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AT THE OFFICE OF THE JEFFERSONIAN.

[From the Dayton (Ohio) Journal.]

Thrilling Narrative—Poisoning a Husband.

A WIFE'S CONFESSION.

Mrs. Elizabeth Ragan who stands charged with the murder of her husband by the administration of poison, is the daughter of Martin Cunningham, an old and esteemed citizen of Colesville, Miami county. She is apparently about twenty two years of age, medium height, has blue eyes and brown hair, and may be pronounced a good-looking woman. She is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was always considered by those who knew her to be a good Christian, a kind and affectionate wife, and an exemplary member of society. But in the face of all this, she committed one of the most cold blooded murders ever recorded in the annals of crime. Her husband is said to have been an honest, temperate and industrious mechanic, always providing well for his family, and never so happy as when administering to the comforts of her he so dearly loved, but from whom he received the basest ingratitude in return.

James D. Mowry, also a citizen of Colesville, was arrested soon after the commission of the murder, upon the charge above stated. He is a man of property, has a wife and three children, and has always borne a good name. He is about thirty-five years of age, five feet ten inches in height, and as ill-favored a man as one would see in a day's journey. Mowry has been a member of the Methodist Church, in good standing, for many years. Upon the conclusion of the testimony of Monday evening, Mowry seemed in good spirits, and most of those who heard it were convinced of his innocence, and deeply sympathized with him. But on Tuesday morning, after hearing the testimony of Mrs. Ragan, the public mind underwent a great change; the sympathies of a great majority were enlisted in behalf of Mrs. Ragan, and nearly every one seemed convinced of the guilt of Mowry.

Mrs. Ragan made a full confession of her guilt, the chief cause of which was her passion for Mowry. The latter had, for a long time been importuning her to murder her husband. Some four months ago she wrote him the following letter on the subject:

Piqua, Dec. 6, 1854.

"Dear Jimmy: Once again I am seated to write a few lines to you. I said I would not any more, but you know I can't refrain from it, as I have been living in a perfect hell, (if you will allow the expression; it is a hard one, but nevertheless true), and I have been tormented day and night since I came home. He saw me kiss you, and that was enough.—Oh! how I have had to suffer for it. I did not think he saw me, but he was watching me. I am so nearly beside myself that I hardly know what I am doing.—He says that I shall not go home any more, and he says he will not get me any more clothes, and that I can't go as much as I have.

Now I can't stand this any longer, and I appeal to you for help. I have thought of one more plan; I am going to make one more proposition to you, and if you will do it, I will grant you, the request you have so long asked of me, as soon as you will only do what I want you. Now, it is this; you make a proposition to him to go and look at some new country—to Oregon, or Wisconsin, or some other place—and name the period right off, and if he says he has not the means, you tell him you will furnish the means if he will go for company; then I will persuade him to go, and you can go on horseback, or on the cars, and you can take your two horses and go the rest of the way—that is till you get a good way from here, and you can procure your poison and administer in oysters, and he will never know the difference; you can give them at some farm house; they will never know the difference, and you can pretend to take it hard to think you have to turn back.

When you can accomplish what I have told you, you can telegraph to me that he is dead; I will tell the Templars, and have them to make up thirty dollars and send to bear his expenses. If you will come up as soon as you get this, I will tell you all about it, and then grant you the request. Come up right away, I can tell you better. Now dear, do come; you know I love you; you are well aware of it. I will write no more till I see you. Come up right away. My ink is pale. Yours, in life or death.

Erom yours, or one that loves you."

This plan not being adapted by Mowry, she administered the poison herself.—In the course of her confession, she says: "I procured arsenic at the drug store, at Tippecanoe on Friday; came home on Saturday and administered it to my husband on Thursday; it was dark; I told Dr. Brownwell he took it himself; I repented of the act, and wanted the doctor to save his life. I have known nothing at all since his death, until the day before yesterday. I told Dr. Brownwell not to say anything of it to Ragan; I gave him only part of what I had; he came home at half past ten in the evening sick; I gave him no more until Monday morning, when I found him out over, and concluded to give him another dose; I knew Mowry was urging me to do it; if it were not for this same James Mowry, I should not now be in the fix I am; his words set heavily on my mind; I was

wrought up to the highest pitch; that was the last I gave him."

"R. C. Davis was in the room on Monday when I gave him the last dose of poison. I sent for his last poison by Mr. Kelly's son; had previously sent a little girl for it, with a note signed with a fictitious name, but she could not get it.—Told Mrs. Kelly that I wanted it for rats. It was a powder the doctor had left."

Mrs. Ragan is thus described by the Reporter of the trial for the Dayton Daily Gazette:

This morning Mrs. Ragan, the widow of Arthur Ragan, who was then present, although under arrest as the principal in his murder consented to be sworn. She came into court at 8 o'clock leaning on the arm of her father. She is a lady about twenty-two, possessing a graceful figure, and intelligent countenance, indicating much firmness and energy. She is quite attractive in her appearance and manner, with bright blue eyes, brown hair and fair complexion. She was scarcely at all discomposed, but seemed determined to make a full and clear statement of the whole affair. The following is her testimony.

Mrs. Ragan sworn.—I wrote a letter to James Mowry in December last; (copy of the letter given to read; this is a copy of the letter I sent; I had talked with Mowry before last summer, a year before as I was at my father's house, and was nursing my child, and he came to me and declared his affection for me; he said he had been miserable the last four years of his life; he took my child and carried it to another room, and tried to have me to follow, but I did not; I told him I was a wife and mother, and we ought not to think of former days; my child afterwards died, and I did not see Mowry until next fall, when I went to Tippecanoe to a Quarterly meeting, where I met him again; he declared his affection for me, and said he was miserable unless he could be with me; I still told him it was wrong, and we ought not to think of our former affection; I went down again in the winter and attended a protracted meeting; I was kneeling at the altar at church, and they all left but Mowry, and I saw him; he went home with me, and he declared his affection, and told me how miserable he was away from me; he asked me to write to him, and I told him I would, in a couple of weeks I wrote him a letter; I told him it was no use.

Second Day.—Mrs. Ragan—I did not see Mowry again until July last when I went to London. He again declared his affection for me, and said he would make one more plan for me, and that was to clove with him. I told him it would not do. He said he thought he could do it, and then we would live together; at last he said, "I will come up and give your old man a dose of arsenic, and that will lay him cold." After I came home I wrote him a letter, and he came again, and asked me to clove, but I would not; he then asked me to give my husband a dose of arsenic in his victuals, and he told me how I could do it; that I could give it to him at supper, and he be brought home dead, and they would not know the difference; he coaxed me and urged me very hard to do it. My husband found he was there and got jealous of me, and said he should not come again. He came up again in December last, and made a request.—My husband saw him returning on the bridge, and was mad about it; he took me by the shoulders and shook me; I felt bad and sick, and sat down and wrote a letter, a copy of which I have; he came up in January, and told me he had not got the letter; I told him what was in it; he told me to give my husband arsenic.—After this Mrs. Cecil visited me, and was going to Colesville, and I told her to ask Mowry to come up; he came and told me he had been studying how many grains of arsenic it would take to kill a man; he told me I could give it in coffee; just then Mrs. Temple came in, and I went to the dentist's with her; I soon after went to Colesville, and before I returned I got five cents' worth of arsenic at the drug store in Tippecanoe; went from the drug store to Morrison & Siele's; Mowry was in the store at the time, and he came up to me and asked me if I had consented to put my old man up of the way; I came home and gave my husband the arsenic the next Thursday night in his coffee.

Cross-Examination.—I was told fifteen minutes ago that I was to come here and testify; I have no legal counsel in regard to giving this testimony; father told me I was to come; I had no notice of it before; my father said he wanted me to stand my trial like a woman, and tell the truth; no one has spoken to me about Mowry, nor held the subject up to me; Mr. Goggin told me that Mowry was arrested; I did not want to tell my father about the affair; I prepared to keep it to myself; it is through his persuasion I do it; I want the guilty to suffer and the innocent to go clear; I did not mention our intimacy to any one; we had an attachment when I was too young to marry; I felt that our intimacy was wrong, and I told him so; did not enjoy religion much last winter; the first time I proposed to Mowry was to take him away was by the letter you have; he had proposed to it to me before when he was up here, and my husband was at home about the time I wrote the letter; he was there nearly all the afternoon with me, and no one came in, and said there was one way; he said he could give him arsenic in coffee or victuals, and he will go

to town and be brought back dead, and no one will know the difference; Ragan was not a Baptist and I a Methodist—he did not like to have me go to church so much, and treated me badly when I went; I formerly enjoyed religion, but I have been in company a good deal, and it led my mind away; I had no correspondence with any other man, except my cousin in London; when Mowry left me I told him I could not do it, and he told me I could take him away and then accomplish it. I wrote the letter the same night after he left, and after my husband had shook me; my husband told me when I left my father's to come home, and told me of it at the time he shook me; I thought it looked so easy and plausible that it could be done, but still told him I could not do it; he colored to the highest pitch, and told me if I could think of any plan, to write to him; I urged him in my letter because I could not do it; another plan was to get my husband to remove to Colesville; last winter I was sewing for Dr. Brownwell to pay my doctor's bill; I boarded in the country, but was home a few nights during my husband's absence last winter; the request referred to was that I should clove with him to some place out west; the other request was one very delicate; on which I do not wish to touch; it was never yet granted; Mowry was forever insisting on getting my husband out of the way every time he came up; and I thought if he wanted to do it so bad, he could do it himself; I thought he was more capable of doing any such thing; when he came up after I sent the letter I was at home alone with him; it was four weeks after and he still told me to give him poison; my husband was in the shop; the letter laid in the office four weeks; he came up after Christmas or before New Year; I think he came up when I sent for him by Mrs. Cecil in January; I told her to tell Mowry that Ragan wanted to settle with him; he was talking about how many grains would kill a man when Mrs. Temple came in; I was deeply in love with him at that time, and I have a great deal of respect for him now; I want to have him suffer no more than myself; I want to tell everything just as it is; my husband came home from Colesville last winter before I did; I had promised to stay two weeks; Ragan did not ask me to come up with him. (Here follows that portion of her confession first given above.) Sent for my father Tuesday noon; I was in and out of the room the afternoon he died; I was grieved—that is one thing certain; my father had no talk about the poisoning of Ragan; my husband told me he had ordered the will to be destroyed; for he had heard some hard things; the will was made on Tuesday, March 27, before he was sick; he said he had given me all the property; told me Sunday he was sick about the will; was surprised that he had made one; I had dreamed that he was dead, and told him; I knew nothing of the will on Sunday; three weeks ago I was at dinner with my husband; they had some nuts, and I went to the kitchen for a fork, and then he asked me if I was going to dispatch him; my husband told me he was tired of living with me, and I should take my clothes and leave; I said these things without any legal advice; or my father's advice; I have not talked with any one about it; have not seen a minister. * * * I sent a letter to Mowry about two weeks ago but I did not say I was glad he did not do it, or that he was getting along well; I asked him to come for I had some things to tell him; he did not come; I wrote to him that some woman was corresponding with Ragan, and that she says to him in one of her letters which I found, "You say if I don't do so and so you will make way with yourself"; I found one letter in the bottom of his boot, one in his pocket, and another; he said he was tired of living, and thought of making way with himself; the letters were signed Ann; suppose it was on her account that he thought of killing himself; I first knew of this last winter; I never heard my husband say there was a rascal in town was ruining him; my miniature was sent with others to my father's; had mine taken last winter at Van Cleve's with Mrs. Cecil; I have not had any intimacy with any man in Piqua; I should like to know what man you mean; I heard Esq. Hart was employed; I have not talked at all with them about it; my father told me. State rested.

The defence merely adduced evidence to prove the good standing of Mowry, and rested the case.

Justice Sage, deeming it a case in which the presumption of guilt was very great, refused to recognize defendant Mowry, and committed him to jail to await the action of the Grand Jury.

A dispatch to the Dayton Journal, states that Mrs. Ragan underwent a merely formal examination, and that she was committed for trial.

A strong solution of alum with some whiskey mixed in it, is said to be a most excellent remedy for the galled shoulders of horses. Apply it three times a day until the wound is healed.

"Why is an old maid like Sebastian?" Because she is "not yet taken."

The aggregate cash value of farms in the State of New Jersey, is \$120,337,511.

Buffalo contains 50,000 inhabitants.

Educational.

Why does not my Child learn more?

This question asked every day by some one may be answered in many ways. The most common way is "It is the fault of the teacher." This may be true—he may neglect his duty, but do you, a parent, fulfill yours? In every well regulated school each scholar has some lesson to learn at home. Are you careful each evening to see that your child does this, or do you permit him to learn other lessons, with the rabble in the street, till 9 or 10 o'clock? Perhaps you will say "That is the teacher's business, let him flog them or detain them after school."—They are under his immediate control, but six hours each day, the remaining 18 they are under yours. If you do not feel a sufficient interest in them to see that they are doing right, how can you expect any one else. Have you ever visited the school, and examined the plans by which they are taught? "You have no time." When you have a pig to fatten you visit the pen at least once every three months, and cannot you spare the same amount of time to visit the place where your children's minds are fattened? Which do you estimate most highly your child or pig?—Is it right to find fault with the teacher in the presence of your child and thereby destroy his confidence in him? Suppose you have strong reasons to believe that he has done wrong, would it not be better to speak to him in a gentlemanly manner and let him make some explanation if possible. Remember the old proverb.—"There are always two sides to a Johnny cake," and hear both sides before you pronounce your judgment. Do you never make mistakes in the government of your own children, and if in addition to them, you had the control of your neighbor's, would your government always be perfect. Think of these things we beseech you.

From the Pennsylvania School Journal. Daily Preparation by the Teacher for his Classes.

MR. BURROWS.—Among the topics suggested for discussion in the columns of the Journal, I was glad to see the above. Being convinced of the claim which this subject has upon the practical consideration of teachers, I hoped it would be deemed a matter of sufficient importance to enlist the attention of some one, among your many able correspondents. Indeed, it really seemed that a knowledge of the indifference of many if not a majority of teachers, would induce such to strike a blow here. But, if this indifference has been deemed "an enemy unworthy of their steel," it may be that a lighter missile will be efficient.

Perhaps there is no greater hindrance, at present, to the complete success of our school system than the want of amply qualified teachers. The want is felt—severely felt. Superintendents find themselves embarrassed, in determining the grade of certificate they ought to give.—This ought not to be. The teacher who presents himself for examination ought to claim, by virtue of his qualification, a first class certificate. The appeal for such a class of teachers is to the teachers themselves. It is in their power to bring into the field a degree of qualifications, worthy of the profession. This they may seek through different channels. Schools especially for their preparation are established in different sections, teachers' associations and institutes are becoming common, and best of all, the teacher has a few hours daily to devote, if he will, in extending the borders of his knowledge.

This we regard as a most important means placed in the hands of the teacher for his improvement. He need not be at a loss what to pursue. The routine of studies pursued in his own school, will open a field wide enough for his explorations. It is not enough that the teacher has previously mastered one text-book upon a particular subject; he should also seek the opinions of others upon it, and compare with them his own reflections and experience. He will thus enlarge his sphere of thought, his conceptions of truth will grow more vivid, and his love for the harmony and beauty of science, will become more and more abiding. This correct understanding of, combined with a love for the intricacies of science; constitutes no small part of the teacher's qualifications. Patient, untiring devotion to study is the price of these jewels.

But though the teacher may be fully qualified and in mental acquirements may be far in advance of his pupils, still this daily preparation will be found necessary to success. The memory needs to be polished. Each review of the subject will induce a more correct and thorough understanding of it. The more thought bestowed upon a theme, the better it is comprehended. Who does not know that this comprehension of a subject furnishes a key for unlocking its mysteries to others? This he cannot do successfully with the mere facts of science. He must study after the laws and principles, by which these facts are bound together in one intelligent system. Indeed, there is no

science until this latter work is performed, and all the isolated facts are made harmonious and consistent. Yet how can the teacher be supposed to retain the facts and relations of all the subjects he is daily called upon to teach, unless he daily trace the relations? With his memory comparatively blurred and darkened, his field for illustration will become exceedingly limited. The facts he presents will be mere appearance, lacking that harmonious combination, so essential to their being received as beautiful.

Suppose that the teacher is teaching Geography: The facts in the subject are so numerous, that, unless the teacher enlarge upon these facts, and bring much collateral matter to bear upon them, it will soon become uninteresting. Let him, however, daily introduce some interesting fact in history connected with the country the class are studying, and he will find it to work like a charm, in exciting an interest and inducing an effort, upon subsequent lessons. Occasional explanations concerning the probable geological causes which have produced those appearances which our earth presents, will soon induce the belief that Geography is, or at least is connected with, science. Meteorological facts and principles may also be brought to bear, in explaining many of these appearances. As all science is intimately connected with all other science, the teacher will find it both for his interest, and for the interests of those he instructs, to bring facts from all its departments to illustrate and beautify any one.

Chester, Delaware, Co., April, 1855. C. W. D.

Wild Men of Borneo.

Further toward the North are to be found men living absolutely in a state of nature; who neither cultivate the ground, nor live in huts; who neither eat rice or salt, and who do not associate with each other but rove about the woods like wild beasts. The sexes meet in the jungles, or a man carries away a woman from company. When the children are old enough to shift for themselves, they usually separate, neither one afterwards thinking of the other. At night they sleep under some large tree, the branches of which hang low. In these they fasten the children in a kind of a swing. Around the tree they make a fire to keep off the wild beasts and snakes. They cover themselves with a piece of bark, and in this, also, they wrap their children. It is soft and warm, but will not keep out the rain. These poor creatures are looked upon and treated by the Dayaks as wild beasts. Hunting parties of twenty-five or thirty go out and amuse themselves with shooting at the children in the trees with the sumpit, the same as monkeys, from which they are not easily distinguished. The men taken in these excursions are invariably killed, and the women commonly spared, if they are young. It is somewhat remarkable that the children of these wild people will not be sufficiently tamed to be trusted with their liberty. Solgie told me he never recollected an instance when they did not escape the first opportunity, notwithstanding many of them had been treated kindly for years. The consequence is, all the chiefs who call themselves civilized, no sooner take them than they cut off the foot, sticking the stump in a bamboo of molten daman; their escape is thus prevented, and their services in paddling canoes retained. An old Dayak loves to dwell upon his success on these hunting excursions; and the terror of the woman and children, when taken, affords a fruitful theme of amusement at all their meetings.

The following additional information is, however, somewhat unexpected. After speaking of the excellence of the iron and steel of the interior of Borneo, and of the extent of its manufacture among the Dayak tribes, Dalton continues: "Those men whom I have noticed living in a state of nature, building no habitations of any kind, and eating nothing but fruits, snakes and monkeys, yet procure this excellent iron, and make blades sought after by every Dayak, who, in their hunting excursions, have in view the possession of the poor creature's spear, or mandon, as much as his head, improbable as it may appear.—*Alta California*."

A FUNNY CASE OF HIVING BEES.

A chap in Louisiana recently took a notion for a bath in an inviting stream, which flowed through a field he was engaged in plowing, and divesting himself of his clothes for the purpose, hung his unmentionables upon the limb of a locust tree, half by. He had luxuriated for some half an hour, and swam back to his starting point, when he perceived a bevy of young dawsels approaching with their flower baskets. He scampered up the bank and into his breeches, but, alas! unhappy man, not soon enough. They were occupied. A small colony of bees were in possession. He reports that he got home—but how, he knows not. "Thanks he ran"—knows he halloed—and is sure the girls laughed. His friends found in his pantaloons a number of dead bees—some angry ones—and the biggest half of a very sore ouch.

Singular.—Last winter some gold fish in a basin in the Crystal Palace, New York, were frozen up solid, but when the ice thawed this spring the fish came out alive, though the color came off. As warm weather comes on the color is returning. So says an exchange paper.