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B. F. SCHWEIER, THE CONSTITUTION---THE UNION---AND THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS. Editor and Proprietor.

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CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

"Your opinion of Herman Craven seems to have changed."

"There is much, son, that we cannot understand. Above all else, we must not lose sight of the fact that Herman is the dead banker's nephew—his only sister's child. I did doubt the validity of that will, but ask yourself this question, 'Would a wealthy uncle do less than liberally remember an only nephew in his will?' Again, would he not be apt to name his daughter's only living relative her guardian? It is not strange that he had named him his administrator. The banker bade fair to live many years. Herman was under his guidance, and he no doubt hoped to see him come up to his standard of what he thought a young man should be, in which event he no doubt expected that the young man would one day become his son."

"And yet we can blame neither the banker nor Herman Craven. Above all things, son, let us be just. I fully believe that Herman has not a single doubt of Robert's guilt."

"But Miss DeRosette?"

"Ah! That is another matter altogether. Come, let us go home. We can converse on the way."

"I am going to call on the mother and sister of the innocent man in jail, father."

"Yes, by all means, son. My heart bleeds for them. But how do they bear up under their sorrow?"

"Bravely, father. Mr. Sellars has inspired them with that faith that they are only looking forward to the day when Robert shall be vindicated."

"Well, it is best so. Jennie is a brave girl."

"And the dearest one on earth to me, father."

"So, so, boy! You have chosen your future bride?"

"If I can win her, father."

"Well, God grant you may! I would gladly welcome the daughter of my old friend, Duncan Campbell, as my son's wife, even though his innocent son should meet death on the gallows."

"Thank you, my father; but no such fate awaits Robert Campbell."

The two men here left the office, and the father made his way home, while fifteen minutes later the son entered the door of the widow's residence, where he found two women in tears.

"Cheer up! Cheer up!" he cried, as he crossed the threshold. "You both promised to be brave. Remember Sellars saying, 'The darkest hour always comes just before dawn.'"

"Then dawn must soon appear," said the widow, "for with my son in the hands of a jury that will at 10 o'clock to-morrow condemn him to death, there could be no darker hour."

"Yes, mother—one!" sobbed the daughter.

"But not for you and your dear mother, my loved Jennie! For you, the dawn will soon break, and as clear and fair as a summer morn! I know it—feel it! A noble name will be vindicated—a son and brother restored to you. Even now the great detective may be hastening to the rescue of an innocent man."

"Yes! Yes!" cried Jennie. "We have his word—his pledge!"

"And the pledge of Lang Sellars is never violated, my love!"

"His reward," said the widow, "shall not be measured by gold. We will ever cherish his memory in our hearts."

"And my reward, dear Mrs. Campbell?"

"Yours, Arthur?"

"Mine, Mrs. Campbell! May I name it now—at least, the one I would ask? It is the hand and heart of the girl I love!"

"Oh, Arthur! Arthur! You have the heart now!" cried Jennie, as the young man folded his arms about her.

"And you have won the hand also," said the widow, with a smile that shone happily even through her tears. "My children's happiness is all I crave. God bless you both, and bring me back my boy!"

"And I may claim my bride?"

"When our great detective has fulfilled his pledge."

CHAPTER XX.

At 10 o'clock on the morning of the twenty-eighth every seat in the court room of Judge Fowler was filled.

There was no longer even standing room.

Wilmington's populace had turned out almost en masse to listen to the verdict of the jury in the case against Robert Campbell, charged with murder, and few there were who doubted what that verdict would be.

The prisoner occupied the box, as he had for several days previous, while seated just without the railing that separated him from the bar of the court was his mother and sister.

It seemed that the calm demeanor of the prisoner brought added confidence to the two women, who were earnestly conversing with him.

Within the bar were seated a number of attorneys.

To the right of the judicial seat was Attorney Robbins, while by his side sat Herman Craven, without a single cloud darkening his brow.

Slightly removed from them sat Mrs. Hammond, the wife of Director Hammond, Miss Steel, and the fair daughter of the murdered banker.

To the left, nearer the prisoner, were seated Lawyer Dobbs and his son.

The clerk of the court was already at his post and Sheriff Cobb stood directly behind the prisoner, while two of his deputies were leaning over the railing.

Coroner Field, who had held the prisoner for trial, was standing near the sheriff.

The low hum of voices resounded throughout the court room, and expectancy was beaming from all eyes as they were turned from time to time to the side door by which it was expected the judge would enter the court room.

As the last stroke of the clock died away the door opened and the judge advanced within the bar.

A moment more and he had mounted the bench and taken his seat.

The sheriff had advanced within the railing, and with his gavel he struck three blows on the corner of the clerk's desk, crying out as he did so: "O yez, O yez! This honorable court is now in session! Order, order in this honorable court!"

A dead silence succeeded the sheriff's proclamation.

"Mr. Sheriff," said the judge, "have the jury in the case against Robert Campbell agreed on a verdict?"

"They have, your honor!"

"Conduct them into court."

Sheriff Cobb passed without the railing and struggled through the throng to the rear end of the court room, where he knocked on the jury room door.

In a moment more his voice resounded through the room as he cried: "Make way! Make way for the jury! Make way! Make way!"

A space was opened, and down through it, with the sheriff at their head, marched the twelve men who, through one word of their foreman, would consign Robert Campbell to the gallows. At least, so expected a vast majority of those present in the court room.

The jury filed into the box, and each man stood facing the judge.

There was a solemn look on the faces of these men that caused a shudder to pass through the frames of a doting mother, a loving sister and the bereaved daughter of the late banker, whose heart was in the keeping of the prisoner at the bar.

"It is all up with him," thought Herman Craven; nor thought he so alone.

The judge turned solemnly and faced the jury. "Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We have," responded Foreman Albright.

"What say you? Guilty or not guilty?"

Every neck was craned forward. Every eye was on the lips of the foreman. Would he never speak?

Ah, his lips move!

"We find the prisoner——"

"Hold! Hold! Make way! Make way!"

Every attorney leaped to his feet.

Even the judge stood erect on his stand.

"Make way! Make way!" and strong arms were forcing a passage through the throng from the main entrance of the court room.

The prisoner, at the sound of that voice, regardless of the sheriff's deputies, had leaped to his feet, and standing erect, the first object that met his gaze was the head and shoulders of the great Southern detective, towering above all others.

"Make way! Make way!" And in an instant more three men marched within the railing of the bar—or rather the foremost one was thrust within by the hands of the detective, who followed.

This foremost party was of a goodly frame, being fully six feet in height. He was clothed in a fashionable suit of steel gray, a diamond stud glittered from his white shirt front, a heavy gold chain hung pendant from a button hole of his vest, and a beaver hat rested rather slantingly on his head.

His eyes were black and piercing, and a grayish mustache adorned his upper lip. On his thin lips was a scornful smile and his features were livid with either the emotion of hate or fear.

His gloved hands were before him, held there by iron shackles, and one hand of Sellars rested upon his shoulder.

The detective appeared as calm and collected as though he was at his home dandling his boy upon his knee.

All eyes were fixed on these two figures, and none noticed the frail looking man who, leaning on a stout cane, had followed in the wake of the detective.

The quick eye of Sellars had scanned all countenances, but now his gaze was riveted on an object of terror that had arisen in alarm to its feet at the first sound of his voice, but had sunk back to its seat with a groan when the handcuffed form had been thrust within the railing.

The object of terror was Herman Craven. He sat, a cowering wretch, with the pallor of death on his face, and his wild eyes gazing on the features of the manacled man.

A dead silence had succeeded the entrance of the three men within the bar.

The judge, who had been lost to his surroundings, now recalled himself to the duties before him, and his ire was apparently aroused.

"What means this unwonted disturbance of the proceedings of this court, Lang Sellars?" he demanded, in a loud voice, with his eyes fixed on the detective.

"It means, your honor," came in deep tones from the lips of Sellars, "that this jury shall be saved from the disgrace of pronouncing an innocent man guilty of the foul crime of murder—that this court shall be saved the ignominy of condemning to death one whose hand has shed no blood. It means that this wretch who you see before you is the murderer of Alvin DeRosette."

A glad cry escaped the lips of Robert Campbell's mother: "Saved! Saved! My boy is saved!" and mother and daughter were weeping in each other's arms, while from his box the arms of the prisoner were cast about them.

"Who is your prisoner?" demanded the judge, who appeared astounded at Sellars' statement.

"Stephen Abbott, a Baltimore gambler—C. A. Stephens, a traveling man—Stephen Craven, the father of the president of 'The Cape Fear Bank,' the cowering wretch seated there, who was his accomplice!"

"It's false! It's a lie! A wicked lie!" cried Herman. "I never saw the man before! Robert Campbell murdered my dear uncle! I caught him red-handed in the act!"

A scornful smile parted the lips of Stephen Craven, as he glanced contemptuously at his son.

"Here, your honor," exclaimed Sellars, "is a bag of coin—twelve thousand five hundred dollars in gold!" and he laid it on the desk before the clerk. "If you will read this missive, you will learn how I obtained it!"

"Let the clerk read it aloud, that the counsel may hear also," said the judge.

Sellars handed the letter to the clerk, who read as follows:

"Baltimore, Md., Sept. 22, 1857.

Dear Herm—Read effusion below and comply by first express. I am hard up, and can delay no longer.—Your Dad.

Up one pair of stairs, then pass in a door,
Under the red brick the chimney before,
Where sits a young maiden in tears and alone,
I left that behind that caused me to groan.

Use very great care in removing the same,
And send its equivalent to a man with three names;
Then have no delay, but make heiress your wife
As soon as you can after one's lost his life.

Since one direct blow made you a rich man,
You must not forget the villain who ran,
For the fetters that bind us are stronger than steel,
And danger has fled if your lips you will seal.

Two nights in a garret and one on the road,
With shot bag behind, was a very big load.
I guided the blade of the sheath knife, you see,
And now there's a fortune for both you and me.

You jingled that bell at an opportune time,
And can clasp in your arms an heiress divine.
Gold satisfies me, you know very well,
For sending the soul of a banker to h—l.

P. S.—The bag of coin was a rich find, and one that came unexpectedly. That poor devil, R. C., made a fatal error entering the banker's residence that night. It will cost him his life, but it is better so. I feared to leave the house with the coin, and had every opportunity during the commotion below to place it where you will find it. Send its equivalent—quick! Address as before, Stephen Abbott, Baltimore, Md."

"That concludes the letter," said the clerk.

Exclamations of horror arose from all parts of the court room, but they were soon checked by the voice of the judge himself: "Order in court! Mr. Sheriff, you will preserve order!"

"How came that letter in your possession, Mr. Sellars?" asked the judge. "And to whom is it addressed?"

"That letter, your honor, arrived at the postoffice in Wilmington, on the morning of the twenty-fourth of September. The envelope bears the address 'Herman Craven, Wilmington, N. C.' On the left-hand corner appears the word, 'Personal.'"

"I—I never saw it! I know nothing about it!" gasped Herman. "There is a foul plot here!"

"Proceed, Mr. Sellars," said the judge.

"I had for some time suspected that Banker DeRosette was murdered by one C. A. Stephens, and that Herman Craven was an accomplice. I had requested Postmaster Grady to hold any mail that might arrive addressed to Herman Craven, marked 'Personal,' or out of the ordinary line that the bank usually received, for my inspection.

"On the night of the twenty-third I returned from a trip South. I had visited New Orleans, and had ascertained the fact that Herman Craven had lied to his uncle when he had stated that his father fell a victim to yellow fever two years previous to his (Herman's) arrival in Wilmington. The yellow fever had claimed no such victim in New Orleans as Stephen Craven.

"I at once came to the conclusion that Stephen Craven and C. A. Stephens were one and the same man, and before I left New Orleans I had formed the opinion that Stephen Abbott was the same individual.

"On the morning of the twenty-fourth Mr. Grady handed me this letter. After reading it I fixed up a dummy express package in his private office and consigned it by express to Stephen Abbott, taking myself the same train for Baltimore that bore the package. I was accompanied by Adam, the colored coachman of the late banker, who on the night of the seventeenth of August had seen C. A. Stephens and Herman Craven conversing together. In fact, who had driven them twice past the banker's residence in the DeRosette carriage on that evening."

"I—I never saw that man before! There is a conspiracy here to blast my character!" cried Herman.

"Proceed, Mr. Sellars," said the judge.

"Arrived in Baltimore, I took up my station in the express office with Adam near me, and at 11 a. m. on the twenty-sixth, when this man entered the express office, called for and obtained the package, I apprehended him. He fought desperately for his life, as you can see from this rent in my coat sleeve, caused by a thrust of his dirk, but I easily disarmed him, and he stands before you. On his person I found these letters. They were purloined from a package taken from a trunk in the attic of the late banker's residence, where the assassin had secreted himself, and where he remained for two days and nights after the murder.

"I had no trouble in obtaining a requisition from Gov. Elliott of Maryland to convey my prisoner from the State. We arrived here at 9:15 this morning. I found the bag of coin beneath the brick hearth before the fireplace in Miss DeRosette's room at her residence. Adam, of course, recognized this man as C. A. Stephens, the man he had driven out in company with Herman Craven, and although testimony of his would not be admissible, it will not be needed. I think I have stated enough to convince the court that Robert Campbell is an innocent man, and that the murderer of Alvin DeRosette stands beside me."

"Marvelous!" ejaculated the judge.

"I will say further," said the detective, "that even the sea has given up it's dead, to show a motive on the part of Herman Craven for the foul crime, in which he was an accessory. Indeed, without his aid it could not have been committed.

"I encountered on the steamer, coming down the Chesapeake bay, one long since mourned as dead—a man who, though one of the survivors of the ill-fated Gossmare, has for months lain with a disordered brain in an asylum near Liverpool, England. As soon as he was sane and in a condition to travel he left England for America. He is yet frail and feeble, but your honor will have no difficulty in recognizing in the gentleman standing here," and the detective moved slightly to one side—"John D. Loyd, the surviving witness of Alvin DeRosette's will."

CHAPTER XXI.

"John D. Lloyd!"

The words fell from the lips of not only the judge on the bench, but from those of every lawyer within the bar.

"John D. Lloyd!" echoed the voices of many in the court room.

"Mr. Sheriff," said the judge, "place a chair beside me and assist my old friend Lloyd to a position here, if the Lord has mercifully spared his life."

Sheriff Cobb looked very gloomy, but he obeyed the order of the court with alacrity.

"Yes, judge and friends," said Mr Lloyd, as the sheriff, after shaking hands with him, assisted him to the judicial bench, "the sea has given up its dead—the asylum its mental wreck. John D. Lloyd is with you once again. Nor has he yet greeted his own family. He is in the hands of the great detective."

"I can well believe you, old friend," said the judge as he grasped his wasted hand. "But if you have not visited your family, we must not long delay you."

"Mr. Sellars has made me acquainted with the contents of the will, said to be the banker's last and final one," said Mr. Lloyd. "If such is the case, and my name and that of my lost friend Elliott appear as witnesses to the same, there has been a forgery committed."

A groan burst from the breast of Herman Craven. He sat the picture of abject terror—a living, breathing wretch.

Miss DeRosette sat with pale face, clinging to the arms of her companions.

"Your names signed to the will constitute the forgery?" asked the judge.

"No, your honor, the signatures, I presume, are valid; but in the body of the will Herman Craven was left but the sum of five thousand dollars. I am told that the will now shows that fifty-five thousand dollars was the banker's bequest to his nephew. There was no administrator named in the will. A space was left vacant with the understanding that if I returned safely from my trip to Europe my name was to be filled in. At Mr. DeRosette's solicitation I had consented to act, should I survive him. Neither was there a guardian named; but the understanding there was the same. He desired me to constitute that guardian and my name would have appeared there but for my trip abroad."

"Miserable wretch, what have you to say?" asked the judge, turning his gaze on the features of Stephen Craven.

"What can I say, judge?" was the sneering reply. "Except that Sellars has got me dead to rights. I knifed the banker, and my delectable son there—the Craven coward—forged the will. That is all there is about it. A Craven need not die a coward! Die game! Be a game sport to the last; that's my motto, and it's all I have to say."

"Are there any here who recognize this man as Stephen Craven, the man who married Alvin DeRosette's sister?" asked the judge.

"I do, your honor," said Attorney Dobbs. "I never saw him but once. The marriage was an elopement. Miss DeRosette was a school girl, and this villain eloped with her from Hillsborough, where she was attending school. At Alvin DeRosette's request I visited Richmond, to which place Stephen Craven at first conveyed his bride, and there begged his wife to abandon him and return to her brother with me. She would not do so, however, and Stephen Craven, entering the house and surmising my object, ordered me out. I cannot be mistaken in the man."

"No, you are right, old duffer!" cried Stephen, with another sneer.

"This man is a monster!" exclaimed the judge, shuddering.

"No, no! You are wrong, judge, wrong. I am nothing if not a dead game sport! Life is a farce—a field in which we each play our part, then make our exit to be seen no more. There is no hereafter. This is the end of life; that is all, and I will die as I have lived—a dead—game—sport! Yes, without a fear for the present or the future; but look at that livid, woe-begone picture! That is my son. Ain't he a beaut? He denies his own father, now that a day of peril is at hand. He put up this job. He forged the banker's will and was too cowardly to remove his uncle from his path. I willingly aided him. Look at him! The bell-ringer of Wilmington. His hand from the stairway pulled the wire that drew Robert Campbell to the door, leaving the coast clear for me. I thrust the blade of the sheath knife home, secured the bag of coin and ran upstairs and secreted myself. During the commotion below I secreted the gold where Sellars found it not an hour ago. Herman had provided me with a key to the attic, and I remained there three days and nights. When I took my departure I left the coin behind, beneath the hearth in Miss DeRosette's room. You have everything dead to rights now. What are you waiting for? Why don't you get a move on yourself? Let Campbell get out of that box and put my sneaking son and myself in it! Do something!"

"This man must be an incarnate fiend!" exclaimed the judge.

"I'm a beaut, I am!" ejaculated the assassin. "But I'm not a coward!"

"Gentlemen of the jury," said the judge, turning to the twelve men in the jury box, "the court instructs you to render a verdict of 'not guilty' in the case of the State against Robert Campbell, and no one can more regret than does the court the unfortunate position in which an innocent man has been placed, but through the efforts of Mr. Sellars an honorable name has been vindicated and the murderer of our old friend and his accomplice are before you."

"What say you, gentlemen of the jury—guilty or not guilty?" asked the clerk.

"Not guilty!" responded the foreman, in a loud voice.

A cheer went up that resounded through the building.

"Order! Order in court!" cried the sheriff.

"Robert Campbell, you are discharged from custody," said the judge.

The young man arose to his feet, and with a happy smile on his countenance passed within the bar, where his first act was to grasp the hand of the great detective. "My preserver!" he cried. "May God bless you, Lang Sellars!"

"And he will," were the words that fell from the lips of the Widow Campbell.

Hattie DeRosette had arisen to her feet as Robert approached. Her face was marble-like in its whiteness, and she had sat throughout the proceedings as one in a trance.

The effort had been too much for her, and with the word "Robert!" she fell forward, to be clasped in the arms of the man she loved.

Another cheer went up from the lips of the vast throng in the court room.

"Order in court!" cried the sheriff.

"Conduct your prisoners to the box, Mr. Sellars," said the judge, "that they may be arraigned for a trial that will speedily follow. I judge its duration will not be long."

"First," said Sellars, "I will shackle this scheming villain," and with a pair of steel bracelets in one hand he reached towards Herman Craven.

A shriek burst from the white lips of the bank president, and the loud report of a revolver followed it.

Herman had held the weapon concealed in his hand, and it had been instantly directed at the detective, but as unexpected as it had been, Sellars had reached the arm of the assassin in time to divert the messenger of death from himself, and it found lodgment in the bosom of Stephen Craven, who for a moment stood motionless, then tottered and fell forward to the floor.

Sellars had secured Herman's weapon, and ere the father had been raised to a chair had him securely shackled.

The ladies present screamed in terror, and the court room was in commotion.

"Order in court!" cried the sheriff, who was bending over the form of Stephen Craven.

The detective literally carried the manacled form of Herman to the prisoner's box, where he placed him, shrieking, on a seat.

"I'm done for!" presently gasped his father. "Murdered by my own son! The cur! It was your life he aimed at Sellars. Well, better so. There will be but one victim at the hanging bee. I—I might have escaped and carried him with me, coward though he be. Better so! Better so! It was a fatal shot, boy. I—I have nothing to regret—no favors to ask. No, no, nothing. I die as I lived—a—a dead game sport!" And with his head on the sheriff's arm, the soul of Stephen Craven passed before its maker.

"Court is adjourned for the day," announced the judge, and a half hour later the court room was untenanted.

The body of Stephen Craven had been conveyed to the morgue.

Herman Craven, the president of "The Cape Fear Bank," occupied a felon's cell in the county jail.

John D. Lloyd had been accompanied by Judge Fowler to his residence, where there was joy over the return of one who had long been mourned as dead.

Sellars was captured by the mother and sister of Robert Campbell, and accompanied them home. Leaning on Robert's arm with the same party was also the young heiress, whose form still trembled with emotion.

"I always distrusted Herman Craven," said Hattie, when the party were seated in the Campbell home, and Aunt Caroline had placed before them an urn of tea, of which the good soul thought the ladies stood sadly in need, "but I little dreamed of the villainy in his nature. In receiving him into our home my dear father received——"

"A viper!" exclaimed Sellars. "But under the tutelage of Stephen Craven he could not have been less."

"Oh, dear Robert, how you must have suffered," said Hattie.

"I was never alarmed as to the outcome, my love, from the time that our noble friend Sellars assured me that I should not stand upon the gallows trap."

"You could pay me no higher compliment than that conveyed by those words," said the detective, grasping the young man's hand.

At this time Arthur Dobbs and his father joined the party. "All honor to the man who has vindicated a noble name; unraveled a double mystery, and brought to justice a father and son, who for cold-blooded villainy have never been equaled in America!" exclaimed the senior man, as he approached Sellars.

"There was one quality a man could respect in the father, notwithstanding his villainy," said Sellars. "Bravery. He was not a coward! In the character of Herman there is not one redeeming trait!"

"Not one!" exclaimed the banker's daughter. "If he had never entered our home, dear father would not be in his grave to-day."

Before the residence of Sellars two negroes were seated on the grass, and they were happy Africans, to judge by appearances.

"I spec' you feel mighty proud now, Adam, an' to-night you jes' 'bout make dat gal Cindy tink yous de debbel himself."

"G'long, Calban! How I gwine win dat gal, if she tink I's de debbel? I is suah 'nuff gwine blow my horn mighty hard. I's gwine tell her 'bout my trip up to Baltimore, on de 'raiload wid Mars Lang, an' how I says in dat spress office 'Dat's de man, Mars Lang."

"G'long, nigger! You didn't do nothin'."

"What you do? Now tell me dat!"

"Adam, you's a fool! Didden I keep dese yere two eyes on Herman Craven night and day? Yes, even when he was in he bed. Whar is he now?"

"Dat's so, Calban. You's had more perience dan I is."

"Now yo' talkin'! Say, Adam, I [illegible] yo' misses will buy dat gal Cindy for you now, an' you ken mek her yo' lawfully wife."

"Golly, Calban! Does you reckon so?"

"Suah I does."

"Well, I gwine hint 'roun' 'bout it mightily, directly she get ober dis flustration. I spec da hang Mars Herman now."

"Fer suah da hang him!"

"Da carn hang he daddy!"

"G'long home an' tell Hannah and Milfie. I seed Unc Duke at de court house. You's a fool! What da gwine hang a dead man fer?"

With what he intended as a withering look, Calban left his sable companion and entered the house.

At 2:45 p. m. on the ninth day of November, a terrible scene was enacted within the county jail at Wilmington.

Twenty persons—the number allowed by law—were gathered before a grewsome structure that occupied a position at the east end of the room of execution. The grewsome object was the gallows, and when Sheriff Cobb approached from an iron door that separated the room from the lower tier of cells, followed by Jailer Filyaw and an assistant, who between them were fairly dragging along a white-robed, shrieking figure, a pallor overspread the faces of those assembled.

Two clergymen followed the main actors in this fearful drama.

The scaffold was reached. The frantic, shrouded form was bodily raised and carried upon the platform. More, he was placed in a standing posture on the very center of the trap.

"If you have words to speak, speak them now," said Sheriff Cobb.

"Mercy! Mercy!" screamed the abject, horror-stricken wretch. "You all know I did not strike the blow!"

The condemned man's hands were shackled together behind him with a leather strap while he was speaking, and his lower limbs were securely bound together with another.

One of the clergymen stepped to the side of the trap and uttered a short, fervent prayer, closing the same with the words: "May God have mercy on your soul!"

A wild wail broke from the lips of Herman Craven as a knotted noose was passed over his head. Another! Still another. But the last, half muffled, came from beneath the black cap that now concealed his livid features.

Jailer Filyaw was supporting the criminal on one side, his assistant on the other.

The clergymen had stepped back from the prisoner's side and the sheriff had disappeared within a small enclosure to the left of the trap, and through which passed the rope that held the trap in place.

"Mercy! My God, mercy! I will not die! I——"

The clock on the market tower sounded the first stroke of the hour of three.

The blow of an ax resounded from the box that concealed the sheriff.

The trap fell. The shrouded figure followed it, leaving the jailer and his assistant with their arms extended over a vacant space.

The taut rope creaked. The body spun round and round. A movement or two of the limbs, and then—a pendant figure, hanging lifeless.

The murder of Alvin DeRosette had been avenged.

John D. Lloyd was appointed by the court as administrator of the late banker's estate and guardian of his daughter; but the term of his guardianship was short, for on the twentieth of the following June the fair heiress became the bride of Robert Campbell, and the same day saw sweet Jennie Campbell the wife of Arthur Dobbs, the young attorney.

The two weddings occurred at midday in the DeRosette residence, and a large number of friends were there present but the one whose good wishes to both brides and grooms brought the most fervent pleasure, it is safe to say, was a certain detective, and tears filled the eyes of the two happy brides when they bade him good-by to start on their wedding trip.

"May your trip through life be as happy as the one before you promises to be," said Sellars, "and may there be no thorn by the roadside."

"That all here are happy to-night," said Attorney Dobbs, "is owing to the vigilance of one man, and that man Lang Sellars, the great Southern detective, who fulfilled his pledge. Robert Campbell did not stand on the gallows trap."

Sellars passed a hand before his eyes to hide the tears that had gathered as he turned away. And he thought what might have been had he not traced down the man with three names.

(The end.)

THE FLOOD OF PATENTS.

Articles of Every-Day Use the Subject of Thousands of Inventions.

"It is becoming harder every year for a man to get out a successful invention," remarked a patent attorney. "The other day I was in Washington and my work required me to search the old patent list. The thing that attracted my attention was the great number of patents taken out on common, every-day articles. Why, they are so covered with patents that it seems absolutely impossible for an inventor to make any improvement upon them without infringing upon somebody else.

"For instance, take knives, forks and spoons. How many patents do you suppose are taken out on these three articles of every-day necessity? A dozen or two? Why, bless you, they are protected by 2,103 patents. Then take brooms and scrubbing brushes. You wouldn't think that any number of geniuses could invent more than a hundred improvements upon such things. Well, there are patents for them to the number of 3,184. It seems ridiculous, doesn't it? It did to me, and for a time I thought I would go home and advise everyone of my clients to give up the inventing business.

"I had the curiosity to go a little deeper into the subject and I made a record of the number of patents taken out on other small things. Games and toys are protected by 4,453 different patents. But, of course, that can be overlooked, for games and toys are as varied and uncertain as our winter weather. The laundry business is hedged in pretty well with patents, for there are 7,633 taken out on various laundry articles. Burglars ought never to be able to get through our locks and latches, for they are protected by 5,976 patents; but then this is partly offset by 4,299 patents for saws and sawing apparatus which burglars might use for destroying locks. Altogether, however, the farmer seems to be the man for whom the inventors have labored most. There are 50,000 patents recorded which in one way or another tend to benefit the farmer. It must be that this is a pretty fertile and profitable field [illegible] he would not devote so much time and labor to it.

"Manufacturing interests of all kinds are pretty well loaded down with patents. In the furniture trade alone there are 4,854 patents to protect the business outside of those which pertain to chairs. These latter necessary articles for the home are covered with over 500 patents. When you take up a piece of paper to write a letter you probably do not realize that the manufacture of stationery is handicapped, or protected, whichever way you please to put it, by 4,532 patents. That fact ought to make one careful how he attempts to invent a new style of envelope, blotter or writing paper. He would have to be a remarkable genius to get around all of these and establish a clean bill of health for his invention.

"When I look at one of the tall buildings in the city in the course of construction I stop now and view it with more interest than I ever did before. That builder has had a host of inventors laboring to make his work easier. His cranes and derricks are protected by 596 patents, the roof he may put on has 665 patents and the elevators he may put in the building have 1,639 patents. Then the stone workers who carve the front for him use tools which are covered by 2,188 patents. I suppose if the builder had to stop and think of all this he would not be able to finish his work. But a patent attorney must know it."—New York Sun.

A Hero at Home.

Not all the heroes were at Santiago. One of them came forward recently in Topeka, when the Santa Fe Railroad found it necessary to reduce the force employed in the freight department.

Among those who were to be discharged was a man with a wife and half a dozen children, and his salary was the family's only income. Lines appeared in his face as the expiration of his term of service drew near, and his eyes told a story of suffering and despair.

Dean Waters, a fellow employe, saw all this. It made him sick at heart, and his folks saw that something was the matter, but he kept his thoughts to himself. For a week he watched the other workman suffer in silence, and at night he could not sleep for thinking of the hardships in store for this man's wife and little ones. Then he made a resolve. Going to the head of the department, he said:

"If I resign my position, will you keep Mr. Blank?"

"Yes," replied the head of the department.

"Accept my resignation," said Waters, and he left the room without another word.—Topeka Capital.

Luck.

"After all, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

"What's happened now?"

"The druggist had such a cold when I went in to get some grip medicine this morning that he couldn't talk; so I escaped a long argument about something he had put up himself that was better than the stuff I wanted."

—Oyster and clam shells are used in great quantities in New York by the gas workers as a purifier.

—Electric mats are in use to detect burglars. They are so thin as to be imperceptible when placed under a carpet, and when stepped upon they set alarm bells ringing in various parts of the house.

SERMON BY Rev. Dr. Talmage

Subject: The World as It Will Be—Improvement in Human Conditions After the Earth Has Been Revolutionized For Good—The Coming Century.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—By a novel mode Dr. Talmage in this discourse shows how the world will look after it has been revolutionized for good; text, II Peter iii., 13 "A new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Down in the struggle to make the world better and happier we sometimes get depressed with the obstacles to be overcome and the work to be accomplished. Will it not be a tonic and an inspiration to look at the world as it will be when it has been brought back to paradisiacal condition? So let us for a few moments transport ourselves into the future and put ourselves forward in the centuries and see the world in its rescued and perfected state, as we will see it if in those times we are permitted to revisit this planet, as I am sure we will. We all want to see the world after it has been thoroughly gospelized and all wrongs have been righted. We will want to come back, and we will come back to look upon the refulgent consummation toward which we have been on larger or smaller scale toiling. Having heard the opening of the orchestra on whose strings some discords traveled, we will want to hear the last triumphant bar of the perfected oratorio. Having seen the picture as the painter drew its first outlines upon canvas, we will want to see it when it is as complete as Renbens' "Descent From the Cross" or Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment." Having seen the world under the gleam of the star of Bethlehem, we will want to see it when, under the full shining of the sun of righteousness, the towers shall strike 12 at noon.

There will be nothing in that coming century of the world's perfection to hinder our terrestrial visit. Our power and velocity of locomotion will have been improved infinitely. It will not take us long to come here, however far off in God's universe heaven may be. The Bible declares that such visitation is going on now. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" Surely the gates of heaven will not be bolted after the world is Edenized so as to hinder the redeemed from descending for a tour of inspection and congratulation and triumph.

You know with what interest we look upon ruins—ruins of Kenilworth castle, ruins of Melrose abbey, ruins of Rome, ruins of Pompeii. So this world in ruins is an enchantment to look at, but we want to see it when rebuilt, repillared, retowered, realtered, rededicated. The exact date of the world's moral restoration I cannot foretell. It may be that through mighty awakenings it will take place in the middle of the nearby twentieth century. It may be at the opening of the twenty-first century, but it would not be surprising if it took more than 100 years to correct the ravages of sin which have raged for 6000 years. The chief missionary and evangelistic enterprises were started in this century, and be not dismayed if it takes a couple of centuries to overcome evils that have had full swing for sixty centuries. I take no responsibility in saying on what page of the earthly calendar it will roll in, but God's eternal veracity is sworn to it that it will roll in, and as the redeemed in heaven do as they please and have all the facilities of transit from world to world, you and I, my hearer or reader, will come and look at what my text calls "A new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

I imagine that when [illegible] ending at that [illegible] will be no [illegible] a descent. Great heights [illegible] depths have no alarm for glorified spirits. We can come down through chasms between worlds without growing dizzy and across the spaces of half the universe without losing our way. Down and farther down we come. As we approach this world we breathe the perfume of illimitable gardens. Floralization that in centuries past was here and there wailed in lest reckless and dishonest hands pluck or despoil it surges its billows of color across the fields and up the hillsides, and that which was desert blossoms as the rose. All the foreheads of crag crowned with flowers, the feet of the mountains slippered with flowers! Oh, this perfume of the continents, this aroma of hemispheres! As we approach nearer and nearer we hear songs and laughter and hosannas, but not one groan of distress, not one sob of bereavement, not one clank of chain.

Alighted on the redeemed earth, we are first accosted by the Spirit of the twenty-first century, who proposes to guide and show us all that we desire to see. Without His guidance we would lose our way, for the world is so much changed from the time when we lived in it. First of all, He points out to us a group of abandoned buildings. We ask this Spirit of the twenty-first century, "What are those structures whose walls are falling down and whose gates are rusted on the hinges?" Our escort tells us: "Those were once penitentiaries filled with offenders, but the crime of the world has died out. Theft and arson and fraud and violence have quitted the earth. People have all they want, and why should they appropriate the property of others even if they had the desire? The marauders, the assassins, the buccaneers, the Herods, the Nana Sahibs, the ruffians, the bandits, are dead or, transformed by the power of the Christian religion, are now upright and beneficent and useful.

After passing on amid columns and statues erected in memory of those who have been mighty for goodness in the world's history, the highest and the most exquisitely sculptured those in honor of such as have been most effectual in saving life or improving life rather than those renowned for destroying life, we come upon another group of buildings that must have been transformed from their original shape and adapted to other uses. "What is all this?" we ask our escort. He answers: "Those were almshouses and hospitals, but accuracy in making and prudence in running machinery of all sorts have almost abolished the list of casualties, and sobriety and industry have nearly abolished pauperism, so that those buildings which once were hospitals and almshouses have been turned into beautiful homes for the less prospered, and if you will look in you will see the poorest table has abundance, and the smallest wardrobe luxury, and the harp, waiting to have its strings thrummed, leaning against the piano, waiting for its keys to be fingered.

"Hospitals and almshouses must have been a necessity once, but they would be useless now. And you see all the swamps have been drained, the sewerage of the great towns has been perfected, and the world's climate is so improved that there are no pneumonias to come out of the cold, or rheumatisms out of the dampness, or fevers out of the heat. Consumptions banished, pneumonias banished, diphtheria banished, ophthalmia banished, neuralgias banished. As near as I can tell from what I have read, our atmosphere of this century is a mingling of the two months of May and October of the nineteenth century."

But I say to our escort: "Did all this merely happen so? Are all the good here spontaneously good? How did you get the old shipwrecked world afloat again, out of the breakers into the smooth seas?" "No, no!" responds our twenty-first century escort. "Do you see those towers? Those are the towers of churches, towers of reformatory institutions, towers of Christian schools. Walk with me, and let us enter some of these temples." We enter, and I find that the music is in the major key and none of it in the minor. "Gloria In Excelsis" rising above "Gloria In Excelsis." Tremolo stop in the organ not so much used as the trumpet stop. More of Ariel than of Naomi. More chants than dirges. Not a thin song, the words of which no one understands on the lip of a soloist, but mighty harmonies that roll from the outside door to chancel and from floor to groined rafter as though Handel had come out of the eighteenth century into the twenty-first and had his foot on the organ pedal, and Thomas Hastings had come out of the early part of the nineteenth century into the twenty-first and were leading the voices. Music that moves the earth and makes heaven listen!

But I say to our twenty-first century escort: "I cannot understand this. Have these worshipers no sorrows, or have they forgotten their sorrows?" Our escort responds: "Sorrows! Why, they had sorrows more than you could count, but by a divine illumination that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries never enjoyed they understand the uses of sorrow and are comforted with a supernatural condolence such as previous centuries never experienced."

I ask again of the interpreter, "Has death been banished from the world?" The answer is, "No, but people die now only when the physical machinery is worn out, and they realize it is time to go and that they are certainly and without doubt going into a world where they will be infinitely better off and are to live in a mansion that awaits their immediate occupancy." But how was all this effected?" I ask our escort. Answer: "By flood of gospel power. You who lived in the nineteenth century never saw a revival of religion to be compared with what occurred in the latter part of the twentieth and the early part of the twenty-first century. The prophecy has been fulfilled that 'a nation shall be born in a day'—that is, ten or twenty or forty million people converted in twenty-four hours. In our church history we read of the great awakening of 1857, when five hundred thousand souls were saved. But that was only a drop of the coming showers that since then took into the kingdom of God everything between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Pyrenees and the Himalayas." The evils that good people were in the nineteenth century trying to destroy have been overcome by celestial forces. What human weaponry failed to accomplish has been done by omnipotent thunderbolts.

As you and I see in this terrestrial visitation of the coming centuries that the church has under God accomplished so much, we ask our