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"DOWN HILL."

A Life Picture.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Not long since I had occasion to visit one of our courts, and while conversing with a legal friend I heard the name of JOHN ANDERSON called.

"There is a hard case," remarked my friend.

I looked upon the man in the prisoner's dock. He was standing up, and he pleaded guilty to the crime of THEFT. He was a tall man, but bent and infirm, though not old. His garb was torn, sparse, and filthy; his face all bloated and blood-hot; hair matted with dirt; and his bowed form quivering with delirium. Certainly I never saw a more pitiable object—Surely that man was not born a villain.

I moved my place to obtain a fairer view of his head. He gazed upon me a single instant, and then, covering his face with his hands, he sank powerless into his seat.

"Good God!" I involuntarily ejaculated, starting forward. "Will—"

I had half spoken his first name when he quickly raised his head and cast upon me a look of such imploring agony that my tongue was tied at once. Then he covered his face again. I asked my legal companion if the prisoner had counsel. He said no. I then told him to do all in his power for the poor fellow's benefit, and I would pay him. He promised, and I left. I could not remain and see that man tried. Tears came to my eyes as I gazed upon him, and it was not until I had gained the street and walked some distance that I could breathe freely.

John Anderson! Alas! he was ashamed to be known as his mother's son!—That was not his name; but you shall know him by no other. I will call him by the name that stands upon the records of the court.

John Anderson was my school-mate; and it was not many years ago—not over twenty—that we left our academy together—he to return to the home of wealthy parents; I to sit down in the dingy sanctum of a newspaper office for a few years, and then wander off across the ocean. I was gone some four years, and when I returned I found John a married man—His father was dead and he had left his only son a princely fortune.

"Ah, C—," he said to me, as he met me at the railway station, "you shall see what a bird I have caged. My Ellen is a lark—a robin—a very princess of all birds that ever looked beautiful or sang sweetly!"

He was enthusiastic, but not mistaken, for I had found his wife all he had said, simply omitting the poetry. She was truly one of the most beautiful women I ever saw. And so good too—so loving and so kind. Aye—she so loved John that she really loved all his friends. What a lucky fellow to find such a wife. And what a lucky woman to find such a husband; for John Anderson was as handsome as she. Tall, straight, manly, high browed, with rich chestnut curls, and a face as faultlessly noble as ever an artist copied. And he was good, too; and kind generous, and true.

I spent a week with them, and I was happy all the while. John's mother lived with them—a fine old lady as ever breaded, and making herself constant joy and pride in doating upon her "Darling Boy," as she always called him. I gave her an account of my adventures by sea and land in foreign climes, and she kissed me when I left. She said she kissed me because I loved her "darling."

I did not see John again for years. I reached his house in the evening. He was not in, but his wife and mother were there to receive me, and two curly-headed boys were at play about Ellen's chair. I knew at once they were my friends children. Everything seemed pleasant until the little ones were a bed and a-leep, and then I could see that Ellen became troubled. She tried to hide it, but a face so used to sunshine and smiles could not wear a cloud concealed.

At length John came. His face was flushed, and his eyes looked inflamed. He grasped my hand with a happy laugh—called me "Old Fellow," "Old Dog,"—and I must come and live with him, and many other extravagant things. His wife tried to hide her tears, while his mother shook her head and said—

"He'll soon see these wild oats soon. My darling never can be a mad man."

"God grant it," I thought to myself, and I know the same prayer was upon Ellen's lips.

It was late when we retired, and we might not have done so even then, had not John fallen asleep in his chair.

On the following morning I walked out with my friend. I told him I was sorry to see him as I saw him the night before. "Oh," said he, with a laugh, "that was

nothing. Only a little wine party. We had a glorious time. I wish you had been there."

At first I thought I would say no more; but it was not my duty. I knew his nature better than he knew it himself. His appetite and pleasures bounded his own vision. I knew how kind and generous he was—alas! too kind—too generous!

"John, could you have seen Ellen's face last evening you would have trembled.—Can you make her unhappy?" He stopped me with—

"Don't be a fool! Why should she be unhappy?"

"Because she fears you are going down hill," I told him.

"Did she say so?" he asked, with a flashing face.

"No—I read it in her looks."

"Perhaps a reflection of your own thoughts," he suggested.

"I surely thought so when you came home," I replied.

Never can I forget the look he gave me then—so full of reproof, of surprise, and of pain.

"O—, I forgive you, for I know you to be my friend; but never speak to me again like that. I going down hill! You know better. That can never be. I know my own power. I know my own wants. My mother knows me better than Ellen does."

Ab—had that mother been as wise as she was loving, she would have seen that the "wild oats" which her son was sowing would surely grow up and ripen, only to furnish seed for re-sowing! But she loved him—loved him almost too well—or I should say—too blindly. But I could say no more. I only prayed that God would guard him; and then we conversed upon other subjects. I could spend but one day with him; but we promised to correspond often.

Three years more passed, during which John Anderson wrote to me at least once a month, and sometimes oftener; but at the end of that time his letters ceased coming, and I received no more for two years, when I again found myself in his native town. It was early in the afternoon when I arrived, and I took dinner at the hotel.

I had finished my meal, and was lounging in front of the hotel, when I saw a funeral procession winding into a distant church-yard. I asked the landlord whose funeral it was.

"Mrs. Anderson's," he said, and as he spoke, I noticed a slight drooping of the head, as though it cut him to say so.

"What—John Anderson's wife?"

"No," he replied. "It is his mother; and as he said this he turned away; but a gentleman who stood near, and had overheard our conversation, at once took up the theme.

"Our host don't seem inclined to converse upon that subject," he remarked, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Did you ever know John Anderson?"

He was my school-mate in boyhood, and my bosom friend in youth, I told him.

He led me one side and spoke as follows:

"Poor John! He was the pride of this town six years ago. This man opened his hotel at that time, and sought custom by giving wine suppers. John was present at most of them—the gayest of the gay, and the most generous of the party. In fact, he paid for nearly every one of them. Then he began to go down hill! And he has been going down ever since. At times true friends have prevailed upon him to stop; but his stops were of short duration. A short season of sunshine would gleam upon his home, and then the night came, more dark and drear than before. He said that he would never be drunk again; yet he would take a glass of wine with a friend! That glass of wine was but the gate that let in the flood. Six years ago he was worth sixty thousand dollars. Yesterday he borrowed fifty dollars to pay his mother's funeral expenses! That poor mother bore up as long as she could. She saw her son—her 'darling Boy,' she always called him—brought home drunk many times, and—she even bore blows from him! But she's at rest now! Her 'Darling' wore her life away, and brought her gray hairs in sorrow to the grave! Oh! I hope this may reform him!"

"But his wife!" I asked.

"Her heavenly love has held her up thus far, but she is only a shadow of the wife that blessed his home six years ago."

"My informant was deeply affected, and so was I, and asked him no more.

During the remainder of the afternoon I debated with myself whether to call upon John at all. But finally I resolved to go, though I waited till after tea. I found John and his wife alone. They had both been weeping, though I could see at a glance that Ellen's face was beaming with love and hope. But oh! his wife was changed—sadly, painfully so.—They were glad to see me, and my hand was shaken warmly.

"Dear C—, don't say a word of the past," John urged, taking my hand a second time. "I know you spoke the truth to me five years ago. I was going down hill! But I have gone as far as I can. I have sworn, and my oath shall be kept. Ellen and I are going to be happy now."

The poor fellow burst into tears here. His wife followed suit; and I kept them company. I could not help crying like a child. My God, what a sight! The

once noble, true man so fallen—became a mere broken glass, the last fragment only retained the image it once bore—a poor suppliant at the feet of Hope, begging a grain of warmth for the hearts of himself and wife! And how I had honored and loved that man—and how I loved him still! Oh! I hoped—aye, more than hoped—I believed—he would be saved.—And as I gazed upon that wife—so trusting, so loving, so true, and so hopeful still, even in the midst of living death—I prayed more fervently than I ever prayed before that God would raise him up—lead him back to the top of the hill!

In the morning I saw the children—grown to two intelligent boys now—and though they looked pale and wan, yet they smiled and seemed happy when their father kissed them. When John took me by the hand, and the last words he said, were—

"Trust me. Believe me now. I will be a MAN henceforth while life lasts!"

A little over two years more had passed, when I read in a newspaper the death of ELLEN ANDERSON. I started for the town where they had lived as soon as possible, for I might help—some one! A fearful presentment had possessed my mind.

I stopped at the stately house where they had dwelt, but strangers occupied it.

"Where is John Anderson?" I asked.

"Don't know, I'm sure. He's been gone these three months. His wife died in the mad house last week!"

"And the children?"

"O—they both died before she did!"

I staggered back and hurried from the place, I hardly knew which way I went, but instinct led me to the church-yard.—I found four graves which had been made in three years. The mother, the wife, and two children slept in them.

"And what has done this!" I asked myself. And a voice answered from the lovely sleeping places—

"THE DEMON OF THE WINE TABLE!"

But this was not all the work. No, no. The next I saw—O, God!—was far more terrible! I saw it in the city court room. But this was not the last—not the last!

I saw my legal friend on the day following the trial. He said John Anderson was in prison. I hastened to see him. The turnkey conducted me to his cell—the key turned in the huge lock—the ponderous door swung with a sharp creak upon its hinges—and I saw—a dead body suspended by the neck from a grating of the window! I looked at the horrible face—I could see nothing of John Anderson there—but the face I had seen in the court-room was sufficient to connect the two; and I knew that this was all that was left on earth of him I had loved so well!

And this was the last of the DEMON'S work—the last act in the terrible drama! Ah—from the first sparkle of the red wine it had been down—down—down—until the foot of the hill had been finally reached!

When I turned away from that cell, and once more walked amid the flashing saloons and revel-halls, I wished that my voice had power to thunder the life story of which I had been a witness into the ears of all living men!

Closed for Repairs.

In Judge L's office was always kept for private entertainment and solace, a demijohn of "good old Jamaica." His Honor noticing that every Monday morning it was a lighter, a more abstracted "John" than he left it on Saturday night. Sam was also missing from his usual seat in the orthodox paternal pew.

On Sunday afternoon Sam came in about five o'clock, and (rather heavily) went up stairs. The Judge called after him: "Sam, where have you been?"

"To church, sir."

"What church, Sam?"

"The Second Methodist, sir."

"Have a good sermon, Sam?"

"Very powerful, sir; it quite staggered me, sir."

"Ah, I see," said the Judge, "quite powerful, eh, Sam?"

The next Sunday the son came home rather earlier than usual, and apparently not so much "under the weather." His father hailed him with: "Well, Sam, been to the 'Secord Meth.' again to-day?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good sermon, my boy?"

"Fact was, father, that I couldn't get in; church shut up and a ticket on the door."

"Sorry, Sam; keep going, you may get good by it yet."

Sam says on going to the office for his usual spiritual refreshment, he found the "John" empty and bearing this label:—"There will be no service here to-day, this church being closed for repairs!"

Sam departed a "sadder and a wiser," but (with his bibulous proclivities) not a better man.

A "thrilling tragedy" was enacted at Bangor, Me., the other night. An honest Scotch shoemaker found his wife and a perfidious neighbor as they should not be, and instead of killing them on the spot dragged them to sign a confession, with an agreement to pay the expenses of procuring a divorce.

It's a great pleasure to be alone, especially when you have your sweetheart with you.

Hints to Young Men.

There are many men in this and every other community, who have grown gray in the race for wealth, and while in the "sear and yellow leaf" they mourn over their misfortune and poverty. They have lived almost a life time without experiencing the great truth that industry, economy and perseverance, are the only requisites to success in business. They never stop to reflect that they have squandered a fortune in spasmodic efforts to become millionaires. Speculations and lucky bids makesome men rich, but a single grain of common sense will teach a reasonable man that the surest means of attaining worldly prosperity, is an honest, useful pursuit, diligently and economically prosecuted. One man may become suddenly rich by the purchase of a single lottery ticket, while ten thousand will be beggared, although they may deal in lotteries all their lives. So it is with wild speculation. In this fast age, men have no patience to bide their time. They shift from one trade to another—try this avocation and that—and as a necessary consequence, they are "jacks of all trades, and masters of none." The shoemaker envies the blacksmith, and the blacksmith thinks he could flourish as a carpenter.—Every tradesman esteems his own calling as the meanest upon the face of the earth, and he quits it only to find out in after years that he made a sad mistake. Then he is forced to exclaim—"If I had only let well enough alone, I would now have been independent."

The road to wealth is a rugged one, and in traveling many faint by the way from over-exertion. Others lose valuable days and weeks by tarrying at the "watering stations"—the magnificent hotels and gilded saloons which are set up at every mile-post. The only way in which a laboring man or a mechanic can hope to realize a competency, is by living always within his means. If he wishes to "spend as he goes along," he must bear the consequence. Thousands live upon that very principle. They think it but proper that they should "take the good of their money," as the saying is. Their motto is, "Take no heed for to-morrow." Persons who live thus, should never complain when the hour of adversity overtakes them. The ant and bee would starve in winter if they did not provide in summer, and the man who lives from "hand to mouth" is sure to feel the pinchings of want, or become the recipient of the alms of others. No man of sense or spirit should pursue such a course.

Then, let young men begin life aright, with a common sense view of what he is about. Let his desires be reasonable and rational, and although he start in the world without a copper, he may become independent, just so sure as he lives to need wealth. To be economical, it is not necessary to be mean or niggardly. Economy, properly considered, is only saving a fractional part each week or year, to provide against contingencies—and no man, however high-minded he may be, should neglect so to do. To illustrate what we mean, let us put the case thus:—

There is scarcely a young man of good sense in this city, who cannot save \$100 easily from his earnings, and if he will forego cigars, billiards, and juleps he can save double that amount. Figures sometimes produce almost incredible results. Thus, for instance, if a young man upon his twentieth birthday will invest \$100 in any stock company paying ten per cent., and annually thereafter, will invest the same amount and the accumulation of interest, he will be worth, when he is thirty years old, \$1,753; when forty years old, \$6,300; when fifty years old, \$18,150; when sixty years old, \$48,700. How simple then, is the plan by which a young man of the present day can pass his old age in comfort and luxury. He has only to regulate his expense so as to save one hundred dollars each year from his income. Young men, are not these facts worthy of your consideration? If so, lose no time in speculation, but choose the sure road to wealth.—Pittsburg True Press.

A Drunkard Eaten up by Rattlesnakes.

The body of a vagrant Scotchman was found a few days since, on Flat Rock, near West Chazy, Clinton County, N. Y. Near the spot where the remains lay is a large chasm or ledge of rocks, that has long been known as the den of a great number of rattlesnakes, and from the trails leading between the corpse and the rocks, it is evident that the unfortunate man was literally picked from the bones. It is supposed the poor fellow wandered to the spot, and falling down in a state of unconsciousness, became an easy prey to the reptiles.

The Elastic Egg.

Take a good sound egg, place it in strong vinegar, and allow it to remain twelve hours; it will then become soft and elastic. In this state it can be squeezed into a tolerably wide-mouthed bottle; when in, it must be covered with water having some soda in it. In a few hours this preparation will restore the egg nearly to its original solidity, after which the liquid should be poured off and the bottle dried. Keep it as a curiosity to puzzle your friends for an explanation how the egg was laid in the bottle.

The cost of a horse is the gift of nature. That of an ass is often the work of the tailor.

Daring Feat at Niagara.

CROSSING ON STILTS ABOVE THE FALLS

A correspondent of the the Chicago Press and Tribune gives the following particulars of the recent insane hazard at Niagara Falls, of Signor Gaspa Morelli, alias Andrew Greenleaf, a dare devil Yankee boy, who for a wager of \$1,000 on Monday week, actually crossed Niagara river, walking upon stilts, between Goat Island and the Falls. This writer says:—

Punctually at 7 o'clock, Morelli appeared, in fine spirits and condition.—He had with him a pair of stilts about twelve feet long, made of wrought iron, flat, sharp-edged and pointed—shaped, in fact, almost precisely like a double-edged dagger. These were firmly fastened to his legs, and he walked towards the terrible river with a confident smile. The morning was clear and cold, but he was attired very lightly, in a dress not unlike that usually worn by professional gymnasts. At ten minutes past seven he stepped into the water, which in another moment was boiling, surging, and rushing beneath his feet. The boldest lookers on held their breath in suspense, as the daring man receded from shore.—He alone seemed unmoved, and passed on, slowly and carefully, avoiding the larger rocks which were made apparent by the eddying current. His steps at first were very short and carefully made, but afterwards became bolder and longer.

The stilts, of course, were so placed that the current struck only against their sharp edges, and produced but little effect, but the danger from the snarled rocks, and the conviction that a single false step would send him to death produced a feeling that was horribly painful. Once or twice he seemed to lose his balance, and a sickening shudder ran through each one of the beholders. Recovering himself he kept on—still receded, until to our straining eyes he could scarcely be distinguished from the foaming waters.—The middle of the river was attained at last; hours seemed to have fled, but it was barely seventeen minutes since he left the shore. As he approached the deepest and most dangerous part of his route, the suspense became more fearfully intense. No word was spoken, except that one man offered another five dollars for a moment's use of his lorgnette, which offer passed unheeded. Just as Morelli reached the swiftest and deepest portion of the current, he seemed to totter—sink—he threw up his arms! I closed my eyes. Opening them a moment after, I saw that he was still standing. A few moments more and he had reached the Canadian bank—and he fell exhausted into the arms of two men who were waiting for him.

At this hour (3 P. M.) he had nearly recovered, and though still in bed, receives the congratulations of dozens of visitors who came pouring in. He left the American shore 960 feet above the fall, and came out about 1,000 feet above the Canadian. The money has already been handed over to him, and all will agree that it was fairly won.

Losses of Territory by Spain.

At one time the Spanish Empire occupied the eighth portion of the known world, comprising a space of 800,000,000 square miles, with a population of 70,000,000. Of this vast territory more than two thirds have been lost. In 1563 Spain gave up the Isle of Malta to the St. John. In 1620 the Lower Navarre and Bearne were yielded to France, and in 1640 the Russelton. In 1640 Spain lost Portugal and her colonies. In 1648 she recognized the sovereignty of the Netherlands. In 1626 the English wrested the Barbadoes from her, in 1655 Jamaica, in 1703 Gibraltar, in 1718 the Luces, in 1797 Trinidad. In the seventeenth century, France took possession of Martinico, New Granada, Guadaloupe, and the half of the Isle of San Domingo, and in 1800 Louisiana. In the eighteenth century, Spain yielded up Sardinia to the Duke of Savoy, and to Morocco her rights on Mazelquiver and Oran.—She ceded Parma Piacenza and Lucca, with other dominions in the North of Italy, to princes of the house of Bourbon and in 1750 Naples, and Sicily were emancipated from the Spanish government. In 1819 she sold Florida to the United States; in 1821 she lost half of the Isle of San Domingo; and before 1825 all her vast possessions on the American continent were lost to her forever. Her only foreign possessions now are the Isles of Cuba and Porto Rico, the Philippines, and some small African colonies.

Satisfactory.

"Hallo, boy! did you see a rabbit cross the road there just now?"
"A rabbit!"
"Yes! be quick! a rabbit!"
"Was it a kinder grey varmint?"
"Yes! yes!"
"A longish creature, with a short tail!"
"Yes; be quick or he'll be in his burrow."
"Had it long legs behind, and big ears?"
"Yes! yes!"
"And sorter jumps when it runs?"
"Yes, I tell you."
"Well, I hain't seed such a creature about here."

"What makes you spend your time so freely, Jack?"
"Because it's the only thing I have to spend."

From the Independent Republican. Experiment with Potatoes.

WYOMING COUNTY, PA.

MESSES EDITORS:—Though not a resident of your county, with your permission, in as few words as possible, I will describe an experiment I made the past season, with potatoes, of the variety known as the Black Merinoes. Soil gravely loam plowed in the fall, and then again quite deep just before planting; time of planting, third day of May; quantity of land, one third of an acre. The seed was of medium size, cut in two lengthwise, so as to have a part of the seed end on each piece; two pieces to the hill, with the exception of two rows through the middle of the piece, in which the potatoes were left whole, putting two medium sized tubers to the hill, being double the seed of the rest. As fast as I cut the seed for planting, I put the cut sides in fresh slaked lime, quite a quantity adhering to them. To one half of the piece, I put directly on the seed a heaping table-spoonful of salt and lime; the other half, about half a pint of leached ashes, and lime and salt on the two rows through the middle of the whole tubers, covered the whole about two inches deep. As soon as the tops were large enough, hoed them once, and sprinkled lime over the vines when damp. They grew finely through the summer. Those that had lime and salt in the hill were of a darker green and more vigorous than those with ashes. The two rows with whole tubers had full double the stalks of the others, and, as a consequence, were more puny and not so stately and healthy-looking as those with less seed; and when we came to dig the potatoes, there did not appear to be any more in number in the hill than those with only half the seed, and near as large; a few only were rotten. Those with ash-ware very good sized ones with a few rotten ones. Those with salt and lime were far superior to the others, both in size and number, and with scarcely any rotten ones. There was a perceptible difference as to the rot, with the whole tubers and those that were cut, though all were scoured alike, the whole ones rotting the most; those cut with ashes on, the next, I can account for it in no other way than that the lime on the cut parts of the potato acted as a preventive.—There was not an accurate account kept of the proceeds of the piece, suffice it to say, it was perfectly satisfactory.

H. H. M.

Names of the Months.

The names of the months were given by the Romans.
January the first month, was so called from Janus an ancient King of Italy, who was deified after his death, and derived from the Latin word Januarius.
February, the second month, is derived from the Latin word Februus, to purify, hence Februarius; for this month the ancient Romans offered up expiatory sacrifices for the purifying of the people.
March, the third month, anciently the first month, is derived from the word Mars, the God of war.
April is so called from the Latin Aprilis, i. e., opening; because in this month the vegetable world opens and buds forth.
May, the fifth month, is derived from the Latin word Majores, so called by Romulus, in respect toward the Senators; hence Maius or May.
June, the sixth month, from the Latin word Junius, or the youngest of people.
July, the seventh month, is derived from the Latin word Julius, and so named in honor of Julius Caesar.
August, the eighth month, was so called in honor of Augustus, by a decree of the Roman Senate, A. D. S.
September, the ninth month, from the Latin word Septem, or seven, being the seventh from March.
October, the tenth month, from the Latin word Octo, the eighth, hence October.
November, the eleventh month, from the Latin word Novem, nine; being the ninth month from March.
December, the twelfth month, from the Latin word Decem, ten; so called because it was the tenth month from March, which was anciently the manner of beginning the year.

WEDDING EXTRAORDINARY.—An Old Dominion paper has the following:—"In the public square, at Monroe, Union co., Virginia, by T. C. Wilson, Esq., Mr. Thomas Watts, aged ninety-three, to Miss Mary Haylor, aged sixty-five, both paupers. The marriage fee was made up by subscriptions among the witnesses, and ten cents worth of candy distributed round to commemorate the event."

The most immoral of musicians is the fiddler; he is always on a scrape.
"Nothing ever floated down the stream of time, but what was buoyant from its elevated tendency."

The whole number of Indians at present in this country is estimated at 350,000.

There are yet two hundred of the patriots of the Revolution living and receiving their pensions.

We learn from the Tamaqua Gazette, that some twenty or thirty citizens of that town and vicinity, have started for Pike's Peak.