Saint Mary's Beacon.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY,

At Leonardtown, Md.,

By T. F. YATES & F. V. KING,

A Dollar a Year in Advance.

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The BAR, in every particular, complete. My stables have been rebuilt and are in first-class condition for accommodation of horses and the storage of all kinds of vehicles. Call and see for yourselves.
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Saint Mary's Beacon.

VOL. XLVII. LEONARDTOWN, MARYLAND, THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 1887. NO 326.

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Saint Mary's Beacon

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Nearing the End.

I'm growing old; the hopes and fears
That waged an ever varying strife,
No more awaken smiles and tears,
Disturbing my serener life.

The ardent love, the jealous throe,
Which burned and raged without surcease,
Have left me; and a gentler glow
Of sweet contentment brings me peace.

Strong passion owns my reason's sway;
Calm pleasure comes where love's bestowed,
And quiet friendship soothes my way
Along life's peaceful autumn road.

No unknown future threatens ill;
No fierce ambition drives me on;
I gaze from life's sublimest hill
On dangers past and victories won.

What though my natural powers decay—
My lessing time makes less demand;
The labor done at close of day,
The farmer, resting, views his land,

And sees the harvest waving fair,
The ridgy rows with plenty filled,
Sees fruitful fields erst barrens bare—
The barrens bare his hands have tilled.

So looks life's landscape to my eyes;
My earthly work is nearly done,
A calm comes to me from the skies,
As slowly sinks life's setting sun.

—Jesse H. Lord.

An Escort Adventure.

From Chambers' Journal.

"Sergeant, you have been detailed to proceed on escort with the prisoner Scales. I would advise you to keep a sharp eye upon him. He is a desperate character, and if he gets half a chance, will endeavor to give you the slip," remarked our adjutant to me.

"Very good sir," I replied.

"Here is your paper," said the officer, as he handed me the warrant which bound me, under severe penalties for non-fulfillment of its provisions, to take Private Jeremiah Scales "dead or alive" to the district military prison.

I saluted the adjutant and was turning to leave, when the colonel entered the orderly room.

"Good morning, colonel," said the adjutant. "This sergeant is going on Scales' escort, and I was just warning him to take great care of the rascal."

"Confound the fellow!" grumbled the colonel. "After all, it seems the scoundrel is coming back to me. The court martial that tried him—very properly, considering antecedents—sentenced him to be discharged on the expiracy of his term of imprisonment, and now the general, presumably acting on superior instructions, remits the only part of the punishment that is likely to benefit the service. During my twenty years' experience I have always found it the same in the army. Last spring for instance during the wholesale reduction that took place we had, perforce, to send away a number of good men infinitely better than this blackguard. Now the Franco-Prussian business comes on the boards, and the authorities at the Horse guards are moving creation to obtain recruits in order to get the regiments up to full strength. Every broken down scarecrow in the kingdom is being enlisted, at least if I may judge from the precious specimens sent up to me. Besides, the recommendations of court martial with regard to the discharge with ignominy of the scum of the army are not being given effect to, and the rascals are allowed to remain in the service. Yes, sergeant," resumed the commanding officer, adressing me, "you've got a cut-throat, incorrigible blackguard to deal with, and if you don't look out he'll give you some trouble."

I then saluted the officers and, leaving the orderly room, retired to my quarters to make a few preparations for my journey, which was a tramp of about eight miles along the seacoast. These finished I proceeded to the room of the private who was detailed to accompany me, in order to have a consultation with him on the subject. This man, a Welshman, named Williams, was a veteran whose period of service had almost expired. He was, speaking literally, the "hero of a hundred fights," his experience of active service beginning while a boy in the second Sikh war.

I narrated to Williams the remarks of the colonel and the adjutant regarding our prisoner, but the veteran effected to treat the matter very lightly. "I have had tougher jobs than this in my time sergeant," he said, and then added, significantly, pointing to his Snider: "Just let him try to bolt, and my word, he won't get very far!"

The prisoner, Scales, was a repulsive looking fellow of about 25. He was more a lithe and active than a powerful man, but was, nevertheless, by reason of his brutal disposition, the terror of all peaceably disposed men of the corps. He had served in the army three years, during which period he was always in trouble. On the return of the regiment from abroad, he came to us from the depot with an extremely bad character, and this evil reputation he afterward consistently maintained. At the reduction of the army referred to in the colonel's remarks, the services of Mr. Scales would to a certainty have been dispensed with had he not at the time been a deserter. Being apprehended and brought back to the corps at the beginning of the scare occasioned by the disturbed relations of Prussia and France, he received two months' imprisonment, and was sent to his duty. Three days after his release an officer's room was broken into, and all his valuables abstracted; and in this business it was supposed Scales was implicated, conjointly with a comrade of equally bad repute. This private deserted with the booty, and Scales was apprehended on suspicion and handed over to the civil authorities; but he was liberated, owing to no sufficient evidence being forthcoming to warrant his being sent to trial on the charge. His next feat was striking a non-commissioned officer, and for this offense he was now sentenced to nine months' imprisonment; the further recommendation by the court martial for his dismissal from the service with ignominy being remitted by the general commanding the district.

In the afternoon Williams and I, equipped in marching order, and provided each with ten rounds of ammunition and a day's rations, made our appearance at the regimental guard room. The sergeant of the guard gave me a word of caution, and informed me that Scales had been boasting to the men that he meant to make his escape.

Our man received us with a stolid look, and mechanically held out his wrists for the reception of the handcuffs; and after a word of farewell to the other prisoners, he took his place beside the private, who had his bayonet fixed. I then marched them out of barracks into the principal street of the town. Perceiving a man of my own regiment who was engaged on garrison police duty, I asked him to accompany us to the outskirts, in case the prisoner took a fancy to bolt down one of the numerous tortuous alleys that led to the wharves near the pier. Having reached the limits of his beat, the private returned, and I was congratulating myself on having nearly reached the open country, in which Scales would run a poor chance of escaping from our custody, when we were met by a large drove of oxen.

In spite of the exertions of the drovers, the cattle passed on either side of us, and Scales, handcuffed though he was, watching his opportunity, suddenly sprang aside, and dodging among the animals, gained the footpath and ran townwards with the fleetness of a hare. Disengaging ourselves as quickly as possible from the cattle, we started in pursuit; but as we were encumbered with our rifles and knapsacks, we made but little headway, only managing to keep the fugitive in sight. We shouted to a few rustics to intercept him; but the yokels perceiving that it was only a soldier running away from an escort, greeted him instead with cries of encouragement. Suddenly, to my delight, a policeman appeared ahead, who spread out his arms and tried to catch the runaway; but Scales, dropping his head, butted him like a ram, and knocking over the guardian of the peace turned to the right and disappeared down a lane a little distance ahead. This lane led into a yard which was situated at the back of a row of storehouses, and which was a cul de sac. Reinforced by the policeman, we followed close on the heels of the fugitive, feeling certain that as there were no means of exit we would speedily capture him. Meeting at the entrance to the yard a drayman with his vehicle loaded with barrels we eagerly asked him if he had seen a soldier.

"Yes," the fellow replied with a grin; "I guess you will find him in the furthest cellar."

We hastened in the direction indicated, but found, to our dismay, that the cellar door was securely padlocked, while the rusty condition of the hasp showed that it could not recently have been opened. The high wall that bounded the other side of the yard precluded the idea of the prisoner being able to scale it; so we stood for a moment, out of breath with excitement and our recent chase, perfectly perplexed with Scales' unaccountable disappearance. Williams, at this juncture, began ominously to untie his packet of cartridges, and placed them loose in his ball bag ready for use, in the eventuality of the fugitive, should we come across him, declining to surrender when ordered. Knowing the determined character of my comrade, I knew that Scales' life, if he proved obdurate, would not be worth a pin's fee.

We searched the yard thoroughly, but found no signs of our man. All the cellar doors like the first we examined, were closed. The warehouses referred to were principally used for the storage of grain; but owing to the war in progress, trade was interrupted with the Prussian towns in the Baltic, and little business being transacted, the buildings had in consequence been shut up. At last a light seemed to break upon the policeman, who exclaimed: "I'm blessed, sergeant, if I don't think the cove wasn't stowed in one of the drayman's barrels!"

This idea seemed to explain Scales' mysterious disappearance; so we started in the direction of the main road, and turning towards the town, found the drayman unloading barrels at the door of a public house. The man, with volleys of the choicest Billingsgate, stoutly denied that he had afforded shelter to the fugitive; so, perceiving that it was useless wasting words on him, we again pursued our search, scarcely knowing in what direction to turn.

I was now in a terrible quandary. Trial by court martial and reduction to the ranks together with a possible sentence of imprisonment for allowing the man to escape, stared me in the face, while imprisonment for Williams was a certainty. My chances of advancement in the service would be absolutely ruined, I reflected, if I did not recapture the man, so I resolved, when I had so much at stake, to continue the search, although I looked for him all night. It was no use hunting for Scales in the principal streets of the town, as these were patroled by military police, intent on apprehending soldiers who showed the slightest symptom of having had an extra allowance of liquor; besides being ruthlessly down on delinquents who had a tunic button undone, or the chin strap not adjusted in the regulation position.

While I was mentally shaping out a course of action, my companion stopped and excitedly exclaimed: "I have it now, sergeant! I'll bet 10 to 1 he's gone to old Nathan's!"

"I'm not sure of that," I remarked dubiously; "but at all events we'll go and see."

Nathan was a rascally old Jew, who, though he was rigorously kept out of barracks, carried on with the soldiers a brisk business in the sale of coarse, rank, contraband tobacco. He had "agents" in the different regiments to further this branch of commerce; and one of his accredited representatives in ours was Private Scales. Besides, the old rascal, although it had never been brought home to him, was suspected of purchasing articles of "kit" from ne'er do wells, and supplying ragged plain clothes to deserters in exchange for their uniforms. We lost no time in making our way to the squalid alley in the slums near the harbor where the business establishment of Mr. Nathan was located; and when we reached the Jew's dirty little huckster's shop we found him weighing out a small quantity of condiment resembling taffee to a couple of grimy children. Pausing until the juvenile customers had left the shop, I asked Nathan whether that afternoon he had received a visit from Mr. Scales.

"No, sergeant; no soldier has been here," replied the Jew, who then continued in an undertone: "Can I do business with you in some good tobacco?"

I paid no heed to the old Israelite's statement, and decided to inspect the premises myself, without any scruples as to the legality of that course of action. Placing Williams at the door, with instructions to allow no one to pass in or out, I proceeded, in spite of the expostulations of Nathan and his threats to call the police, to carefully search the little back room behind the shop. No one was there; so I ascended a rickety staircase, and finding the door at the top locked I kicked it open; but the foul-smelling apartment into which the door led was plunged in utter darkness. Returning to the shop, I helped myself, sans ceremonie, to one of a bunch of candles, and lighting it, returned to the upper room, which, on examination, proved to be a storehouse for the rags and bones in which the Jew dealt largely. I opened the shutters of the dirt-encrusted, diamond-paned window, and probed with my gun barrel every heap of rags; but, to my disappointment, the fugitive was not concealed in them. Suddenly I perceived some glittering particles on the floor, which, on stooping to examine, I found to be bright iron filings. I was now filled with a feeling of exultation. Scales had apparently been to the Jew's, and thus relieved of his handcuffs.

I once more examined the room. The window was apparently a fixture, and no one could make his exit without removing the sash. I next surveyed the roof, and perceived a trap door giving access to the attics just large enough to allow a man to enter it. "My man is there right enough!" I exclaimed to myself in great glee. I then shouted through the aperture: "I know you are there, Scales; it will be better for you if you come down at once," There was no response; so I decided to have the region explored. I called to Williams to keep a lookout for a policeman, and almost immediately my comrade shouted to me that he had secured the services of a constable. I thereupon summoned Williams to my assistance, leaving the Jew in charge of the policeman Placing the rickety table under the trap, Williams speedily crawled through and gained the attic. Knowing the desperate character we had to deal with, I considered it expedient that my comrade should be prepared for an encounter; so I unfixed his bayonet and handed it to him, together with the lighted candle. Crawling over the creaking joists in the direction of the gable in which the window was fixed, Williams made a careful examination of the interior, while in the room below I waited with breathless excitement.

"Anybody there?" I cried.

"One moment: I haven't had time to see," Williams replied; and then began to search the opposite end. "Come out of that, you rascal?" he at length indignantly shouted. "I've got him, sergeant; he's stowed in a corner!"

I then heard the fellow hiss out: "I've got a knife, and if you come near me I'll cut your throat, if I have to swing for it!"

Fearful of exposing my comrade to the peril of a hand-to-hand tussel with such a ruffian in the circumscribed area of the attic, I called Williams to the trap door, and placing a cartridge in my Snider, I handed it to him. Then mounting the table, I thrust my head through the trap and held the candle. My blood was now up, and I determined to order the rascal to be shot if he refused to obey my commands.

"Surrender, in the Queen's name," I shouted.

There was no response; but the click of the lock of Williams' rifle as he placed the hammer at full cock must have been distinctly audible to the runaway.

"If you don't come out before I count five, you are a dead man. One—two—three!"

"Stop! For mercy's sake, give me a chance!" now pleaded the wretch in a husky whisper.

"First throw your knife this way, and then come out."

The villain tossed his knife to Williams, who threw it behind him to the other extremity of the attic; then leaving his retreat, he crawled towards us, and I was surprised to see by the dim light of the candle that he was attired in plain clothes. When he got near us, we were astonished beyond measure to find that he was not the man of whom we had been in search, but Scales' companion, the deserter, who had been suspected of rifling the officer's room.

"I own I took the things," confessed the man doggedly, seemingly anxious to make a clean breast of it; "but Scales helped me" and old Nathan put us both on the job—".

"Scales has been here," I interrupted, "You may as well tell me what you know about him; it will be better for you."

"Yes," replied the deserter, when he had dropped through the trap on the floor; "I got off his handcaffs, and here they are," scattering a heap of bones, and displaying the "bracelets," each receptacle for the wrist being filed in two.

"Now," I continued, "if you can give me any information that will enable me to catch Scales, I'll report in your favor at headquarters. Perhaps it will save you something when you are tired. Where is he now?"

"Well, sergeant, Nathan gave him a suit of 'plains' and he went out, I don't know where he has gone. But I don't mind 'rounding' on him, and I'll tell you this, he's to be back here to-night at 12. Nathan will let him in by the little window that looks into the yard."

We then descended the stair with our prisoner, and the man, perceiving the Jew, broke away from us, exclaiming: "You old villain! if it hadn't been for you I wouldn't have got into this!' and before we could prevent him, struck the miserable Israelite a terrible blow.

Two additional policemen having been summoned, the deserter and Nathan were taken away in custody. When they had gone I was rather amused when Williams informed me that, dispite the Jew's extreme trepidation, while I was examining his upper story, his commercial proclivities did not for a moment desert him, as he attempted to open negotiations with the private regarding the purchase of his war medals.

Two detectives now arrived to search the premises; but of course this investigation did not lie within my province. No article of a criminating nature was found, however, except Scale's uniform, which was concealed neath the Jew's filthy mattress. I lost no time in dispatching my companion to an adjacent blacksmith's shop, in order to have the divided parts of the handcuffs welded together; and this operation was completed within an hour.

It was now dark; the Jew's house had been locked up by the police; so my companion and I turned into the back yard, in order to await the expected return of Scales. We first made sure that he was not concealed about the dilapidated outhouses, which consisted of a disused coal cellar and shed. In the latter place we set a couple of boxes, and seating ourselves upon them, with our loaded rifles within reach, patiently awaited the return of the runaway—prepared, if need be, to give him a very warm reception. As the night wore on the sky became clouded, while the oppressive heat was apparently the precursor of a thunder storm. Suddenly we were startled by a loud clap, followed almost immediately by a blinding flash of lightning, which, as we could see from our place of vantage, vividly lighted up the towering chalk cliffs that overhung the town. Then rain began to fall in torrents, and the decayed roof of the shed proving most indifferent shelter we were compelled to put on our great coats. To add to our misery, the floor became a regular pool, occasioned by the overflow of a huge water butt.

After a while the storm ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and being perfectly overpowed with fatigue and the day's excitement, I fell fast asleep, and slumbered until Williams shook me up and informed me that the town clock had struck 12. The monotony of our vigil was now a little relieved by the appearance of the Jew's cat, a large brindle animal, which came purring and rubbing against us. Williams took puss in his arms and caressed her for some time, and when he got tired of this amusement he stepped over to the water-butt, and, acting on a sudden mischievous impulse, tossed the animal inside. To our surprise a howl of pain proceeded from the interior of the cask, and upon investigation there stood our prisoner up to the neck in water! Williams had thrown the frightened cat with outstretched claws plump on his face. The poor wretch was stiff and numb with cramp, and was perfectly unable to get out of the butt. We then, with a heavy plank, stove it in near the bottom, and when it was empty, assisted Scales to the shed, where I made him at once strip off his wet clothes—with which Nathan had provided him—and assume his uniform. When the shivering wretch was able to speak he informed us that, having returned sooner than arranged, and perceiving the arrest of the Jew and the deserter, he was so overcome with fright that he took refuge in the water butt, as no other place of concealment was available. At dusk he was thinking of getting out of his uncomfortable hiding place, when he was deterred by seeing us take up a position in the yard. He had, he asserted, been nearly drowned by the volumes of water that poured on his head during the thunder storm, and confessed to having been terribly scared by the lightning—a circumstance, considering his situation, perhaps not to be wondered at. Also, he admitted, he had actually been concealed in an empty barrel on the drayman's cart, and that the driver had further facilitated his escape by arranging with a fellow wagoner to have him transferred to his vehicle, and driven to the alley in which the Jew's shop was situated.

My comrade and I, after partaking of much needed refreshment, kindly offered us by one of the prison officials, returned to headquarters, where I lost no time in reporting the whole circumstances of the case to the adjutant. That officer ordered us to appear before the commanding officer, a command which at "orderly" hour we obeyed. The colonel administered to us—to speak paradoxically—a commendatory reprimand, alternately animadverting on the enormity of our offense in allowing the man to escape, and praising the qualities of courage and perseverance we had displayed in tracking and capturing him, together with the missing thief—"conduct," as the commanding officer was pleased to put it, "which is creditable to the British army in general and the—regiment in particular."

The Jew was committed for trial on a charge of receiving stolen property; but a day or two before the assizes he committed suicide by strangling himself in his cell.

The deserter was handed over to the civil authorities, and received a long term of imprisonment; and a similar fate awaited Scales when his term in the military prison had expired.

TYROLESE SUPERSTITIONS.—Tyrolese peasants connect every elementary visitation, such as hailstorms, lighting, earthquakes, heavy rains, or long droughts, with the evil disposition of the Unholy One, or sees in it the punishment for some unrighteous act. Before he sows his field, he sprinkles it with small bits of charcoal consecerated by the priest. When he drives his cattle to the mountains, his Alp-hut receives the blessings of the holy man. When his cow calves, she is besprinkled with holy water; before he enters an untenanted house, he goes over his rosary. When a thunderstorm is approaching, the village bells are rung, and if he has a bell on his house—well-to-do peasants in the fertile valleys very ofter hang a bell on top of their house to call to their meals their men and women servants from their work in the fields—it is set tolling with might and main. The object of the ringing is to keep off or charm the dreaded lightning. The peasant population have in this safeguard a stanch belief, which is not shaken even if the lightning strikes that or any adjacent house. "The bell has been bewitched," they argue, "and requires to be reconsecrated." As a rule the older the bell of chapel and church the more efficacious it is considered, and one or two in different parts of the country have a wide-spread repute as "*wetterglocke*," or storm-bells. You lliw often hear a peasant express regret that his village possesses a bell much inferior to that of the next village, and add, "Oh, had we only the bell of Rodenegg!"—a bell enjoying the highest repute as a lightning charmer thoughout Tyrol.

DON'T TRY TO BE GREAT.—You can never be great in any sphere by trying to be great. You may secure a situation or get a public office by striving for it; but you can never gain real power in the discharge of your duties in any place while you put honor as the first thing to be desired. Unless you give yourself heartily to the work to be done in your sphere you will not do that work well, and everybody who measures you fairly will know that fact. If, however, you do the best you can wherever you are you may find yourself distinguished before you know it.

☞ He led the German and his dudish dress was the admiration of the assembled fair, but his stout partner slipped on his favorite corn Sensation! Salvation Oil to the rescue. Happiness again!

Nothing is more provoking than a troublesome cough. Cure it with Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup. 25 c.