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THOS. J. ADAMS PROPRIETOR. EDGEFIELD, S. C., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1899. VOL. LXIV. NO. 6.

THE OLD OAK.

His feet laid hold of the marl and earth, his head was in the sky,
He had seen a thousand bulb and burst, he had seen a thousand die.
And none knew when he begun to be—of trees that grew on that ground—
Lord of the wood, king of the oaks, monarch of all around.

And towering so high over others the wind in his branches roared,
Yet never a limb did the tempest break or shatter a bough that soared,
Only the ripe young acorns it flung to the earth at its knees,
And they sprang up themselves in their season, a belt of protecting trees.

But at length when the storms were over and still was the forest dell,
Unbattered, unbeaten, unbroken, he bowed himself and fell,
And the breadth of that mighty clearing, when the giant had gone from his place,
Was like to the scene of a hundred oaks in the waste of its empty space.

—Hall Caine.

Whitrige's Burglar.

Whitridge lived in the suburbs When he made his confession to himself he admitted that this was a reckless thing to do when one considered the inconvenience of crossing the ferry, riding in a trainful of commuters, changing to a trolley car and finally groping through a dark park. But, as he explained, the heart, like the wind, goes pretty much where it wills, and his had taken up its abode in the old Walton house some 12 miles from the city, and after all it was not so bad.

Whitridge was such an indolent man that it seemed to his friends rather strange that he should have chosen to worship at a shrine that could be reached only by a veritable pilgrimage. His laziness was natural and sensible, for his grandfather had dried up in an old tea warehouse on Front street and left him a million. Before that he had pottered a little in law and had even advanced so far as to defend a celebrated burglar known as One-eyed Grogan, who was acquitted because of the shrewdness of his counsel's cross-examination and the eloquence of his plea. Then Whitridge retired from the bar and took to doing nothing. He did it well.

Such a career met the severe disapproval of Dorothea Walton, who, like most women of the suburbs, was cultured and had ideas. Never having done any work herself except to study the labor question from its philosophic side, she believed that every man should be busy eight hours of the twenty-hour.

So when at length Whitridge asked her to marry him she said abruptly: "But you don't work. You are a man without an aim in life."

"My grandfather worked and had aims for me," Whitridge replied.

"Every man should do something in this world, even if it is only driving an express wagon," said the girl, warmly. "You are a man without ambition—a man who might as well not be living at all. You——"

"It seems to me you are just a little rude," he interrupted, reproachfully.

"Of course you know I like you," Dorothea went on more kindly. "But it seems so much nobler for a man to say to a woman: 'I shall slave all day in the office for you,' than 'I've got a million and am willing to share it with you.' Now, doesn't it?"

"I think the average woman would say, 'I'll share the million; don't bother about the office,'" was the grim reply.

Dorothea flushed.

"You consider me an average woman, then?"

"No, no!" cried Whitridge. "And if you will I shall slave for you. I'll go down town and plod along on the law, and we can live on what I make."

"Now you talk foolishly," said she, "I do not demand work for work's sake, but it seems to me that for a man to be without an occupation in these times shows a lack of brains."

"But it takes a great deal of brains to do nothing and to do it respectably. And after all, I don't think you can say that I am very bad."

"No. And that's where more trouble comes. You are not even reformable. A woman might devote herself to the work of reforming a man, but you offer nothing but mere money."

"And love," Whitridge blurted out, and he was overcome with confusion. He blushed and began to tear nervously at the lapels of his coat. But his embarrassment served to emphasize his honesty and sincerity.

The girl recognized this and said kindly: "I know I am foolish, Sam, but I have queer ideas, perhaps. So don't talk of it any more."

"Then good night," said he, rising abruptly from his chair and holding out his hand.

"Good night," said she. "I trust you will be able to find your way to the street without trouble. It is very dark."

"I have traveled the path often enough to know it," he said with a forced laugh. "I guess I shall not have much reason to follow it often after this."

Whitridge turned and walked from the room. Dorothea Walton stood as he had left her, gazing abstractedly into the fire. She heard the door close with a bang a few minutes later, and by a sudden impulse she ran up to her room, turned out the light and peered out into the darkness. If she expected to get a glimpse of Whitridge as he disappeared into the blackness or to hear the gravel crunching beneath his feet, she was disappointed. She closed the window with a crash.

Dorothea Walton's disappointment had its origin in a door knob, one of those modern contrivances that are such a bane to the man who calls. When Whitridge reached the hall he put on his overcoat and hat, opened the first door and closed it behind him. This left him standing in the vestibule. He seized the knob of the outer door, turned it and pulled, but to no avail. Then he turned the knob the other way and pulled, but the door did not budge. He turned and pushed and pushed and turned, but his efforts were not rewarded.

Now, in the 25 years of his life he had learned that locks are very human; that they resent harsh treatment and are susceptible to kindness and persuasion, so he gave this particular one a good long breathing spell, approached it again as though he were afraid of disturbing it and turned it so gently that had it been sleeping it would hardly have been awakened. He went just so far and stopped. He gave it a violent jerk and a forceful jam—all to no avail. Again he rested and again attacked the obstinate mechanism only to confess himself utterly beaten.

He thought of arousing the family, but peering through the frosted glass into the dimly lighted hall he saw that the family had retired for the night. The idea of being found in such a position was repulsive to him. After what had occurred was he to confess that he had been conquered by a door knob? He certainly was not, or at least until all hope was gone. He remembered that she had said that her father was in town and would be at home at 12 o'clock. It was an hour yet, but he believed that he could persuade the old gentleman to hold his peace, and that was worth long and weary waiting.

One more attack on the door knob convinced Whitridge of the uselessness of further efforts at freedom, so he settled down in a corner and made himself as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. As he sat there on the floor of the dark vestibule he forgot his unpleasant predicament and fell to thinking of her, and as he thought of her he forgot all else.

The sleeping man was awakened by a gentle dig in the ribs, and he opened his eyes into the dim glare of a dark-lantern. He tried to raise himself, but there was a weight on his chest, and he was forced back to a prostrate condition. He would have cried out, but a heavy hand was clasped over his mouth.

From the blackness behind the lantern came a hoarse whisper:

"S-sh! Mr. Whitridge, it's me, Grogan, who you got off. You ain't goin' to be hurt."

Whitridge was wide awake now, and the situation came to him in a flash. He recalled his one client, and, though he realized the man's mission at the Walton house, he felt that to him Grogan was a messenger sent from heaven to release him from the toils. The weight was removed from the chest and the hand from his mouth after another admonitory "S-sh."

The lawyer got to his knees and leaning toward the dark form of his quondam client seized the grimy hand and squeezed it affectionately. "Can't you get me out, Grogan?" he whispered.

There was a chuckle. The light quivered in evidence of the amusement of the man who held it.

"Can't you?" repeated Whitridge.

"S-sh!" Grogan answered. "Turn about 'nd be fair play, seein' ez you saved me once from the jug."

"But I'm not a burglar," Whitridge expostulated.

"It looks suspicious," was the reply. The light quivered again and more violently. "You seem anxious to get away without a row."

Whitridge was in no mood for joking.

"Now, see here, Grogan," he said, "I did you a good turn not long ago, as you remember. I got you off when I really had reason to believe you guilty. As——"

"Oh, but that was a plea o' yours, Mister Whit——"

"Hang the plea!"

"S-sh!"

"All that I ask is that you silence your conscience, disrogard your suspicions and let me go my way."

"I can't. It looks like we're both caught," said the burglar. Whitridge heard a muttered oath and a reference to the door knob.

"Can't you open it?" he asked.

"No," answered Grogan. "I might have once, but it's been jammed all out o' shape. I can't go back, nuther."

"How in the world did you get in?"

"Why, me an' me pal come through the cellar window, of course. He stayed below and gathered up the silver while I went upstairs. I goes into a room there, an' hardly was I at work till I hears a woman begin to git restless. Had it been a man I'd stayed, for a man'll mostly cover up his head and lay still, but a woman allers yells. So I sneaked. Bill, he went through the winder with the main part of the swag an' all the tools, an' I come this way. Here I am. One door's closed, so I can't go back; t'other I can't open."

"This is a pretty kettle of fish," moaned Whitridge.

"Fish? Burglars you mean," retorted Grogan. "But where's your swag?"

"See here, Grogan," said Whitridge, "I got in here honestly, and I'm going to get out honestly. These people are friends of mine, and I think I'll just give the alarm."

"How about me?" said the burglar. "I don't think they're on my wisitin' list."

"But can't I say you are a friend of mine?"

"A pretty time this fer frien's to be locked up in vestybules, particular with pockets full o' spoons an' things like this." Grogan held a handsome portfolio in the light of the lantern. "I got it in her room while lookin' fer jewelry an' bills. Kin you read?"

He opened the leaves and turned the light full on a page covered with angular handwriting. A long silence followed, during which the burglar ran his finger along the lines and spelled out word after word.

"Why, it's about a fellow," he muttered. "She must 'a had 'em bad. 'If he'd only come back to me,' she says."

"Says what?" exclaimed Whitridge, grasping his companion's arm.

"S-sh! She says if he'd only come back she'd a-c-c-e-p-t him an'——"

Whitridge seized the portfolio. "It's a woman's diary," he said, roughly, and you have no right to look at it."

Then, fixing it in the lantern light to suit his own eyes, he read the last entry: Eleven P. M. What a fool I am. I have just refused him; told him that he was a num' skull; ranted about aims and ambitions; aired all my fine ideas, and yet when he had gone I listened just to hear his footsteps as he picked his way along the path to the street. Women are geese. If only he would come back I would beg his forgiveness and accept him. If he would only come back."

Whitridge snapped the portfolio shut and and arose.

"Grogan," he said firmly, "we must get out of this at once. Never mind how. I'll take care of you and plead your case at another bar."

"Jest wait," growled the burglar. "mebbe——"

A strong hand was laid on his throat, and he was lifted to his feet and thrown violently against the door.

There was a crash of glass, a feminine scream, followed by an uproar on the upper floors of the house.

"Never mind, Dorothea," arose from the vestibule. "It's only me, Sam Whitridge. I've got a burglar. Hurry down here and let me out of this cell."

"Is it really you, Sam?" came in frightened tones to Whitridge, who had Grogan pinned fast in a corner.

"'Elp, miss, 'elp! He's chokin' me to death!"

"Yes, it's I. Don't be scared."

In answer to these cries Dorothea Walton, attired in a long driving coat and carrying a golf club, led a line of five maids, similarly armed, down the stairs. The ancient negro butler drew up in the rear muttering prayers.

The door was opened and Whitridge dragged his captive forth before the household.

"How did you get him?" exclaimed the girl, her fright having given way to astonishment.

"Don't bother about that now," replied Whitridge, nonchalantly. "Have you a good closet-close by."

Dorothea ran to the distant end of the hall and threw open a door. Whitridge pulled the discomfited Grogan after her, while the maids made a threatening demonstration against the prisoner with their golf clubs.

"Plead 'ard, Mister Whitridge, plead 'ard," moaned the burglar as his captor pushed him into the closet, closed the door and turned the key.

"What does the creature mean?"

"Compose yourself, Dorothea," replied the young man, coolly. "First let us have some lights in the library. Then I shall explain."

The suggestion was quickly followed, and while the six servants watched the door behind which lay the captive, Sam Whitridge explained.

"The man thinks, and rightly, too," he said, "that he has a claim on you and me, inasmuch as he showed this to me." He drew the diary from his pocket and opened it at the last entry. "I have been mean enough to read it."

Dorothea Walton took the portfolio, looked blankly at the man and then at the last page.

"Am I forgiven?" Whitridge asked.

The girl seated herself at the table and seized a pen.

"There is one more entry," she said. "Look over my shoulder and read it."

She glanced at the clock and then wrote: "Two A. M. He has come back, and I have accepted him."—N. McA. L., in New York Evening Sun.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

Among the Kols of Central India a sham fight always accompanies the wedding ceremony.

The two little islands of Zanzibar and Pempa furnish four-fifths of the cloves consumed by the world.

Some wonderful stalactite caves have recently been discovered eight miles from Krugersdorp, in the Transvaal.

A good Arabian horse will canter in the desert for twenty-four hours in summer and forty-eight in winter without drinking.

Bees are said to see an enormous distance. When absent from their hive they go up in the air till they see their home, and then fly toward it in a straight line.

Glass is being extensively used for church bells. It can be toughened so that there is no risk of it cracking, and the tone is said to be beyond anything yet invented, perfect, soft, and sonorous.

The little town of Peculiar, in Cass county, Mo., got its name in rather a curious manner. Its founders got into a controversy over what they should christen it, and finally they referred the matter to the postoffice department, saying they didn't care what name was given the place so long as it was peculiar. One of the Washington officials then, in a spirit of waggery, named it accordingly.

Italy in London.

Many Londoners have heard about the Italian district, which lies in the neighborhood of Theobald's road and Hatton garden, and some with inquiring minds have strolled up Leather lane and watched the Italian ice cream venders and fortune telling women with pretty love birds, intermingled with the dirty, noisy street hawkers, common to all London slums. It is amusing to watch the old padri making purchases of meat and vegetables for the Sunday dinner, or a young Francisco and Madalena choosing a "gold" ring with which to plight their troth. "O che allegrezza! allegrezza! allegrezza!" (Oh, what joy!" cries the young girl as she slips the ring on her finger and gazes at it with admiration, surrounded by a little group of sympathizing friends.

Then she blushes and cries, "Oibo! O vergogna!" (Oh, fie, for shame!) when Francisco slips his arm around her waist and gives her a hearty kiss, which the friends applaud with "Bene! Bravo, bravissimo!" It is amazing to learn how these Italians crowd together in the poky little houses of the courts and alleys. Generally a house is hired by an old padrone, who sublets to as many of his countrymen as he can respectably squeeze in. The cellars are utilized as sleeping apartments, and in the morning as many as 20, even 30, men will emerge from the bowels of the earth, blinking and winking in the daylight after a night in the cellars under one small dwelling house. A whole family, consisting of a husband and wife and eight or nine fanciulli of various ages, often sleep in one small cellar or garret.—Ludgate Magazine.

A PHILIPPINE SULTAN.

Queer Facts About the Ruler of Sulu and His Mohammedan Subjects.

Americans have now a Sultan for a fellow citizen.

His title is Sultan of Sulu. We have annexed him, together with the Philippine Islands. His subjects are all devout Mohammedans.

He is everything that a Sultan should be. He has a harem and a grand vizier. He bowstrings his enemies and friends, and is in constant danger of assassination.

The Sulus are a small group of islands stretching between Mindanao, the southernmost of the Philippines, and the northeast corner of Borneo, the second largest island in the world. They have a population of 4000 people, and an area of 950 square miles.

The inhabitants of the Sulus are called Moros. It is their chief peculiarity to be Mohammedans. The foundation of the race is Malay, as in the Philippines, but the Moros have been strongly influenced by Arab blood.

In the seventeenth century an Arab named Said Ali conquered the Sulu Islands and forcibly converted the natives to Islamism. He and his followers took large numbers of wives, and thus added an Arabian strain to the Malay race.

The Moros are governed by sultans and by hereditary chiefs called datos. The latter are often supreme in their own domains, but are supposed to give homage to the Sultan of Sulu.

The Sultan lives as we expect a Sultan to do. He has a great harem, replenished by periodical raids among all the Philippine Islands. He has a grand vizier, and a barber who tells him stories.

The Moros are not particularly obedient to their Sultan. Sometimes

HEADSMAN OF THE SULTAN OF SULU, AMERICAN CITIZEN.

they kill him and sometimes they set up another in his place.

They are the fiercest and bravest of all the races in or near the Philippines. Their skill in the use of their curved knives, or barongs, is marvelous. They have defeated the Spaniards again and again with plain steel against firearms. Spain made no sort of effective occupation of the islands until 1871.

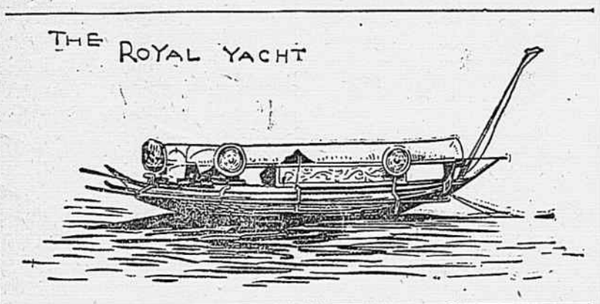
Dean C. Worcester, the acknowledged American authority on the Philippines, devotes considerable attention to the Sulu Islands, their rival Sultans and the blood-curdling features of life there.

A few years before the Spanish-American war, the Spaniards deposed Mahmond, the rightful Sultan of Sulu, and appointed in his place a chief, under the title of "His Excellency, Paduca Majasari Malauna Amiril Mauinin Sultan Harun Narrasid."

The Spanish had invited the rightful Sultan to come to Manila and be invested with his crown. Remembering that a predecessor, who received a similar invitation, had been kept in prison for life by the Spanish, the Sultan did not respond. Thereupon, the Spanish put Harun in his place.

That did not worry the legitimate Sultan. Harun occupied the palace in the city of Sulu, carefully guarded by Spanish soldiers. Mahmond occupied the rest of the island with 10,000 well-armed followers.

The most interesting character in Sulu is the old Sultana, mother of the Sultan Mahmond. Although born a slave she married a previous Sultan. She hastened his departure from this world with corrosive sublimate. When Harun was appointed Sultan she sent him an offer of marriage, but he declined it, as "he wished to die a natural death." Mr. Worcester remarks that she has a genius for organization, but a mania for poisoning.



While General Arolas, one of the few competent Spaniards, ruled the Sulus they were fairly quiet. When he left his successor thought he could collect taxes from the Moros. Harun called them together and asked their decision. They promptly decided not to pay the tax.

On the day appointed for paying the tax Harun presented himself before the Governor with a large number of followers. They were admitted. Harun presented a large bag of pearls to the Governor. As he took them Harun drew a barong—the Moro sword—and split the Governor's skull to the chin. The other Moros fell on the Spanish soldiers and slaughtered them all. Then they destroyed the town.

The Sulu Moro is a born warrior. He disdains to work and expects his wants to be supplied by his wives and slaves. He has many excellent qualities. He gives much time to the care of his arms and to perfecting himself in their use. He tries to terrify an opponent by making hideous faces, uses his shield very skilfully and keeps his legs in constant motion, so that a blow below the shield may not disable them. In battle he is the bravest of the brave.

Absolute indifference to bloodshed is one of his most prominent characteristics. He will cut down a slave merely to try the edge of a new barong.

Sometimes a Moro goes head-hunting. This is considered a very sportsmanlike proceeding. The hunter takes with him a big and handsomely-worked basket, which he slings over his shoulder, as an American would a fishing basket. In this he puts the human heads which may fall to his skill.

The Moros believe that he who takes the life of a Christian thereby increases his chance of a good time in the world to come. He who dies taking the life of a Christian is sure to be transported at once into the seventh heaven.

From time to time it happens that one of them wearies of his life, and desiring to take the shortest road to glory he bathes in a sacred spring, shaves off his eyebrows, dresses in white and presents himself before a pandita (priest) to take solemn oath (juramentar) to die killing Christians. He is then called a juramentado. He hides a barong, or kris, about his person or in something that he carries, and seeks the nearest town. If he can gain admission he snatches his weapon from its concealment and runs amuck, slaying every human being in his path until he is finally himself dispatched. So long as the breath of life remains in him he fights on.

Eye-witnesses informed Mr. Worcester that they had seen juramentados seize the barrel of a rifle on being bayoneted and drive the steel further into themselves in order to bring the soldier at the other end of the piece within striking distance and cut him down.

The number of lives taken by one of these mad fanatics is sometimes almost incredible, but he is eventually killed himself. His relatives have a celebration when the news of his death reaches them. They say that just as night is coming on they see him riding by on a white horse bound for the kingdom of the blessed.

General Arolas, the last Spanish Governor, established a guard house on the only road leading into the city of Sulu. Here every Moro coming from the country was compelled to halt and give up his arms. If he did not halt at once he was shot dead.

"Accidents" often happened at the guard house, however. One day a Moro passed through and gave up his barong as usual. When he came out he claimed it. Before going away he handed some cigarettes to the soldiers. They laid down their guns to light the cigarettes. Quick as a flash the Moro whipped out his barong and sliced off the head of the soldier nearest him. Then he inflicted mortal injuries on two others and crippled a third for life. At last the sergeant got his rifle and shot the Moro dead.

In one of the Sulu Islands there was a dato, or great boss. Once a bullet struck his clothes and he escaped uninjured. Thereafter he was regarded as having a charmed life, and the people worshiped him. He was very gracious to the American travelers.

One day a native rode past them on a fine horse.

"Do you admire that horse?" asked the dato.

"Yes," said the American.

"Then you shall have him," said the dato courteously, at the same time raising his rifle and shooting the rider dead.

The Moros are fairly orthodox Mohammedans, although they have engrafted on the religion many features peculiar to themselves.

The Moros believe that the sun, moon and stars are the light of God, to "dominar" the whole world. There are no other worlds than this in the universe, but there are beings who inhabit the air above us and the earth beneath our feet. They worship God, and die like ourselves. There is one God, namely, Toohan. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. Without him we cannot speak. His form is that of our thoughts. Animals have spirits, but they are not like the soul of man, and vanish into thin air when death comes.

MAHMOUD, SULU SULTAN AND AMERICAN CITIZEN.

HEAD OF RUSSIAN CHURCH HERE.

Bishop Tikhon Takes Charge of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska.

Among the passengers arriving recently at New York was Bishop Tikhon, newly appointed head of the Russian Church in America, although nominally he is Bishop of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska.

He was met at the pier by the Russian Consul General and members of

BISHOP TIKHON.

(He has arrived on his way to his diocese of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska, and is the new head of the Russian Church in America.)

the Russian colony in New York City and escorted at once to the Russian Church, at No. 323 Second avenue, where, in accordance to the custom of his church, he conducted a service of thanksgiving for his safe arrival.

A reception followed upstairs in the apartments of the rector of the church, where the Bishop will reside during his brief stay in New York before going to his new field of labor. Here he received representatives of the different associations and nationalities belonging to his flock, including Servians, Arabians, Montenegrins and Russians, kissing each man's brow as the man kissed his hand.

Bishop Tikhon won the hearts of all present, not only by his words, but also by his beautiful simplicity and cordiality of manner. He is tall, slender, with long light brown hair and the reddish golden beard which is distinctly Russian.

Bishop Tikhon's secular name is Vasily Bellarin. He was born in 1865, and has attained his prominent position at an early age even for a Russian ecclesiastic. He was graduated from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy in 1888, and immediately entered upon pedagogic work, at which he continued almost to the time of his elevation to his present ecclesiastical rank. He recently served as Bishop of Liublin and Vicar of Kholma, the Warsaw diocese. His new diocese is said to be the largest in the world, as it includes the whole of North America, and comprises about thirty parishes with as many churches and seventy chapels.

Statistics of the class of '97 at Princeton show that fifty-five members are studying or practising law, twenty-seven are studying medicine and twenty-three are in theological schools.

Now that the peace treaty has been signed the warships are to be painted white again. This fact lends color to the belief that harmony has been permanently restored.

CANADA'S OFFICIAL HANGMAN.

Steward of a Swell Toronto Club When He Hanged His First Subject.

T. R. R. Ratcliffe is official executioner of Canada. For almost seven years Ratcliffe has practiced his profession, and in that time he must have launched very nearly some five dozen people into the great unknown. His official appointment is of a more recent date. He receives a regular salary and is compelled to travel to any part of the Dominion where a man is to be hanged, his traveling expenses and the expenses of the execution, such as those engendered by the building of the scaffold and the gallows, etc., being borne by the government of the province whose courts have ordered the execution. In addition to his regular salary, he has certain perquisites, such as are derived from the sale of fractions of the rope which furnish the noose and such articles of wearing apparel as are often given him by the law's victims. In some cases these things are bought outright from him by some local speculator, and the latter often supplements his stock of gruesome relics thus acquired with others less genuine. In all his executions Ratcliffe has never made a mistake or failure from the time that he made his debut, which was the occasion of the hanging of Birchall, who made a business of inveigling wealthy young Englishmen to Canada on the pretext of teaching them scientific farming and then murdering them.

Ratcliffe's home is at 52 Fern avenue, Toronto, where he lives in a pleasant little house with his wife and children, and where his neighbors and all those with whom he is acquainted have nothing but good to say for him. He has his own circle of acquaintances and mixes very little with the general public; in fact, so unostentatious are his ways that in the city of Toronto itself very few people know who he is or where he lives.

Who and what he was before he came to Canada is a mystery. The first time he became known was through Birchall's crime. When the murderer was condemned to be hanged the authorities were in a quandary as to where they could find a man to carry out the sentence. Formerly some jail official, chosen by lot, or some prisoner who was well paid for his work had done the actual hanging. In this case, however, no one could be found willing to undertake the job. Suddenly the steward of the Sunnyside Boating club of Toronto, a very swell organization, offered to do the work. This man proved to be Ratcliffe. As he did his work remarkably well and as the boating club did not want to have anything more to do with him after that, he stuck to the business.

Climbing Runs in Families.

Climbing runs in families, for steeple-jacks are often the sons of fathers who were in the business, but it is somewhat odd that man, though he learns to swim so well that armed only with a knife he can encounter a shark in its native element, and judged by the extent of his mining operations in comparison with the size of his body surpasses by a thousand times all animals that work underground, has never become a good climber, or shown the slightest tendency to become "arboreal," as he has become aquatic and subterranean. South sea babies who cannot walk will roll into the sea and swim, collier boys at fourteen will take pick and lamp and descend into the mine almost as naturally as young moles; but we believe that, in spite of the danger from wild beasts in forest regions, and the fact that in such places there is ten times more life on the level of the tree tops than on the ground, there is no single instance of a tribe which, properly speaking, has become "arboreal" and learnt to climb like monkeys. Though not a few make huts in trees, they approach these by ladders; and except in the huts which they use as a refuge and sleeping place, they spend their time on the ground. Even in forests where the upper levels of the trees are so closely laced together that a comparatively slight adaptation would enable the Indians to progress from tree to tree, and where nearly the whole of the fruit, and the greater part of the birds and animals, used for food are found only in this "upper story," man is not, and always refuses to become, "climbing animals."—Washington Star.

Where Murderers Are Safe.

A strange state of affairs exists in Indian Territory. By the discrepancy of an act of Congress, Indian murderers are being turned loose upon an innocent public. According to a decision just rendered by Judge William M. Springer of the Federal court of the Indian Territory there is no legal way of punishing any Indian of the five tribes for murder or any other offense created prior to January 1, 1898. There is no officer who can lawfully execute a death sentence on any of these Indians, although the red man may be caught redhanded and convicted beyond a shadow of a doubt of killing a fellow being. Judge Springer, formerly of Illinois and ex-member of the lower house of Congress, has handed down his opinion, which reveals one of the most startling and most dangerous conditions that can be imagined.

The present condition is just as bad as No Man's Land. There are no tribal courts, as they were abolished by the last Congress. Judge Springer has decided that the Indian courts have no jurisdiction and has accordingly given about ten murderers and many other Indian criminals their liberty. Two of the prisoners, Blecher Smith and William Tiger, both murderers, were released recently, and others will be turned loose soon.—Correspondence of the Chicago Tribune.

A Plague of Rats in Brussels.

The Rue Berckmans, one of the most fashionable quarters of the capital, has just been visited by a plague of large rats. No house has been free from these unwelcome visitors, and the havoc they have made is so great that most of the residents have been put to flight. Some of the rats are of an extraordinary size, and hitherto the measures which have been taken to free the neighborhood of the pest have proved of little avail.—Brussels Correspondence of the London Post.

THE BOYS OF MY BOYHOOD.

Sometimes when I ain't so busy, workin' for my daily bread
(Which is only in the evenings when I'd orter be in bed),
When the troubles an' the trials of the weary day are through,
An' the stars are twinklin' brightly in the far and distant blue;
Then I git to wanderin' back among the days of long ago,
An' a-thinkin, an' a-dreamin' of the boys I used to know.

Thar was Silas Green, a youngster that was in my class at school,
An' the chap that larn't me how to say the long division rule.
He was allers counted han'some an' a mighty knowin' boy,
An' his folks looked on his future with a lot o' pride an' joy;
'Twas last week I run across him—only time in twenty years—
He was trampin' through the country grindin' butcher knives an' shears.

Hiram Wilkins was another boy I know'd in days of yore;
He's a cobble-stone arranger in the town of Baltimore.
Ezry Jenkins is a motorman, an' Ebenezer Brown
Is dispensin' hot termollies in a Pennsylvania town.
Of my dearest friends of boyhood, Rufus Perkins was the best,
Who is punchin' cattle somewhar in the wild an' wooly west.

Eben Sikes is in the Philippines, an' Jeremiah Reese
Is a posin' in the Klondike as a justice of the peace.
Mem'ry takes me back to others that I ain't got time to name,
Some are doin' mostly nothin'; others jist about the same,
But I don't believe there's one of them that's doin' any worse
Than myself, that's scribblin' poetry at fifty cents a verse.

—Lawrence Porcher Hext, in Truth.

HUMOROUS.

"Captain, the new recruit is a fine fencer." "Is he? Put him on picket duty."

Hargreaves—Do you know what is the difference between an avenue and a street? Ferry—About $30 on a month's rent.

Fogg says that he never saw a cake walk, but he once saw a-bun-dance on the table, and he presumes that the two are something similar.

"Carker made the boast that he never was seasick in his life. I wonder if he was lying?" "No. He has never been outside the state."

Bess—Oh, I know how I look. My looking-glass always tells me the truth. Kate—The looking-glass doesn't show much tact, does it?

"I'm afraid my wife's affection for me is cooling." "Why?" "When she bade me good-by this morning she didn't say, 'Be sure to hurry home as early as possible.'"

"Here's a writer who says married people ought to live across the street from one another." "That wouldn't do at all. They'd fall out about the things they'd borrow."

"Cholly told me he was burning with patriotism, but, between you and me, I think he is too green to burn." "Yes, Cholly might appropriately be called a fireproof flat."

He—He's not a very high-bred dog, but he's very plucky and intelligent. Saved my life once. She—Oh! that shows his pluck, no doubt; but do you think it was very intelligent?

"My wife doesn't want to vote, but she's what I call strong minded." "In what direction?" "Well, she can read a doctor book clear through, without getting symptoms of any of the diseases."

Mrs. Prim—John, you used to say before we were married that you could die listening to the sound of my voice. Mr. Prim—Well, Mary, it begins to look as if I'll have to do it, unless you go first.

He—Reggy Fitzjames has become recklessly engaged to any number of girls, but he always gets out of it. She—With decency? He—Oh, yes; he merely has to go and ask the father's consent, and it's all over.

Foreign Nobleman (introducing American heiress)—Mother, may I present my affianced bride? Dignified Dowager—Hem! Young woman, can you support my son in the style to which he has been accustomed?

"What we need in this country," howled the political orator, "is an elastic currency——" "Right you are, mister," interrupted a man near the door; "something that will stretch a man's income so as to make both ends meet."

Evidence of Genius.

There is a proverb which says that there are several distinct ways of removing the cuticle from the body of a feline.

And just as proverbially there are several ways of doing almost everything.

For instance:

At luncheon time the other day two clerks in a certain wholesale house of Detroit compared notes as to the condition of their reserve fund and found that they had twenty cents between them.

"I want meat and potatoes and a vegetable," said one.

"So do I," said the other.

"It takes twenty cents to buy the same," continued the first.

"I know it," said the second, "but I have an idea. Come with me."

And the pair sought a certain cafe on the seventh floor of a big department store.

They whispered together as they shot up in the elevator.

They seated themselves at the table. One of them ordered meat and potatoes and cauliflower. He knew the waitress. She saw to it that he received large portions.

"No, I don't want anything," said the second. "I'm just waiting for my friend."

The first ate half of what was served him then shoved the plate over to the friend, who finished it. Then the twenty-cent check was paid and the pair went back to their desks.

Wyoming's Natural Soda Well.

Perhaps the greatest curiosity among all the soda deposits of Wyoming is the soda well recently drilled at Green river, that is now furnishing water that contains 24 per cent. of sal soda, and this soda is more than 93 per cent. pure. Chicago capitalists have recently purchased a large tract of land here and are now laying plans for the erection of a plant.—Chicago Times-Herald.