

SHOCKING FAMILY TRAGEDY.

A Pennsylvania Farmer Kills Two Brothers and Tries to Kill Sister and Sister-in-Law.

Worked into a frenzy as a result of an altercation with one of his brothers, Benjamin Franklin Wessinger, living on a farm several miles from Pottsville, Pa., Monday afternoon shot and killed his two brothers and attempted to kill his sister and a sister-in-law, and held a large posse of policemen at bay for nine hours before he was captured. The tragedy occurred on the farm of the father of the men. The dead men are Louis Wessinger, aged 27 years, single, and Frederick, aged 25, who leaves a widow. The fratricide is 45 years old.

Having realized what he had done and, fearing arrest, Benjamin decided to barricade himself in the barn. He went into the house, got a shotgun, several revolvers and ammunition and then took up his position in the barn.

When Sheriff Smith appeared on the scene a ruse was planned to capture the man. Another parley was held with the murderer and he agreed to let the two farm hands bring him his supper. The men were instructed to watch their opportunity, seize him by the arms and shout what would be the signal for the deputies to rush in. This they did and a terrible struggle took place. The murderer is a powerful man, but the force of numbers was too much for him, and he was tied hand and foot before he could further use his weapons.

Wessinger is believed to be insane. His mind is said to have been failing for some time. He had nothing to say regarding the tragedy, except that he exclaimed: "I am bewitched."

December Designer.

"Mother Love," always a touching theme but never more sacred than at this season, is exquisitely pictured in reproductions from noted paintings in the December Designer, and "The Bethlehem Star," a full page illustrated poem by Aloysius Coll, carries out still further the beautiful idea. "Christmas at Bear h," by Lillian C. Paschal, is a story of the West, while "The Art of Gold," by Ada Marie K., is another holiday romance, but in different vein. That well-known portrayer of happy childhood Mrs. Gabrielle E. Jackson, contributes the Christmas story for young folks, entitled "How Swipes Played Santa," and Dr. Sarah A. French Battey gives suggestions for "Holiday Tableaux, Home Made," accompanied by charming illustrations. "Nooks and Dens," by Mary Kilsyth, pictures and describes the artistic furnishings of odd and pretty rooms, and "A Christmas Sock Social" and "A Doll Party" will be of great assistance to the Sunday school or young folks' club in search of attractive entertainments for this season.

"Observances of Christmas," by Phebe L. Humphreys, tells The Designer readers why the Christmas tree, the Yule log and the holly wreath form part of the celebration, and "Mistletoe and Holly," by Cora S. Day, is a pretty holiday drama into which a love story is skillfully woven. "Toilettes for Gala Occasions," "Fashions and Fabrics," "Fads and Fancies" and "Fashion Notes for Men" all have their share of the Christmas element, and every department in general, but "The Kitchen Kingdom," in particular, is fairly bubbling over with it. "Dainty Edibles as Christmas Gifts," by Eleanor Marchant, and "Christmas Bonbons" by Alice Chittenden, are among the good things the latter contains. "For Little Folks Fingers," by M. Goodrow Richardson, supplies simple Christmas fancy work guaranteed

sufficient to keep a regiment of tots out of mischief for a few hours at least.

New Idea Woman's Magazine.

Have you ever asked yourself, in your quieter moments, "What was the happiest day of my life?" A group of clever and celebrated women have formed a symposium for the December number of the New Idea Woman's Magazine and have given their several experiences during the one happiest day of their lives, and the result is exceedingly interesting. This issue is the Christmas number, and the spirit of the holiday season prevails in its pages. Valuable suggestions for gifts, for feasting and for house decoration are in evidence, and many ideas are advanced. The number is also exceedingly rich in good fiction and verse, and is entertaining from cover to cover.

SPANKING MACHINE.

Almost Kills its Inventor While he is Making a Test.

Anoka (Minn) Cor Chicago American.

Harvey Miller, a farm hand, working for J. E. Reynolds, a prosperous farmer at Cedar Point, a few miles west of here, was spanked almost to death by a machine of his own contrivance.

Miller who is an inventor, discovered a "mother help" machine. It consists of a series of phonographs to be set in each room of the house. On pressing a button any one of the phonographs desired will call out: "stop that, Robert, and be a good boy." Or will yell out: "If you aren't a good boy mamma will whip you." The device is worked by electricity and is supposed to relieve the mother of much running to and fro after her offspring, and to make the latter behave.

Miller has also a graduated spanking attachment. The person to be spanked is strapped flat down on a board, while a strong hardwood paddle operated by an electric motor does the work. Two dials control the mechanism. On the dial are printed ages from 2 to 16, so that the force of the blows can be regulated according to the age. On the other are the words, "light, fair, good, hard, serious," to correspond with the offence for which punishment is to be inflicted.

Miller had finished the mechanism last night, and after vainly attempting to secure a friend to try it had himself strapped down on a board while a number of friends operated the works. The paddling was started at 2, slight, and gradually turned on until age 16, serious was reached.

Miller was by this time roaring for mercy and promising to be good while the onlookers were rolling on the floor, boubled up in laughter, not knowing that Miller, the inventor, had been terribly punished.

Miller's strength was rapidly failing when his friends noted his condition, but not being familiar with the machine were unable to make it stop.

Miller had lost consciousness when someone released the buckles of the straps which held him down and rescued him.

Miller's first act on regaining his senses was to destroy the "mothers help."

Better Than Pills.

The question has been asked—In what way are Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets superior to the ordinary cathartic and liver pills? Our answer is—They are easier and more pleasant to take and their effect is so gentle and so agreeable that one hardly realizes that it is produced by a medicine. Then they not only move the bowels but improve the appetite and aid the digestion. For sale at 25 cents per bottle by W. E. Pelham & Son, Newberry, S. C., and Prosperity Drug Co., Prosperity, S. C.

LETTER WRITING.

Its Decline as an Art Caused by the Modern Newspaper.

The wonderful development of the newspaper may be looked upon as a very potent factor in the decline of letter writing as an art. The letter no longer can be regarded as primarily the carrier of news. The expression of one's opinion about great contemporary events is indeed still left to the letter, but how much of an incentive to friendly correspondence is lost by the fact that every part of the world knows of important happenings almost simultaneously is not to be lightly estimated, says Gunton's Magazine. The stimulus to writing that comes from having "news" to impart is done away with, and it is not always that even the gifted letter writer can afford to lose that incentive. It is only the correspondent par excellence who knows how to attain the perfection of his art by writing delightfully of nothing, if indeed that may be called nothing which affords him a means for the employment of his delicate perceptions. For the saving quality of the genuine letter is in the ability of its author to put himself into it. If he writes about trivial things he does it with a grace of interest that disguises the triviality. He must not make his little fishes talk like whales, but he should, as Goldsmith himself knew how to do, make his letters of perpetual interest because of the aptness of their style to the simplicity of their thought.

The Delights of Nudity.

I cling to that perhaps fanciful theory that no primitive instinct of man is altogether lost. It is modified, amplified, refined; that is all. With all our culture we are barbarians still. Man is a clothed savage. And now and again he delights in doffing the clothing and returning heartily to savagery. How delightful the feel of the briny breeze and the boisterous wave on the bare pelt! Mr. Edward Carpenter falls at the, I think, eleven layers of clothing that intervene between our skins and the airs of heaven. Wait Whitman reveled in his nude sun bath. What a treat, too, sometimes to get away from the multicoursed dinner and to bite downright audibly into simple food in the fresh air and to lap water noisily from the brook! Well, walking perhaps is the primal instinct, ancient as Eden, where the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day. And if my theory is correct walking will persist till in recovered paradise man walks with his Maker again. No mechanical contrivance for locomotion will extirpate the tribe of tourists, of those who walk from love of walking.—Arnold Haultain in Atlantic.

Such Birds Come High.

There used to be in a store on Ninth avenue, New York, a very valuable canary whose owner and teacher, the wife of the German proprietor, refused an offer of \$500 for it. Sometimes as one entered the place there came from a corner in the rear a liquid peal of music so sweet and high and clear that it sounded like a piccolo without the metallic shrillness of that instrument. In a small wicker cage a black and yellow canary waltzed round and round, never quiet, and as it danced it sang the air of "Lauterbach" from beginning to end without a false quantity, without missing or changing a note. When the solo was finished the bird whisked up to its perch, trilled an improvisation and then began the melody again, breaking off in the middle, warbling a little in self-willed fashion and then finishing the air. It was a beautiful and unique performance.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Smoking in Banks.

In every bank in New York there is a rule against smoking, and it is doubtful if any depositor or visitor ever saw a coil of tobacco smoke sifting through the atmosphere in the big counting houses—that is, no visitor who is excluded from the building promptly when the bank closes. But if the curious could squeeze their way through those closed portals in the afternoon they would be treated to a very different sight.

The rules against smoking in all the big banks of the city apply only during banking hours. After the doors are closed and locked one can transform himself into a human volcano with perfect freedom—and he does. And "he" is legion.—New York Times.

A Personal Bill of Fare.

A squire of Andover once hired a brother of Patrick, who was in his employ. The terms were made with Pat before his brother's arrival, and the following conversation ensued:

Squire—I'll pay your brother one fifty a day, Patrick.

Patrick (bowing and smiling)—Yis, sor; yis, sor; and will he ate himself or will ye ate him, sor?

The squire thought that Dennis had better eat himself.—Lippincott's.

His Sobriety.

A gentleman who had grave doubts as to a servant's sobriety one day accused him of intemperance and as a test chalked a line across the floor and commanded him to walk along it.

The fellow looked at the line for a bit, then at his employer, and said: "No jokes, now, sir. Which line do you want me to walk on?"

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