The Somerset Press.

VOLUME 4. SOMERSET, OHIO: FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1876. NUMBER 6.

SELECT STORY.

MR. BEAMAN'S MISTAKE.

An Old Fashioned Story.

[From the Galaxy, for April.]

It was the close of the afternoon service in the village church of Bayfield. The last notes of the doxology were still echoing from the singing gallery, and the congregation, with a rustle and a stir, turned their faces toward the minister for the benediction. In the brief pause before it was spoken, old Mr. Beaman, the town clerk of Bayfield stepped in front of the pulpit, and raising his hand, said in a loud clear voice, "Know all it may concern, that Mark Boynton, of this town, and Elizabeth Heath, of the same, intend marriage."

There was a movement throughout the whole congregation as if it were pervaded by an electric shock, and looks of surprise passed from eye to eye.—But there were three persons present on whom the clerk's announcement fell like a thunderbolt. One of these was a young girl with a pale face and downcast eye. When Mr. Beaman began to speak she listened with a kind of patient composure; but as the names were announced, a wild, startled look came into her eyes, she sank back upon her seat, and buried her now burning face in her hands.

Not many steps removed stood a man of perhaps forty—a grave and sober person, with hair slightly turning to grav. His face, habitually a somewhat sad one, had worn throughout the service that day, a look of cheerful content; but as Mr. Beaman made his announcement, it took the paleness of death.—His head dropped upon his breast and he stood like one paralyzed, clasping the railing of the pew for support.

Very different was the effect produced upon a young man, the solitary occupant of a pew not far away. He had been standing with a drooping head and downcast heavy look; but as he heard the words of the old clerk he started visibly, the blood mounted in a crimson flush to his forehead, while his eye flashed with a look of blended triumph and defiance and his lips closed with an expression of stern resolve.

There was a painful hush over all the house, as if every one present were strangely moved to sympathy with one or another of those so deeply and variously affected by what had been said.—It was broken by the voice of the minister saying solemnly, "and now may the grace of God, and the communion of His Holy Spirit, be and abide with you all for ever. Amen." And the people moved silently out of the church.

The pale and stricken man on whom the old clerk's most unexpected words had fallen so like the stroke of doom, was Robert Jocelyn. He had listened that day to hear his own name coupled with that of the lovely girl who had promised to be his wife, and the voice of the clerk had joined with her's that of another and a younger man! To understand the full force of the blow which had fallen on him, it is necessary to go back at a time, nearly twenty years before, when as a youth he had won the love of his pretty and gentle cousin Phœbe Jocelyn. Pœbe was the lovliest girl in all the country round, and had admirers by the score, but Robert Jocelyn was the choice of her heart, and to him she was tenderly attached. But though capable of loving with devotion, poor Phœbe was weak-willed and timid, and quite powerless to resist a resolute and domineering mother, who had chosen a different person to be her daughter's husband. William Heath had more money than Robert, and was a showy, plausible fellow, in whom the ambitious mother fancied she saw a more brilliant match for her daughter. She plied the yielding girl with arguments, reproaches and appeals to filial duty till she was quite bewildered; and almost before she was aware of it she had given up her cousin, and was plighted to William Heath. Her married life was fortunately brief, for she knew no happiness in the three weary years she lived with her husband. At the end of that time he left her in poverty, and no one in Bayfield ever saw him again. Poor Phœbe sinking under the pressure of grief, neglect and privation, lived but a few months after his desertion. During that time she was tenderly cared for by her cousin Robert, who supplied all the wants of her and her infant daughter, and found for them a serene asylum under the roof of his brother Ezra and his wife. This kind couple had no children, and when her mother was gone the little Lizzie was adopted by them as their own.

Robert Jocelyn had never married. He lived on, a sad and silent man, old before his time, but he had no heart to offer to another woman. He had loved Phœbe so unselfishly that he could have borne to lose her if she had been happy; but to have her taken from him to suffer neglect and cruelty was hard indeed. It was with solemn thankfulness that he saw the sod laid over her faded beauty and broken heart.

Years passed, and Phœbe's daughter was a charming, bright-eyed girl of eighteen. Under the fostering care of Ezra and his wife she had grown up cheerful and happy, loving and dutiful a favorite with all. Like her mother, she had many admirers; but it could not be positively determined that she favored any. Still, there were shrewd supicions, and more than one young fellow would have been glad to stand in Mark Boynton's place, and would have felt rich indeed with but a portion of the smiles which shone on that fortunate youth.

Mark was a neighbor of the Jocelyns. He had inherited from his father a fine, well-stocked farm; but unfortunately there had been discovered a flaw in his title; and ever since his majority he had been involved in a tiresome law suit which it was now generally believed would go against him. Should it so result he would be a poor man, if a young man with a strong hand and courageous heart can be poor. With all the strength of an earnest and manly nature Mark loved Lizzie Heath; but his pride withheld him from saying so until he should know whether indeed, he had a home to offer her. If he won his case, he would ask her to share the wealth which would then be his. If he lost, he must—no, he could not resign her; but if she loved, she would wait for him. He was not a vain man, but his hopes rose high. He had seen how Lizzie's eye would brighten and her color glow at his approach, and had marked the innocent arts by which she sought to avoid the attentions of others while his own were gladly received.

As for Lizzie, her ideal of manly beauty and excellence was embodied in Mark Boynton; but maiden like she would not admit the idea of love. She knew that she was perfectly happy only when he was by; but she would not own even to herself the reason. Of late, too, she half fancied that he avoided her, and interpreting that fact backward, felt no pique, but just enough uncertainty about his sentiments to be resolute in concealing her own.

And so matters stood when one pleasant afternoon in summer Lizzie sat sewing with her mother, as she alway called Mrs. Ezra. There was an unusual shade of pensiveness on the young girl's face, and her mother watched her narrowly. At length the latter said:

"You seem very sober to-day, for you, Lizzie. Has anything happened to make you so?"

A blush and some low, inaudible words were the only reply. Mrs. Jocelyn went on:

"Are you thinking of anything that brother Robert said to you last night as you walked in the orchard together?"

"Why, mother, did you know?" asked Lizzie, looking up in surprise.

"Yes, dear; your father and I have known all along that Robert was fond of you. What did you say to him?"

"What could I say," replied Lizzie, in a broken voice, "but that such a thing is impossible?"

"I don't see, dear, why it should be impossible. You are surprised because you have not thought about it; but when you come to reflect I hope your answer will be different. If your father and I have a wish in the world it is that you should marry Robert."

"Oh, mother, how can I?" exclaimed Lizzie, looking up in astonishment.

"Why, not, pray? I am sure it is not every girl has an opportunity—a man of character and position, and so good and kind as he is. Then you know he is well off; you would have everything that money could buy. And I always thought you were fond of Robert."

"Yes, mother, but not that way. He is my uncle."

"I know you have called him so, but you knew all the time he was only your second cousin. There is no reason why you should not love him in 'that way,' as you say, unless you like somebod, else. Is that so?"

"No—indeed, no," poor Lizzie faltered hastily, turning away her face, now burning with blushes. The eyes of Mark Boynton rose up before her with a glance of reproach at this denial; but how could she confess a love for one who perhaps did not care for her.

"I am glad to hear it," Mrs. Ezra went on, "for I am sure you will in time return Robert's affection. He loves you dearly and you have it in your power to make up to him in part for what he suffered through your mother."

Lizzie looked up with startled eyes.

"What do you mean, mother?" she asked in astonishment.

Then Mrs. Ezra told all the story of Robert's love and blighted hope, of his delicate kindness to poor Phœbe during the sad years of her married life, and how in her last distress he had succored her and her child. She reminded the young girl of his generous and watchful care over her childhood and grow youth. And then, though the good woman had no idea of taking a mean advantage, she was yet so anxious to win Lizzie's consent to the match she thought best for her, that she did work upon the girl's gratitude to herself and husband, though, ordinarily it would not have occurred to her to think whether or not she had conferred favors on one who was almost like her own daughter.

Their talk was long, protracted and often renewed, and Robert added his pleadings. He told of the years during which he had watched her growing beauty, loving her first for her mother's sake, but as she bloomed into womanhood so like that mother, he found himself renewing the dreams of his youth, daring to hope that happiness might yet be his. The strongest, the best fortified woman's heart must ever be more or less moved by the evidence of a deep and earnest affection; and poor Lizzie had the yielding, pliant nature of her mother, and Mark Boynton was away—she had not seen him for weeks; and not knowing that he was occupied at the county town with the final trial of his case, she felt herself neglected by him.

Why; if he really loved her, was he not here to say so, and to stand by her in this time of trial? So it came about that, hopeless in the hands of her affectionate but ill-judging friends, she yielded, and promised to marry Robert Jocelyn.

It was a day or two after she had formally given her word, that she was returning one evening alone from a neighbor's. She had not walked far when she heard a quick step behind her and turning saw Mark Boynton. He greeted her gayly, and the dim light prevented his observing her pale and troubled face. He took her hand, drew it through his arm with an air almost of ownership, saying as he did so, "this is just what I wanted, Lizzie, to meet you. I was going to your house. I am such a happy fellow to-night that I want to tell you about it.

She made no answer; indeed, he gave her no time, but went on:

"I have been all week at Milford, attending court, and have gained my case. My farm is my own at last, and I am an independent man."

She murmured some half inaudible expression of pleasure at the result.

"Lizzie," he said, stopping suddenly and taking her hand in his, "there is only one thing I want to make me the happiest man in Bayfield. I want you to come and share my home with me."

Here Lizzie drew her hand hastily from him and said in a frightened tone, "Don't, don't Mark! You must not talk to me so."

"What do you mean, Lizzie? Why may I not tell you that I love you better than all the world? I think you must have known it without my telling."

Poor Lizzie burst into a passion of tears, but could not speak. Mark drew her gently out of the path and seated her upon a stone, placing himself beside her. He waited some minutes for an answer, but she remained silent.

"Dear Lizzie, he said at last, "you must know that I love you. Can I be mistaken in thinking you care for me?"

He drew away the hands with which she had covered her face, and begged him to speak to him.

"Oh, Mark!" she gasped out in a kind of deprecation. "I have promised to marry Robert Jocelyn."

Mark Boynton flung away the hands he held with an angry gesture, and sprang to his feet.

"Lizzie!" he cried indignantly, "you are not, you cannot be in earnest."

No answer from Lizzie. Her voice was choked with sobs. Poor Mark broke out in bitter reproaches. He accused her of cruel trifling with him and declared his belief that she had accepted Jocelyn because he was the richer man, and his own case a doubtful one. Lizzie had but one answer to his reproaches; she cried as if her heart were broken; and the strong, tender hearted fellow, soon grew pitiful of her grief, and soothed her, and begged forgiveness for his harshness. After a while he drew from her the whole story. He understood the pressure which had been brought to bear upon her, and how powerless she and been to resist it. He saw that if she had felt sure of his affection she would have stood out against them all. If he had but spoken out before!—But his own pride had been to blame.

Though he argued long and earnestly, he could not convince Lizzie that she had any right to draw back. She had given her word, and she held herself bound by it, persistently declaring that he must not talk, or she listen. So at last he gave up in despair and the two walked home in gloomy silence.

In Bayfield everybody's affairs are known to everybody else; and so it was but a few days before the whole neighborhood was informed of Lizzie't engagement to Robert Jocelyn, and by some mysterious agency, known only to rural communities, the secret of Mark Boynton's love and disappointment was also generally understood. The circumstances created a kind of excitement. The general opinion was that the two young people were being sacrificed to the wishes of their elders; and sympathy was strongly with them, as always, where true love is crossed. The young people blamed Lizzie for her want of firmness; but parents, interested perhaps in the cause of authority, exonerated her and censured those who were taking advantage of her filial duty. Robert, too, came in for his share of sympathy. The sad story of his love for Phœbe was well remembered; and there was not wanting some romantic souls who thought it fitting that the daughter should compensate him for the pain her mother cost.

Of course all the neighborhood gossip was known to Mrs. Ezra, but she took good care that very little of it should come to Robert's ears. She had made up her mind that she knew what was best for Lizzie, and she did not mean to let her plans fall.

And Robert! Was he ignorant of the state of things? He might have seen, but he would not. He heard it said that Lizzie loved Mark Boynton, and he would not believe it. Had he not loved her all her life as no young man could? Had he not a right? He had missed happiness once, and now it was again within his grasp, who should say that he ought to give it up? Lizzie would be happy. She loved him already; she would love wholly when she was his wife. That other was a passing fancy. He shut his eyes to the evidence of her pale and sorrowful face, silenced all inward remonstrances, and held his way.

The preparations for the marriage were rather hurried forward, for Mrs. Ezra thought the sooner it was over the better. Lizzie made no objection. Since it was to be, all times were alike to her. The day for the wedding was fixed, and they only waited for the regular three weeks' "punishment," one of the legal forms essential in those days. They were to be "cried" for the first time on that pleasant Sunday afternoon on which this story opens. And Mr. Beaman, whose duty it was to perform that office, stood up before the congregation and published the banns of marriage between Elizabeth Heath and Mark Boynton! No wonder that the people were thunderstruck, and that they moved in silent amazement out of the church.

But once the crowd was fairly outside the sacred edifice, comment and question were free. Mr. Beaman was beset by inquiries. Ezra Jocelyn was there, angrily accusing him of wantonly insulting his daughter and his brother. The poor man was completely bewildered. He did not understand that anything was wrong. He had been called upon by Robert Jocelyn to publish the intention of marriage between himself and Lizzie Heath, and he had done it.

"Why, man alive!" exclaimed a bystander, "it was not Robert Jocelyn's name that you called, but Mark Boynton's."

The unlucky clerk could not believe it possible that he had made such a mistake, until the reiterated assertions of all his neighbors convinced him. He could only explain it by the fact that he had thought a good deal of the peculiar circumstances of the case—he had heard, he said, the woman folks talking it over—and had pitied the adverse fate of the two young people crossed in love; and he must have had Mark Boynton so much in his mind that he had spoken the latter's name unconsciously. A fine communication his blunder had made.

Mrs. Joycelyn, with a flushed and angry face, took Lizzie's arm and hurried her away. She believed the whole thing was a trick of Mark's; and she suspected that Lizzie might be privy to it. But she prudently repressed her anger until they reached home where Lizzie quickly escaped to her own room and locked herself in; so the good woman's lecture had to be postponed.

As for Mark Boynton, the last syllable of the benediction was hardly spoken before he was out of the house. Curious eyes followed him, but no one had time to speak to him, for he quickly sprang over a stile leading from the churchyard to a foot path across the fields, and disappeared in the wood beyond.

But doubtless the saddest, the most pitying sympathy of the crowd went after Robert Jocelyn, as, with a face white and immovable as that of the dead, he moved through the throng, which divided to let him pass, and went away to home. He sat down by the open window, through which the pensive autumn sunshine streamed in warm and sweet, and burying his face in his hands, remained for a long time lost in gloomy thought. Bitter memories crowded thick upon him. The struggle in his soul was a cruel one, but it was the better part of him which conquered. After a long time he lifted his head, and drawing out his watch, took from the inner part of old-fashioned silver case a lock of hair, faded now, but once a bright warm brown. Over it lay a little watch-paper on which was painted in water colors a wreath of forget-me-nots encircling two clasping hands. Underneath the whole was the name "Phœbe." He gazed at these treasures long and steadily, while the hard look of suffering went out of his face and his eyes grew tender and moist with tears. He leaned his elbow on the window sill and looked out across the happy autumn field to the church yard where for so many years poor Phœbe had rested from her sorrows. Then his eye went on to his brother's house, from the door of which he presently saw little Lizzie pass out and take the path to the orchard. At sight of her his lips quivered slightly; he heaved one great sigh and then said, as if summoning strength for some final resolution, "yes, I will go and tell her."

Poor Lizzie had thought her cup was full before; but this day she was sure she could bear no more; and escaping as soon as possible from her mother, she sought the only place where she would likely to be uninterrupted, that she might cry her heart out alone. She hurried along till she reached her favorite seat beneath an ancient apple tree whose long branches drooped so low as to almost touch the ground. On one side was the wall, and on another a huge barberry bush, so that she was almost entirely shut from view, and any one approaching could not be seen until close upon her.

Now, not far distant from the Jocelyn orchard, and separated from it only by a small field, was a pleasant strip of woodland. It was a part of Mark Boynton's farm; and up and down its shaded paths their owner had been recklessly walking ever since he left the church. He alone, of all present that day, had understood in a flash the old man's blunder and its cause. In that moment when he drew himself up proudly in the face of all who looked at him, he was saying to himself, "She belongs to me, and she shall be mine. That notice shall be repeated here, and it shall be no blunder."

Now, as he restlessly paced to and fro, quite convinced that affairs had reached a crisis and could never stay as they were, he was fully resolved to make a good fight for his rights. He was just making up his mind to go to Robert Jocelyn and have it out with him at once, when he chanced to glance across the field to the orchard beyond, and his eyes caught the flutter of a pink dress among the trees. Well he knew who had worn that pink muslin in church; he knew, too, the nook under the apple tree, for he had sat there more than once with Lizzie Heath. Without a moment's hesitation he sprang over the low stone wall and went straight across the field to the old tree. There, as he expected, he found Lizzie. It is unnecessary to relate all the arguments he used to bring her to his way of thinking; at least they were not immediately effective, for the poor girl's conscience and sense of duty were unfortunately arrayed upon the wrong side. They had been thus occupied for perhaps half an hour and were on the verge of a genuine quarrel. Lizzie, with tear-stained face, sat pulling nervously at the long grass. Mark stood before her talking earnestly. She had said something about repairing her mother's wrong. He interrupted her almost angrily:

"How can you repair one wrong by doing another? That your mother failed to keep faith with Robert Jocelyn is nothing to you. A girl is not bound to marry every man her mother jilts. If she did wrong by him you cannot make it right by doing me the same wrong. I tell you that my claim is better than his. That he loves you I have no doubt—how could he help it?—but I love you as well as he, and you love me, for you have admitted it with your own lips. Oh, Lizzie! don't you know that love has some rights as well as duty?"

What answer Lizzie might have made I cannot tell, for just then the sound of a step in the grass made them both turn, and there stood Robert Jocelyn. Mark straightened himself with a defiant look, but Lizzie sat silent and trembling. It was to her the new-comer spoke.

'I thought to find you alone," he said, but perhaps it is better as it is. I have heard a part of your conversation, and what Mark says is right. I have thought it all out myself to-day, and came to tell you so. I have made a great mistake, but, thank God, I have found it out before it is too late. I hope you will forgive me, Lizzie. I have not been faithful to your mother, for I promised her upon her dying bed that I would watch over the happiness of her child; and I have not kept my word, but selfishly sought my own happiness, forgetting yours. Long ago I regarded you as my child; it was presumption in me to think that you could be anything else. But my eyes are fortunately opened. It will be all right between us, for I have found my child again."

He stopped and kissed her twice upon the lips so like her mother's. Then, taking Mark's hand, he said:

"This child has promised to be mine I give her to you. Be good to her, and may God bless you both."

Then he walked slowly away in the direction of his brother's house. The young people looked after him in silence their own great joy forgotten for the time in their sorrowful sympathy for him who had resigned to them so much.

Robert Jocelyn made it his care to reconcile Ezra and his wife to the change in Lizzie's destiny. By what argument he did so, and how things were explained to the public—if explained at all—I am unable to relate. It is sufficient to say that on the two Sundays immediately following, old Mr. Beaman again announced to the deeply interested congregation the intention of marriage between Mark Boynton and Elizabeth Heath, and the intention was carried out at no distant day.

It was many years ago that these things happened, during which the Boyntons have been a happy and a prosperous couple, with no reason to regret Mr. Beaman's mistake. Strong sons and pretty daughters have grown up around them. One of these, a gentle, blue-eyed girl, bears the name of Phœbe. With her is often seen an aged man who leans upon her arm, or follows her movements with eyes full of tenderness and love. "Uncle Robert" is the object of affection and reverence from all, but Phœbe is his own special darling. It is her gentle ministry which sheds light and beauty on the evening of his days. He is only waiting now, serenely waiting for the happiness which shall soon be his. And "grace, mercy and peace, the love of God, and the communion of His Holy Spirit," do abide with him now, and shall forever.

MISCELLANY.

BLACK HILLS SKETCH.

The Hanging of an Ohio Boy.

[From the Kansas City Times.]

There were four of us seated together around a cheerful pitch pine fire upon the side of a grassy knoll among the foothills, about forty miles from Custer. One of the party was a mountaineer, the rest were members of a large, well-armed train of Black Hillers, then toiling and working its way through a wilderness of sage brush, endeavoring to reach the trail our party had discovered a few hours before. We had selected a spot for a rest where the wind or the sun, or perhaps both, had cleared away the snow from about a huge pine knot almost petrified by age. The grass, too, was quite luxuriant, and offered an inducement for us to halt and rest until the train came up. The fire lighted, and the knot in a blaze, we brought forth our pipes to smoke, and watch the misty curtain rise. 'Twas a glorious scene on that crisp morning, and the man that died there that day should have felt proud of his magnificent death chamber. Nature seems to have lavished unlimited wealth of beauty upon the Black Hills, and fate seems to have led Dick Burnett to the most beautiful spot in the Hills in which to die. While we were calmly smoking around the fire, watching the misty canopy rise like a feathery veil from the valley beneath us; while we silently admired the magnificent back-ground of glistening snow and bright green pines, which in the morning sun appeared more beautiful than ever before; while we were thus quietly admiring the beautiful blood red, iron-tinctured valley below us, now plainly visible beneath the slowly rising curtain of mist, admiring the winding creek in its center, which, with its broad fringe of orange-colored kinnickinnic willow, appeared like a huge yellow snake in a basin of blood, a man rode suddenly upon us.

Each sprang to his feet, rifle in hand. The stranger turned his horse away in alarm, and rode quickly away. He was a white man, and we could not and had no reason to halt him. He rode out to the side of the road and dismounted.—Then he proceeded to arrange and to write upon one paper, which he placed in his bosom, and, after some hesitation, led his horse toward our surprised party, and halted about thirty paces distant, rifle and pistol in hand.

"Hallo there!"

"Hallo yourself!"

"Is this the Custer road?"

"Don't know. I've been lost all night. Who are you?"

"Pilgrims from Cheyenne. Been lost on Jenney's trail two days."

Then the lonely stranger rode up and stood restlessly awaiting interrogation. He said he had left Custer two days before; that he was drunk when he left, and did not know what he had done or how he had got lost. He received a lot of letters from our party, and soon afterward bade us adieu. He said he was going to the States, and we bade him look out for his scalp, and said good-bye.—Poor fellow! unfortunate drunk! It cost him his life. It was late in the afternoon when we met him again. We were in a dry camp, a camp in which snow must be melted for water for man and beast. The boys were busy at work shoveling snow into camp kettles and melting it for the horses. Supper was over and the guards were out. A shot awoke the reverberating echoes of the hills, and a minute afterwards every man of the fifty-five "pilgrims" were prepared for duty. A party of vigilantes rode into camp; they had come upon the guards suddenly and had been fired upon. They were rough looking men, but all quite civil. They inquired for a lawyer. We had one and he came forward. They asked for a Judge; we had none, so they elected one. They asked for a preacher, but found none. A clerk was found in the reporter. They had brought back the strange man of the morning. He was a prisoner and seemed to realize his position. He called the reporter and handed him back his mine matter, and requested him to write a few short letters for him. This was done, and he signed them while Court was being held—the Judge seated on a pile of harness, the jury on a wagon tongue.

"Dick Burnett!" shouted one of these strange, cruel men. Dick turned to the reporter, and handing him his papers and two or three pictures, said in a trembling, choking voice: "It's all over with me, I reckon. They all know me, and it's no use squerling."

He walked over to the wagon, while two of the party started to a darkless old cottonwood tree, where a lariat was thrown over a projecting limb.

"Dick Burnett," said old Colonel Lyon, "you've been caught in the act of stealing horses from the people of these hills. You have also been found guilty of shooting and wounding, with intent to kill, Peter S. Lambert, and with stealing his horse. This 'ere party of good and true men have settled this fact, and say you must hang. What have you to say against it?"

Dick, while old man Lyon was speaking, manifested little or no feeling. He looked in the faces of all, and seemed to expect some interference from the members of our train. He paused for a moment, then he said:

"I know I shot Pete Lambert, but he wanted to get the drop on me. I took his horse, and I may have taken a few others, but what I done I done when I was drunk. If I've got to swing, I'll do it like a man, only give me time to fix up matters afore I go."

Then the poor fellow sat down, and with tears in his eyes wrote a letter to his father in Steubenville, Ohio, and one to his brother in St. Louis, and still another to a lady in Coshocton, Ohio.—Then he arose, and dashing the tears from his bloodshot eyes, said he was ready. He gave his rifle and a horse to Colonel Lyon, to be sent back to the owner, Pete Lambert, and, folding his arms, walked to the tree. For a moment he hesitated. Life was sweet to him (he was not thirty). But he was seized and pushed forward to the tree, mounting the horse without hesitation. Then the tears came gushing from his eyes, while his arms were belted down to his side. The rope was passed over his neck and drawn taut. Another minute and the horse received a blow which sent him galloping down the valley, and Dick Burnett was struggling between heaven and earth. It was soon over, the rope untied, and he fell to the earth, and was left to the pilgrims to bury. We rolled him up in his saddle-blanket and interred him in the blood-red soil of "Red Canon," with a pine board at his head inscribed, "Richard Burnett, of Steubenville, Ohio. Died February 26, 1876."

ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

The Greatest Feat in the Annals of Railroading.

A train will start at 1 o'clock, on the morning of the 1st of June, for San Francisco, from the city of New York, a distance of 3,325 miles, with sixteen passengers, each of whom will pay $500 fare, the fare including a week's board at the Grand Palace Hotel at San Francisco.

Mr. Jarrett has engaged this train with the intention of making a Centennial event of the affair. Leaving New York at 1 o'clock of Thursday morning, June 1, he believes that his distinguished guests will dine at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco on Sunday, June 4.—There are bets that it cannot be done.—Thirty-four hours to the Mississippi river by rail, and no stoppages between New York and Pittsburgh, is something wonderful if it can be done. The United States Government has decided to send its mails by this lightning train, and Wells, Fargo & Co., will also send their gold, specie and valuable packages by the same.

The tickets for the guests are of exquisite workmanship, in book form, five inches by four in dimension. The outer coverings are of solid silver, burnished in the centre, and the ten leaves inside are engraved by a Baltimore firm. The passengers, sixteen in number, will have their silver-bound ticket books encased in white satin caskets, with a lilac of ecru satin lining. The cost of each ticket book and casket will be $40. During the passage of the train there will be relays of engines at every station where the train may stop.

The excursionists will form a stag party, no ladies being admitted on the train. It is intended to run but forty miles an hour, but the quickness of the trip will be accomplished by this continued speed without stoppages.

The tickets will permit the passengers to return at any time during six months following the 1st of June, 1876.

How to Make Barren Fruit Trees Bear.

A correspondent of the American Agriculturist says: "I wish to describe to you a method of making fruit trees bear, that I blundered on. Some fifteen years ago I had a small apple tree that leaned considerably. I drove a stake by it, tied a string to a limb and fastened it to the stake. The next year that limb blossomed full while not another blossom appeared on the tree, and as Tim Bunker said, "It sot me to thinking." and I came to the conclusion that the string was so tight that it prevented the sap returning to the roots, consequently it formed fruit buds. Having a couple of pear trees that were large enough to bear, but had never blossomed, I took a coarse twine and bound it several times round the trees above the lower limbs, and tied it as tight as I could. The next spring all the top above the cord blossomed as white as a sheet and there was not a blossom below the place the cord was tied. A neighbor seeing my trees loaded with pears used the same method with the same result. I think it is a much better way than cutting off the roots. In early summer, say June or July, wind a strong twine several times around the tree, or a single limb, and tie it, the tighter the better, and you will be pleased with the result.

The law passed in New York for the prevention of cruelty to children prohibits the employment of a child under sixteen years of age begging, peddling, or in any public entertainment, singing, dancing, or acrobatic, and any one so using a child can be arrested for a misdemeanor. Persons exhibiting the child will be considered guilty as well as those apprenticing or giving it into their control. Formerly the Society could only interfere when there was evident brutality or great danger to life and limb, as in the case of "Prince Leo," but hereafter it will be able to compel all exhibitions of children to be stopped, and if necessary the young performers may be sent to some institution. The Superintendent of the Society intends to enforce this law in preventing the use of little girls as bouquet-sellers at night, such employment exposing the children often to immoral associations, and all persons employing children in this way will be prosecuted. The law will also cover the Italian "musical combinations," organizations living on the results of the labor of the little street musicians.

A gentleman in this city has a pair of pantaloons which were worn by one of his ancestors a hundred years ago. They are made of home-spun cloth, except the seat, which is of thick leather. It is inferred from this that the original owner was a book agent.—[Norwich Bulletin.

How terrific must be the molecular action in the brain of a man who comes homes at one o'clock in the morning singing "Too ral, 'oural addy," and mistakes his wife's patent bustle, standing pale and rigid in the corner, for the spirt of his deceased mother-in-law.—[Globe-Democrat.

Vaccinate. Politeness never hurts anybody. Small-pox will not attack you if you allow it to take your arm.—[New York Graphic.

Perry County Centennial Organization!

THE FOURTH OF JULY TO BE APPROPRIATELY OBSERVED AT SOMERSET!

A GRAND BARBECUE!

A Hearty Welcome to All, and Ample Preparation for the 10,000 People who are Expected to be Present!

A Military Parade, Patriotic and Historical Addresses, a Jolly, Old-Fashioned Time, &c.,&c.

To the Vice Presidents by appointment and to Chairman of Committees of the "Perry County Centennial Organization."

GENTLEMEN:—You are hereby severally requested to notice your appointment as it appears in the subjoined report and to accept the same. If, for any reason, any appointee cannot serve, and declines the honor conferred by act of a large meeting of the citizens of the county, he, or they, will confer a special favor by informing me at an early day of his or their resignation, that the vacancies created thereby may be filled; and at the same time give me the names of gentlemen who will accept, act, and aid in promoting the object of the organization. It is expected that the Chairmen of the several committees will organize the same for work immediately, and that all appointed members of committees who cannot serve will promptly notified their Chairman. Prompt and vigorous action is necessary to make our county celebration what it should be a successful and happy gathering of the people.

Respectfully, your ob't serv't.,
T. SPENCER STILLMAN,
Cor. Sec'y Perry County Centennial Organization.

Citizens' Meeting.

The call for a meeting of the citizens of Somerset and the county at large, to make arrangements for the Centennial Anniversary on the coming 4th of July, resulted in the assembling of a large and enthusiastic gathering of the citizens of Somerset, and from Reading and adjoining townships. The meeting was called to order by Capt. H. C. Greiner, and organized for business by appointing Capt. A. P. Ashbrook, chairman; and O. M. Hamilton, secretary. The Chair, in a few brief and pertinent remarks, stated the object of the call, and the necessity of a permanent organization in order to effect the object. Capt. Greiner in order to test the feelings of the assembled citizens, offered the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That we will have a Centennial celebration of our National Independence at Somerset, to which the citizens of the whole county shall be invited."

Sam. Cassel suggested (but not as an amendment) the whole world be invited or made welcome. P. H. Binckley moved as an amendment that the resolution be altered so as to read:

"*Resolved*, That we will have a centennial celebration of our National Independence at Somerset, and no where else, to which the citizens of the whole country, and the rest of mankind shall be invited," and the same was unanimously adopted.

On motion of Capt. Greiner, the Chair appointed a committee on Permanent Organization, as follows; H. C. Greiner, Noah Karr, R. W. Levitt.

On motion, the Chair appointed the following "committe on committees:" O. M. Hamilton, W. H. Darst, T. S. Stillman, John L. Sheridan, Samuel Ream. Spirted remarks were made by S. Cassel, P. H. Binckley, Thos. Johnson, Martin Kagay, P. H. Shough, Jonas Bowman, A. L. Johnson, D. M. Matthews, W. M. Ream and others, on the magnitude of the occasion of the centennial celebration, and also the magnitude of the undertaking to provide the ways and means for the appropriate celebration of the day and the entertainment of the thousands whom it is expected and believed will assemble in old Somerset, the oldest town in the county in commemoration of the grand events of 100 years ago. There is to be no such word as fail, known in the vocabulary of our citizens in respect to the undertaking. We mean work and success, and such an ingathering of the people of the county as has not been had since its organization and will not be again witnessed until another century shall have been added to the flight of time.

On motion the meeting adjourned until Thursday evening next, at 7 o'clock, at which time the committees on permanent organization and on committees will report. The organization made and the work commenced. One great assurance of success is the intense interest manifested by our oldest citizens both in town and country, those who are drawing to the close of life, but are rejoicing that they have lived to see the Centennial year, and hope to live, to see and enjoy the centennial day of our Nation's birth.

To the citizens of Perry county Ohio, in adjourned convention assembled for the purpose of effecting a permanent organization and appointment of necessary committees to make due and full preparation for a general county observance and celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Our National Independence: Your committee on committees having attended to their duty to the best of their judgment and ability present the following report, and recommend the creation of the committees named and the appointment thereon of the persons named, with such additions as the meeting may deem wise and necessary.

COMMITTEES.

On preparing address to the people on the subject of the celebration for the County Newspapers—Martin Kagay, M. G. Mains.

On Speakers—H. C. Greiner, S. K. Ream, C. J. Skinner.

On Vocal Music—A. C. Elster, Geo. Brunner, jr., J. C. Curran.

On Martial Music—O. M. Hamilton, W. H. Darst, Thos. Levitt.

On Band—W. H. Darst, Col. N. F. Hitchcock, Jesse Magruder.

Executive Committee—W. H. Russell, O. M. Hamilton, A. P. Ashbrook, R. S. Cox, H. P. Lentz.

Finance Committee—E. T. Droege, Samuel Cassell, D. M. Mathews, Thos. M. Ashbrook, E. A. Hesse, Geo. H. Safford.

Committee on invitation and organization for procession of soldiers of the wars of 1812, Mexican War, and war of the Rebellion—Col. N. F. Hitchcock, Col. W. N. Free, Major J. W. Free, Capt. A. P. Ashbrook, Capt. H. C. Greiner, Capt. D. W. Fowler, Lieut. Levi Bowman, Sergt. W. H. Russell, and R. W. Levitt.

Committee on Printing—Martin Kagay, P. H. Binckley, T. Spencer Stillman.

Committee on invitation to aged citizens other than soldiers—Martin Kagay, M. F. Scott, Dixon Brown, Col. David Ream, George Wellen, John Brown, P. H. Shough.

Committe on Invitations to Civic Societies—T. Spencer Stillman, R. W. McMahon, Nathan Dennison.

Committee on Groves, Tables, Seats, Speakers, and aged People's Stands and Seats—Samuel Ream, George Green, John Mantz, John B. Jones, A. R. Yost, John L. Sheridan, Jonas Bowman, Jacob Mantz, Joseph Groff, Samuel Elder, Charles Cassel, George B. Flautt.

Committee on Fire Works—Benj Whitmer, R. S. Cox, Ed. Kempf, P. G. Matthies.

Committee on Water Supply—John B. Jones, Daniel Speice, Benj Spencer, James Shaw, Amos Heiser.

Committee on Invitations to Children of Congregations of Churches and Sunday Schools—Rev. D. H. Noon, Rev's Van Law, Weisman, Hoyman, Whitmer, Loucks, Arnold.

Committee on Soliciting Subscriptions—Thorn Tp.—Peter H. King, Irwin Yost, Fred Sterner, Gutelius Bros.

Hopewell Tp.—Robert Chalfant, John Dean, P. Melancthon Brunner, Seth R. Johnson.

Madison Tp.—John Danison, Joseph Embrey, Rev. James White.

Reading Tp.—W. H. Russell, John B. Jones, David Williams, John W. Westall, George Green, B. Whitmer, A. A. Finck, Samuel Ream, M. Bowman, John Kollman, A. H. Yost, D. R. Needy, Nat. Barnes, George Mathews, W. H. Walker, Jos. C. Myers, Isaac Weaver, Frank Dittoe, James W. Graves, J. Bickford.

Jackson Tp.—Dr. P. Folk, Joel Finck, Albert Bringardner.

Pike Tp.—P. Bastian, W. G. Bucknor, John Dike, Al. Morehead, John Furguson, A. W. Silnelcomb, J. W. Overmyer, Gib. Porter.

Harrison Tp.—G. W. Brown, Harvey Allen.

Clayton Tp.—Isaac Yost, Isaac Cooper Luther Guy, Ray Dean.

Bearfield Tp.—John Wise, Henry Herring.

Monroe Tp.—Charles Weimer, R. P. Nuzum.

Pleasant Tp.—Wm. Wiggins, D. P. McGonagle.

Coal Tp.—Capt. E. Abbott, W. J. Shriver.

Saltlick Tp.—Harrison Hazleton, Steward Marshall.

Monday Creek Tp.—James Price, Capt. Larimer, James Wilson, George Hendricks.

Committee on General Programme and order of the day—A. P. Ashbrook, Lewis Green, Jesse Magruder, Dr. Williard, J. F. McMahon, H. C. Greiner, J. W. Hull, Martin Kagay, R. B. Woodward, Isaac Weaver, T. S. Stillman, J. D. McKinney, James McQuaid, Aaron Binckley, E. R. P. Baker, Isaac Yost, Daniel Baker, Dr. S. S. Dollison, J. G. Kelso, Col. Wm. Spencer, D. M. Mathews.

Committee on Flags and Decoration—R. W. Levitt, Cecil H. Hope, John O. Skinner, Charles Backinstos, O. M. Hamilton, Charles Russell, Wm. Hindman, John B. Jones, Mrs. M. F. Scott, Mrs. D. M. Mathews, Mrs. Kate A. Brown, Mrs. R. W. Levitt, Mrs. Sarah A. Burns, Mrs. Allice McCormick, Mrs. John F. Mains, Mrs. George W. Brown, Miss Mary Darst, Miss Belle Hewitt, Miss Mary and Florence Magruder, Miss Gertrude Finck, Miss Nettie Ream, Miss Dick, Miss Addie Berkey, Miss Flora Hall, Miss Minerva Huston, Miss Jennie Rudolph, Mrs. D. R. Needy, Miss Eva Chilcote, Miss Lizzie Levitt.

Committee on Special Railroad Trains and reduction of rates of fare—T. Spencer Stillman.

Committee on Toast Hon. Wm. E. Finck, Col. Wm. Spencer, P. H. Binckley, A. P. Ashbrook, H