy citizen to arrest him for a murder, summoned to do so by the sheriff, who had occupied during the attempt a singularly unofficial position out of harm's reach.

Imagine a message from such a man, requesting you to come immediately, reaching you as you sit at breakfast, ignorant of the whole transaction. You know on the spot that the wounded man makes no such request at all. At a glance you know it is the miserable wife instead. Like many a Beast, Tige, too, has a Beauty to wife. Not a Beauty in the bodily sense at all; such a life as Tige has led her would have turned a Venus into the poor, pale-faced, haggard creature Mrs. Clarke is,—her beauty lying in the loveliness, superior to all else, of sincerest piety. Weeping and praying beside her dying husband, dragged out of the gutter into a barber's shop near by, she imagines Tige really wants to see a Christian minister, when the desire is exclusively her own.

That minister does not tell her so, but his first visit is to the wounded man who succeeded, since that was the only way to do so, in making the arrest. Thanking him heartily for his fearless vindication of law, after rendering him all help he can, the minister hastens to Tige. The usual crowd of eager lookers-on are coming and going; while the dying man lies on a mattress upon the floor, writhing in the agony of wounds getting cold.

"O, talk to him, pray with him!" the wife exclaims to the minister as he presses his way through and stands by her side. "He is not fit to die so! But he was in the right in *this* difficulty! They have murdered him,—murdered him for nothing at all!"

Not the smallest opening for surplice, sermon, or any of the formal proprieties just here.

"Why, Tige Clarke! Sorry to see you so hurt! In much pain?" the minister says, sinking the official as much as possible in the mere friend.

"Pain?" Tige replies in the same tones. "You bet! I am in hell!" For the man writhes in torture.

After preparing the way by further attempt at inducing Tige to forget the mere clergyman in the friend, his visitor adds, "You can live but a few moments longer, Tige. You are about entering quite another world, in which you are to stay forever. Any objections to my asking you a question or two, and praying with you? God, you know, is the only one can help you now!"

"O yes, perfectly willing!—Tom, old fel, how do *you* feel about it all?" This to a well-known desperado standing with arms folded upon his breast near by, whose face Tige catches on the instant as he writhes upon his mattress.

"Me? *Me*, Tige? Mighty bad, feel *mighty* bad!" says Tom, with a sorrowful shake of his head. Judge Lynch has hung Tom since; devoted friends in life, in death they were not far divided. Just this word here about Tom. A noble-hearted man had taken him, a boy then of sixteen, into his trade and to his table, trying to rescue him from a drunken father who was half his time in jail.

"Tom," this friend said to him one morning at breakfast, "did you know the jail was burned down last night?"

"An' the old man in it?" said Tom, with brightening eyes; "no, I had n't!" as at glad news. "I do *hope* he was burnt up in it!" with all sincerity.

"Only a question or two," the minister says to Tige Clarke, as he writhes toward him. "Do you believe in the Bible, in religion?"

"Certainly I do, every word of it! Why, of *course* I do. Think I'm a heathen?"

"Well, then, Tige, you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner against God?" in kindest tones.

"Acknowledge *what?*" Tige, ceasing his writhing, looks at the questioner steadily.

"Acknowledge yourself to be a sinner, a sinner, Tige, against a holy God!" question pressed in manner as little offensive as possible.

"No, SIR!" Tige replies with all the emphasis left in him. "A sinner!" with utmost indignation. "No, SIR!" very angry. "I *may* have done some things a little out of the way, — driven to it," the dying man adds with an air of magnanimity and gentlemanly candor; "but a *sinner?* a sinner against *God?*" anger rapidly rising again. The hand of the questioner holds that of the deeply offended man, finger upon pulse. The body rolls and turns, doubles up and in and out like the incessant writhing, coiling, uncoiling of a wounded snake. But the gray haze creeping over the eyes is dispelled by the flashing up of the soul again therein. "*Acknowledge!*" in accents of sarcasm. . . . "A *sinner* against God!" the tones as of one re-stating an assertion as preposterous as it was insulting! A moment more to collect sufficient vehemence therefor. "No, SIR!" with a violence which hurls the man out of his body! In the eyes the fire is utterly gone, — only haze there. From the writhing body all motion is instantly passed, no stone stiller than that. For fire and unceasing motion were of the man himself. With that bound of the pulse, Tige Clarke had gone, taking with him all he is, leaving nothing at all behind him but that riddled body, really no more an essential part of him than the jeans clothing he wore, also riddled with balls and cuts. At ten o'clock this man was alive here and was Tige Clarke! I looked at my watch in the instant of that last wave of life's red ebb and flow which receded, leaving him ashore elsewhere. Half a minute after ten. If, body excepted, he did not stand upon that shore the same Tige Clarke he

was the half-minute before, please explain how a thing so exclusively physical as death effects also a moral change. Or, if it is more than the mere separation of Tige Clarke from his body, please prove it. Who denies the sensation this long, lank, notorious desperado would have made had he suddenly walked down the aisle of any church, revolver and bowie-knife begirdled, say upon a bright and quiet Sabbath morning in the midst of the service. Now, imagine, if you dare, the sudden leap of this wild animal out of this world into the very centre of white angels and serene saints in full heaven of service and song. True; his knives and revolvers are left behind. But every passion which prompted to the use of them. The effect of such entrance upon such company, upon himself? The eternal absurdity of the same reaches the insanity of laughter!

And this as a matter of scientific inquiry. To what degree do men in general share Tige Clarke's ignorance upon *that* point of his personal standing elsewhere? But this further: a Divine power specially given could alone have enlightened Tige Clarke herein. To what degree can your ignorance and mine in the same direction dispense with that same peculiar power?

Surely it is not often given to anybody to ride at the head of such a procession as bore Tige Clarke's body to the grave next day. Emerged like vermin from who knows what lurking-places; bound by who knows what fraternity to Tige and to one another, with jingling spurs they rode along, upon sorry scrubs of horses, twenty strong, jeans-clad, full-bearded, slouch-hatted, revolver- and -bowie-knife-girdled desperadoes, every man of them. Through the community flowed the funeral, like the Mississippi through the purer waves of the Gulf; for the good people of that region bear the same proportion to such a crew as these, as does the Gulf deep and broad to the muddy Mississippi flowing through it; the mass of those looking upon us as we rode being as thor-

oughly superior to and separate from Tige Clarke and his clan as any who read these lines.

As we stood around the open grave there came to the mind of the minister a sermon he had before preached to a like congregation in an extremest West. It was an effort to demonstrate to every man there that he was the direct reverse of a child of God, unless he repented and reformed. There was a horse-thief sitting among the congregation that day, the sheriff having brought him to church, the jail being too insecure for him to trust his charge out of his sight. With every clank of the criminal's chains, the speaker himself winced lest he should have hurt the feelings of the prisoner by the exceeding pungency of his train of thought. That it was presented with all due caution and tenderness may be hoped, however, from the fact that, the next day, one of the worst of all present sought out the speaker to say, "Look here, passon, you said yesterday we was children of the Devil—"

"Yes, my dear sir, but—" attempts the clergyman, in persuasive accents.

"An' you told the square fact! About *me* at least. Now, look here," continued the man, with gravest meaning, "if I don't quit from this day bein' a son of Satan, may I be—" a tremendous oath. "Because, you know an' I know I will be just *that*, if I don't quit off!"

One can be a vast deal more at rest in reference to the recording angel in this case than in that of Uncle Toby. His whole, after life, as well as the tears that sprang to his eyes as he spoke, proved the omnipotence in his case, as of myriads, of the very peculiar Power!

Therefore, as respectfully and lovingly as a man naturally speaks when addressing demons who may change to angels, the minister told, at the open grave, exactly what he thought concerning those present if they did not change. This wind, however, bloweth where it listeth; that very night these same mourners break into a certain treasury with sledge-hammers and cold chisels, each man filling his wool hat

with gold, scattering the same over the ground as he runs. One was shot as he ran. Something of Roman grandeur in the man, dying for days with sealed lips as to his associates. He had stood too near me at the grave for me not to know who all the rest were. Ah, if we could but enlist the heroes of darkness, *all* of the Sauls of Tarsus, into the ranks of light!

THE HON. ALEXANDER ANDERSON deserves your attention, in this connection, for something more than the having been a brilliant lawyer and former member of Congress. When he had his famous difficulty with Jefferson English, he was member and pillar too of a certain church. Yet when his pastor eagerly sought an interview with him, the day before the "affair," what could that pastor say, at last? Jefferson English had already had his terrible card printed, denouncing the Hon. Alexander Anderson, the "HON." being in the largest type the market afforded, as scoundrel, coward, liar. In vague hopes of arresting the inevitable, a friend of both sides, one of the truest gentlemen in the world, had caused a copy, yet damp from the press, to reach the hands of said pastor. There was a shade even of the ludicrous in the sudden and utter halt to which that pastor was reduced after he had been closeted with the Hon. Alexander for an hour; after he had showed him the card, which would be posted next morning upon every wall in town; after he had exhausted all the abundant arguments which Christianity supplies for the successful use, it is generally held, at least of a clergyman in the case of parishioner who is also a pillar, in such a case as this. Exhaustion upon both sides; blank silence upon both sides, from want of anything which can possibly be said under such circumstances. The pastor is as anxious as a man can be to save his personal associate and friend from almost certain death in the affray which dawns with and as certainly as the next morning; especially as the church, in any case, will receive

such shock from the same. And the Hon. Alexander is, on these, on all accounts, fully as anxious, although there is no man braver than he, to avoid a difficulty. But what can possibly be done? In the gathering night, there in the parlor of the Hon. Alexander, they sit in painful silence, endeavoring to solve the irresolvable.

Very easy for you to suggest that the pastor should quietly inform the authorities, or should induce mutual friends to arrange the matter. Had he only thought of that before coming! But, then, the card had been shown him only after a solemn pledge that no one but the Hon. Alexander should know of it; the vague hope being that *he*, being a pillar, would "fix it up" in some way other than by battle. Besides, now that the pastor is in the house of his friend, that friend has distinctly informed him that he cannot leave the house unless under pledge, having been there, not to make any effort to arrest the result; people would say the Hon. Alexander had, in a cowardly manner, suggested the same!

"But consider the disastrous influence your killing English will have upon our church!" the clerical friend suggests yet again, after a long pause.

"You know perfectly well, sir, my *not* fighting him would have a worse influence upon St. Samuel's! Why, sir," the lawyer continues, in tones of cool statement of undeniable fact, "not only would it almost kill St. Samuel's, in that case, to have me as an officer, but there is hardly a woman, even among the communicants, would take, say, the bread or the wine from my hand, after my refusing to kill English, under the circumstances!"

The clergyman yet again, with tears, with vastly more eloquence than ever in the pulpit, urges at length the Sermon on the Mount, the Death on another Mount, the One himself, as acknowledged to be the Master! Had he been speaking of Balder or Epictetus, it would have had as much and as little weight under the circumstances. You observe, "What is the *use*?" It

is replied, "Pardon me, but you know I have my will to write, and it must be near midnight. If there was any *practical* suggestion—" For the Hon. Alexander has risen to his feet.

"But to think of leaving your wife a widow!" the impracticable friend will venture to suggest for the third time.

"As I told you before, I could never look in my wife's face if I did *not* fight. She loves me as much as a woman can; yet, you know as well as I do, she would go back to her father, the General, the day I backed out, and neither the General nor herself would speak to me again as long as I lived!"

"Do you think, sir," says the clergyman, with affected sharpness, "the people will vote you again to Congress, a man whose hand is red with the blood—"

"I run next time for judge of the Supreme Court, and you know as well as I, not one vote will I get if I incur even the suspicion of backing down in this matter!" the Hon. Alexander replies in judicial tones. "True, a regular duel would disqualify for office, so we'll make it a chance *rencontre* instead!" he adds in business accents.

"But your children, my dear friend!" his persistent companion begins, "darling little Lutie, bright little Charlie! and, pardon me, I'm afraid you will not have much to bequeath them in that will."

"Beggars all, Sir John," the other quotes. "Yet what *is* the use? You know so well," he continues, wearied of his reasoning as with a child, "that, if I showed the white feather to-morrow, I could not make a dollar for them in my profession! Besides, as they grew up, Lutie and Charlie would despise me more and more." Yes, both acknowledge the same. Napoleon, and Hannibal before him, managed to get over the Alps: obstacle here which leaves no alternative!

When the minister hears the rapid revolver shots the next morning, where he sits in a convenient room in waiting for the same, there is positive relief after painful suspense. Possibly to

Mrs. Anderson also ; for, with heartiest approval of her husband's course, — as what other possible alternative is there ? — she, too, waits near by, Lutie and Charlie with her, in case a last farewell with their father is necessary.

“Had English killed Alec,” she tells her pastor next day, stroking the head of Charlie, standing at her knee, “I would have begun to-day putting Charlie in practice with his father's revolver. I would have laid everything else by to train him till he could be certain of killing English at the first shot !” And she says it with no violence, though she is a lovely brunette, but with the repose of a blonde. No member of the church could be more devoted and energetic than beautiful Mrs. Anderson. And you might almost as well blame the poor chameleon with being red when all the woods are scarlet in autumn, as blame the Hon. Alec and herself, under the circumstances ! And we will say it is all changed now, these events taking place — will a thousand years ago do ?

Only, the remark was made in the privacy of the vestry and is wholly irrelevant !

Returning to our “difficulty,” strange to say the parties had accidentally passed each other in the early morning. The “card” had not as yet been posted, however, and nothing could have been more *suave* than the demeanor of the gentlemen to each other, both perfectly aware of the approaching event. “Gentlemen !” Yes, to save your life, you cannot give the name to the polished plunderers in public life to-day any more than you can refrain from giving “that grand old name” to these, however great their defects. There is a fragrance, old-fashioned as its perfume to daisy and buttercup, which will cling to men with these ideas of honor and courage, in distinction from Cassius with his ticklish palm, so long as buttercup and daisy bloom upon the earth !

Why sing at length an Iliad which lasted scarce ten minutes ? After the

“card” had been duly posted, by an instinct so unanimous as to be of the nature of harmony, the poster and the posted meet in the most public part of the public street, and, keeping marvellous time, open fire upon each other ! Five shots to a revolver, two revolvers each, twenty shots ! A good many beside Mrs. Anderson and the pastor kept account with painful accuracy, the simultaneousness of the reports requiring a nice ear for the same.

All the town had converged to the arena in a thrill of excitement. The very negroes, too ; for here, all on a sudden, was Fourth of July, circus, Christmas, all at once and not a cent to pay ! True, as the assailants perpetually changed their position in reference to each other as they fired, the balls whizzed never twice in the same direction among the encircling crowd, keeping up a perpetual expectation and movement among the same, which gave to the lookers-on all the zest of being themselves, also, actually engaged.

The twentieth shot ! Highly unclerical for a minister to be on the scene during the battle ; exceedingly proper for him to be there immediately after. To qualify the dying, you observe, for death. But when the clergyman hurried to the spot on the signal of silence, he found, not so strange to say to one familiar with the statistics of duels, neither man killed ! That would have mitigated the disgust of the crowd. At least, one of them wounded ? Not even that.

Apart from intimate friends, the crowd had with the last shot as instantly resolved itself into its three constituents as ever water does under the battery of the chemist.

CLASS A. “It is perfectly outrageous that men should assault each other thus in the public street, endangering our lives ! The only regret is that they did not kill each other !” Yet Class A had taken its gold-headed cane and walked eagerly down to see, enjoyed it as much as any, would not have missed it for the world !

CLASS B. "I do solemnly declare," leaning against the nearest support in convulsions of laughter, "it was the funniest thing I ever saw in my life. I laughed here while it was going on till I cried. The way they twisted and dodged and stooped and jumped while they fired! Talk of the circus! And the way they let fly at each other with their empty revolvers! I'm sorry, of course, that nobody was killed, but it certainly *was* the funniest thing!" Laughter at the very idea for weeks after.

CLASS C. Profoundly indignant. Personally mortified. Seriously hurt. "Sir, that those two men should have had all the time for preparation they had, and neither killed, or even grazed at last! So near each other, too. Two revolvers,—*two* each!" Deep contempt. "Why not four apiece? Better still, double-barrel shot-gun full of buck-shot. It's a shame! If it was me I'd never show my face again in *this* community!" And these never recur to the painful failure to draw blood without deep indignation!

Before night another "card" was pasted over the first, everywhere announcing that, friends interposing, the Hon. Alexander and General Jefferson did hereby mutually withdraw everything said about the other. Amazing power in a "card" either way. Yet, somehow, we cannot merely laugh at such men. This, at least, can be repeated. Men of the sort of these may be in Congress, upon leading committees therein, before very long; as sure as you approach them, however adroitly, with a bribe of money or land, so surely will you feel their hasty right hand full in your face! Certainly, dead opposition to you henceforth in that "little matter of mine now pending in Washington."

If you are justly dissatisfied with a reminiscence of so pale a red as this last, indulge the artist if he drops the unskilful pen, grasps, as it were, the pencil instead, and tries to sketch in outline

JUDGE LYNCH IN LAWN.

Possessing the fine imagination you do, dear reader, conceive yourself upon a brilliant Sunday morning in the spring, in the centre of the vast Cypress Swamp, west of the Mississippi River. You are one of a large camp of emigrants from east of the father of waters, on your way with the twenty-two households composing the camp to a new home upon the banks of the White River. Be deliberate in acceding to this imagination, since, if you do, it makes you a member of a church, for the camp is not only a neighborhood afloat, a future town upon White River in the air, it is also a regularly organized church, pastor, officers, members, and all. In that large red wagon with the close covering, off to the right, is a particularly large and new trunk containing the pulpit-cushion, the communion-service and font, the huge gilt Bible, the church records, and all the lesser volumes for the psalmody and the Sabbath school of the building for worship, which, by the by, will be the very first structure erected when this church itinerant shall have reached its selected resting-place.

Look around you! If the woods are nature's churches, these gigantic live-oaks and cypresses which environ the closely clustered tents and wagons of the camp, with their limbs interlocking overhead, draped in great banners of hanging moss of the peculiar gray of an old man's beard, make up to-day a cathedral. Nor is the dim religious light wanting, so dense is the hanging moss and the foliage above and around.

Nor is actual worship lacking. The men and women in their Sunday demeanor and clothing are seated in a semicircle, of which a rude pulpit is the centre, upon the hide-bottomed chairs, brought along largely for this very purpose. A baby being carefully hushed upon its mother's bosom there, an aged woman here, a white-headed patriarch supporting his chin as he sits upon the horn-handled top of his cane,

his right hand hollowed behind his ear, that he may lose none of the sermon, — these, with others of every age, make up the congregation; one more solemn and deeply serious meets nowhere else in the world this Sunday morning.

Breathless solemnity, even, for the venerable pastor is just closing a sermon upon the divine command from creation to slay the murderer; and, immediately before him, beside some long object supported by a horse-trough under each end, and covered with a quilt of white Marseilles, sits the murderer, already condemned to die, and to be hung as soon as the benediction is pronounced! The facts being simply these: John Armstrong, a sandy-haired, huge-limbed, resolute Scotch-Irishman, pillar of this church, and born leader among men, was the getter up of this move of the church from its worn-out lands in North Carolina to the new and fertile location selected by himself, after years of careful examination out West, sent out by the church for the purpose. As the leader of the party he always rides a few hours in advance of the camp, along the military road upon which they are journeying through the swamp, to select a camping spot for each night. Now, only last Monday, they stayed in Memphis a day or so, making the last purchases before leaving all civilization behind and plunging into a world almost as new as if created the year before. At that date Memphis swarmed with desperadoes, flying from the older States, unwilling to go on to Texas if they could possibly avoid it. One of these, Beauty Harmon by name, chances in Memphis upon John Armstrong while making his purchases, for Armstrong is treasurer of the colony as well as everything else; sees him in possession of large sums; follows him upon his lonely ride in advance; shoots him from behind upon this very spot; rides on with his plunder only to be ridden down and captured by the young men of the colony, for escape is impossible in such a swamp, no turning off to the right or the left from the embank-

ment for the military road through the same, and the horses of the pursuers were freshest and swiftest. And so, there the murderer sits! But far from silent.

Now it is impossible for the camp to halt while the criminal is guarded back to civilization. A long trial tarried for, almost certain escape from the log jail there while awaiting trial! Besides, the colony are wholly satisfied that no jury can be found just now in Memphis which will not be a "hung jury," whatever the evidence, even if it does not acquit the murderer, leaving him free to wreak after-vengeance upon them; associated, as they have every reason to believe he is, with the "Murrell Gang," then the terror of that region. No! The matter has been thoroughly discussed all the Saturday night by the men of the colony, the pastor presiding, and with frequent prayer for Divine guidance. Are they not a town? The having not yet reached, and actually turned their tents into log-cabins upon their town site, — what difference does that make? And who doubts or denies the guilt of the murderer? Money, watch, memorandum - book, well-worn pocket Testament even, of the murdered man found upon him! And Beauty Harmon never denies the crime at all; only curses and strikes and spits at them till he is exhausted, boasting all the time of what "the boys" will do to them for his death, bewailing only the fact that he separated himself from "the boys," and "took to rough gambling" by himself!

Very easily could the criminal have had his case at least postponed, for he is not twenty years old; "the most perfectly handsome human being I ever saw," one of the men afterwards told the writer. He had but to acknowledge all, beg and pray, and promise for the future, and over the very body of his victim, possibly, — by the women first, the men afterward, — he would have been held, at least, under advisement. But he has driven the women into silence from the first by his obscene curses upon them; simply a beautiful

wild animal, a sleek and spotted panther, utterly untamable, too wicked and dangerous to let loose !

And so the sermon is ended, not without doxology and benediction. The weeping pastor attempts a beseeching exhortation to the condemned, till cursed by him into despairing silence. The women uncover the face of the dead for a last look, but are hastened from it by the brutal language of the murderer. Then the men, the pastor following in the rear, bear the murdered and the murderer to the live-oak beneath which the body was found, and where a wide grave has been already dug, a stout halter from one of the horses already secured to the limb overhead. It is wholly useless, the attempted prayer of the pastor, for Beauty Harmon gives way to a fiercer frenzy of cursing, possibly to keep his courage up to the last, — cursing which ceases only when a sudden blow upon the horse on which he is seated with the rope about his neck, leaves him struggling in the Sunday light, in a few minutes to hang revolving to right and left, — dead ! And so the two are laid side by side in the same grave. The women, too, cluster about the dead now and lend their tears and their voices to the funeral Psalm. Another prayer in which both of the dead are left in the hand of God, with humble entreaty for forgiveness if any sin has been committed in the matter. The doxology and benediction yet again, and the service is ended !

It was years after, that one of the officers of the church, now an old man, told the writer the whole story with no shade of regret as to the course they had pursued !

“And, you see, we wrote to Beauty Harmon’s people as soon ’s we could learn where they lived, told them the whole story just how it happened,” the old pioneer said to me in continuation.

“And what did they write ?” I asked.

“They never wrote. The old man, the boy’s father, *he* came out here. You see, we had kept the boy’s saddle-bags, an’ did n’t know what to do with the things. Mighty bad boy Beauty always was, desperate bad boy, the old man said !” my aged friend added.

“But what did he say to your hanging his son ?” I ventured to ask. And how the exact words of my informant’s reply linger to this hour in my ear !

“O, the old man, he grumbled about that mightily ! It was such a cold-blooded murder, and John Armstrong he was such a good man, real valuable man, I had no more feeling in hanging that young wild-cat, — what a Beauty he was, eyes and claws and satin skin !” my friend added after a long silence. “But when we came to examine his saddle-bags closely after he was buried, we found one little bundle. The women they had a cry over it. I could n’t help feeling some myself !”

“But what was it ?”

“O, nothing in the world ! In that saddle-bag was loaded dice, decks of marked cards, books full of the dirtiest pictures you ever saw. But that little bundle ! Nothing at all, at last, but a pair of little red baby shoes tied up very carefully in a bit of white paper all to themselves. It is mighty foolish I know,” added my friend, taking out his large, black, greasy pocket-book, selecting a crumpled bit of paper therefrom and putting the same in my hand, “but I’ve kept *that*, tied up in the shoes it was, ever since, a reminder like !”

I carefully unrolled the worn paper, and could hardly make out the faded words. What a foolish old man he was ! Nothing at last written there but the words, “A nise pare of littul shoose bought by Beauty for his deer littul Babby bruther !”

William M. Baker.