

# THE HAND UNDER THE SEAT.

Did I ever tell you, or did you ever hear from other sources, how logical deductions and obvious inferences once led me into what might have proved deep waters? asked Detective Sergeant Channing, as he threw his feet up on a chair and settled himself comfortably.

It was a winter's night, cold, hard, and frosty, eight or nine years since. I had been down to Cliffe to spend a few hours with a friend, and was going on to Sharnal street, the next station down, to spend the night with another friend.

I was walking up and down the deserted platform, thinking of various things, when my foot kicked up against something which went sliding along the platform, and fell upon the down line. My inquisitiveness impelled me to jump down and search for it with the aid of light of a lucifer. It turned out to be a novel—I forgot the title—and was in a very damaged condition. My explanation of the torn cover and the bent corner was that they were the outcome of the book having been flung out of the window of a passing train.

I took it into the light of an asthmatical lamp and examined it. There was writing on the fly leaf—writing in pencil, and the shakiness of it and the uncertainty of the lines immediately suggested to me that they had been written in the train. The words themselves convinced me. They were—

"Man hiding under the seat of this compartment. Believe he has designs on valuables I have about me. Communication cord broken. Only way to inform in case anything occurs; and with anchor tattooed on wrist. Left hand."

For a moment I half suspected it was a practical joke. Then it occurred to me that there was more in the affair than mere humor. Cliffe is on the line to Queenborough, where one can take boat for Flushing, which is in Holland, the principal town of which, Amsterdam, is well known as a trading place for dealers in precious stones. The logical deduction was, therefore, that the writer of the message was traveling with jewels from London to Amsterdam via Queenborough and Flushing. Possibly he had a small fortune in gems upon his person, and was uneasy in his mind. Possibly the man traveling under the seat of his compartment, but for whose presence the other would have been alone, had designs upon the valuables he carried, and, realizing he could not stop the express owing to the communication cord being broken, he decided upon the novel method of giving the police a clue in the possible event of the hiding man killing him to obtain the valuables.

I knew quite well that the Queenborough express had run through Cliffe three-quarters of an hour before, and it had by that time reached its destination. Going over to the station master's office, I showed that official the message and explained my conclusion. He agreed that the affair might be serious. The only thing he could not understand was the point that the man under the seat must have taken up his position before the other man entered the compartment, and this did not suggest to him that he had designs upon the other, because he could not rely upon the other choosing that particular compartment. But I pointed out to him that the hiding man may have taken up his position in a compartment next to that of his intended victim, expecting to get along by the footboard at the first opportunity and that the other man, for some reason, might have changed into the next compartment at Gravesend, thus walking into the enemy's camp unconsciously, and not discovered his enemy's presence until the train was running between Gravesend and Cliffe.

To oblige me he wired down the line to Port Victoria, and shortly afterwards came the news that nothing absolutely pointing to a crime had come under notice. But that, in a second-class smoking compartment, a quantity of blood had been found by a guard.

A peculiar fact was, however, that no body had been found. If a murder had been done, what had become of the body? If only an assault had been committed, why had the victim neither been found in the compartment nor given information? So he wired back to Port Victoria, giving them details, advising them to make immediate inquiries and to search the line. Very shortly after that we received a message to the effect that blood had also been found upon the footboard on the down-side of the compartment on the floor of which similar stains had been discovered. The police had been informed, and already a search party had been sent up the line.

I wired full particulars to Scotland Yard, and, on receiving instructions to personally conduct the inquiry, I organized a search gang, and, armed with naphtha lamps, we set out down the line to meet those coming from Port Victoria.

We went along as far as Sharnal street without discovering anything, and from that station we wired on for information. In reply we were advised that stains of blood had been found at the side of the down metals, half way between Sharnal and Port Victoria, and that a track of stains had been followed down the embankment and half across a field.

This new fact appeared important, seeming to suggest that either the assailant or his wounded victim had jumped out of the running train, and escaped across the fields. But it

plled, coldly. "But I would rather have surrendered myself. I am now in possession of evidence which will prove my innocence and that I was unjustly punished."

"That is not the only thing for which we want you," I said. "You are suspected of having murdered a gentleman between Cliffe and Port Victoria."

"Is he dead?" he cried.

"We have reason to think so."

He laughed lightly, but rather an evil, unnatural laugh.

"I don't think so," he said. "I was very near strangling him at one moment, but he gave in like the wise and cowardly wretch he is. Shall I tell you all I know? See, I have here—worn from him by threats—a written confession that he committed the forgery and swore false evidence against me, and he told me where I shall find the proofs of all he did to ruin me and my good name."

I took the paper—a half-sheet of common note-paper covered in pencilled words; and I readily recognized the writing as being the same as that of the message in the novel. It was, as he said, a full confession, and signed with the name of Herbert Ryan.

"I got to London," he began, while I was yet reading, "after my escape, determined upon coming down here to see Miss Duncan before I thought of anything else. I meant to walk all the way, but I overestimated my strength—impaired by 15 bitter months in prison—and the boots I had stolen from a rubbish heap were stiff and heavy; I had to throw them off and go barefooted, as you see me now. So before I reached Gravesend I decided to risk recapture, and steal a ride. I waited in a cutting for the coming of a chance to board a train unobserved, and my luck was good enough to bring me to a standstill within a few hundred yards of me."

"I boarded it, and having found an unoccupied compartment, I got in and scrambled under the seat. To my dismay, at Gravesend a man got into the compartment. I feared he would notice me and call the guard, but he didn't and the train set off again. It was a tortuous position I was in—cramped in every limb, not daring to move lest the passenger should notice me and stop the train, and I had bidly cut my foot on a stone in walking along the railway, and the wound caused me great pain, and bled not a little."

"I could only see the legs of the passenger, who sat on the opposite seat. I was dreadfully afraid that he would stretch out his legs and kick me any moment. But he did not. After a time, however, he grew restless, and went to sit at the corner farthest from me. I could not see what he did, but I could pretty well guess that after he had changed his seat he opened the window and tried to pull the communication-cord, and I heard a low oath as the cord ran slack in his hands. Had I not guessed the cord was wrong I should have slipped up and jumped out of the train before it pulled up. But I understood, and kept quiet to consider what I should do. I twisted my head slightly, and in this way was able to see him take a book out of his bag; and I saw his hands writing in it. Presently the roar in front of the train told me that we were running through a station; and I saw him lean to the right and fling the book out of the window. His head came so low that I saw his face and recognized him as my traitor of a cousin. 'I wormed myself out and confronted him. He did not seem in the least surprised to see me—he told me later that he recognized my hand by the tattooed anchor—but professed the greatest pleasure at seeing me. But all the while his face was pale as death, and his hands shook like those of a palsied man. I had some difficulty in dealing with him. Once I put my fingers around his throat, and felt like strangling him. He told me what I wished to know—how I could clear myself, so I released my hold. I made him write that confession and duly sign it, and with it on me I got on to the footboard as soon as the train slowed down, and jumped. I opened the window in my foot in jumping and had to pause awhile, it pained me so. I hung about the fields for a time, then cut away to see Miss Duncan. That's all. Herbert was going over to Holland. He won't stop there now because I know how and where I can find proof to convict him of the crime for which he had me sentenced. He told me that himself."

"Let me just speak to Miss Duncan in private for one moment, sir," he concluded. "I give you my word of honor that I will not attempt to escape; and then I shall be ready to accompany you to prove my innocence."

He kept his word well, not only about escaping, but as to proving his innocence. And I had an invitation to his wedding, not long after.—Tit-Bits.

Uncle Sam's Vegetable Garden.

People who were amused in the days of Holman, at that great economist's suggestion that potatoes instead of flowers might be planted in the grounds around the public buildings may not be aware that Uncle Sam has a great garden of spring delicacies around the Capitol building. The first garden delicacies of the season are found there. On the southern slope of the lawn under the protection of the terrace and exposed to the sun, the dandelions have begun to sprout, and a few days ago some old women and children who know the secrets of the soil were out with their baskets gathering these "greens" for the table. Mushrooms of the best variety, as well as dandelions, grow in great abundance on this broad lawn, and it is a source of supply of "greens" or mushrooms almost from the time snow disappears until winter comes again.

Washington Star.

## DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

### SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED DIVINE.

Subject: God's Saving Grace—Religion is an Active Principle Which Works Constantly For the Welfare of Body and Mind and Soul—Hope For Sinners.

(Copyright 1904.)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Dr. Talmage has been deeply interested in the natural phenomena and the quaint social life of that wonderful land. In this sermon he argues, contrary to the opinion of many, that religion is an active principle which works constantly for the welfare of body and mind and soul. His text is Luke xiv, 34, "Salt is good."

The Bible is a dictionary of the finest similes. It employs among living creatures storks and eagles and doves and unicorns and the like, and among trees, sycamores and terebinths and pomegranates and almonds and apples; among jewels, pearls and amethysts and jacinths and chrysoberyls. Christ uses no stale illustrations. The lies that He plucks in His discourses are not stuffed specimens of birds, but warm with life from wing tip to wing tip; the fish He points to are not dull about the gills, as though long captured, but a-squirm in the wet net just brought up on the beach of Tiberias. In His text, which is the peroration of one of His sermons, He picks up a crystal and holds it before His congregation as an illustration of divine grace in the heart when He says what we all know by experiment, "Salt is good."

I shall try to carry out the Saviour's idea in this text and in the first place say to you that grace is like salt in its beauty. In Galicia there are mines of salt with excavations and underground passages reaching, I am told, 280 miles. Far underground there are chapels and halls of reception. The miners, the altars, the altars, the salt. When the king and the princes come to visit these mines, the whole place is illuminated, and the glory of crystal walls and crystal ceilings and crystal floors and crystal columns, under the glare of the torches and the lamps, is a sight to describe it. But you need not go so far as that to find the beauty of salt. You live in a land which produces millions of bushels of it in a year, and you can take the morning rail train and in a few hours get to the salt mines and salt springs, and you have this article morning, noon and night on your table. Salt has all the beauty of the snowflake and water foam, with durability added. It is beautiful to the naked eye, but under the glass you see the stars, and the diamonds, and the white bristles of the splinters, and the bridges of fire as the sun glints them. There is more architectural skill in one of these crystals of salt than human ingenuity has ever demonstrated in an Alhambra or St. Peter's.

But I shall take all this, with an infringement upon eternity, for an angel of God to tell one-half the glories in a salt crystal. So with the grace of God; it is perfectly beautiful. I have seen it smooth out wrinkles of care from the brow; I have seen it make an aged man feel almost young again. I have seen it lift the stooping shoulders and put sparkle into the dull eye. Solomon discovered its therapeutic qualities when he said, "It is marrow to the bones." It helps to digest the food and to purify the blood and to calm the pulses and to cheer the spleen, and instead of dall's prayer text of twenty years ago, putting a man in a philosophical hospital to be experimented upon by prayer, it keeps him so well that he does not need to be prayed for as an invalid. I am speaking now of a healthy religion—not of that morbid religion that sits for three hours in a grove of stone reading Hervey's "Meditations Among the Tombs"—a religion that prospers best in a bad state of the liver! I speak of the religion that Christ preached. I suppose, when that religion was common, the disease will be wished, and that a man 100 years of age will come in from business and say, "I am tired; I think it must be time for me to go," and without one physical pang heaven will have him.

But the chief beauty of grace is in the soul. It takes that which was hard and cold and repulsive and makes it all over again. It pours upon one's nature what David calls "the beauty of holiness." It extirpates everything that is hateful and unclean. If jealousy and pride and lust and worldliness lurk about, they are chased away, and the soul is made as pure as the snowflake and as fragrant as the summer garden as He comes in saying, "I am the Rose of Sharon," and He submerges it with the glory of a spring morning, as He says, "I am the light."

Oh, how much that grace did for the three John's! It took John Bunyan, the foul mouthed, and made him John Bunyan, the immortal dreamer; it took John Newton, the infidel sailor, and in the midst of the hurricane made him cry out, "My mother's God, have mercy upon me!" It took Samuel Johnson from a life of sin and by the hand of a Christian maker of edge tools led him into the pulpit that burns still with the light of that Christian eloquence which charmed thousands to the Jesus whom He once despised. Ah, you may search all the earth over for anything so beautiful, so beautifying as the grace of God! Go all through the deep mine passages of Wieliczka and amid the underground kingdoms of salt in Hallstadt and show me anything so transcendently beautiful as this grace of God fashioned and hung in sterner crystals.

Again, grace is like salt in the fact that it is a necessity of life. Man and beast perish without salt. What are those paths across the western prairie? Why, they were made there by deer and buffalo going to and coming away from the salt licks. Chemists and physicians all the world over tell that salt is a necessity of life. And so with the grace of God; you must have it or die. I know a great many speak of it as a mere adornment, a sort of shoulder strap adorning a soldier, or a light, frothing dessert brought in after the greater necessities of life are over, or a medicine to be taken after powders and mustard plasters have failed to do their work, but ordinarily a mere superfluity, a string of bells around a horse's neck while he draws the load and in no wise helping him to draw it. From this I declare the grace of God to be the first and the last necessity. It is food we must take or starve into an eternity of famine. It is clothing, without which we freeze to the mast of infinite terror. It is the plank, and the only plank, on which we can float shoulder to shoulder.

It is the ladder, and the only ladder, on which we can climb up into the light. It is a positive necessity for the soul. You can tell very easily what the effect would be if a person refused to take salt into the body. The energies would fall, the lungs would struggle with the air, slow fevers would crawl through the brain, the heart would flutter, and the life would be gone. Salt, a necessity for the life of the body; the grace of God, a necessity for the life of the soul; grace is like salt in abundance. God has strewn salt in vast profusion all over the continents. Russia seems built on a salt-cellar. There is one region in that country that turns out 90,000 tons of salt in a year. England and Russia and Italy have inexhaustible resources in this respect. Norway and Sweden, white with snow above, white with salt beneath. Austria, yielding 900,000 tons annually. Nearly all the nations rich in it—rock salt, spring salt, sea salt.

Again, the Creator of the world, when He uttered our text, knew it would become more and more significant as the shafts were sunk, and the springs were bored, and the pumps were worked, and the crystals were gathered. So the grace of God is abundant. It is for all lands, for all ages, for all conditions. It seems to undergird everything—pardon for the worn sin comfort for the sharpest suffering, brightest light for the thickest darkness.

Around about the salt lakes of Saratov there are 10,000 men toiling day and night, and yet they never exhaust the salt treasures. And if the 1,000,000,000 of our race should now cry out to God for His mercy there would be enough for all—for those furthest gone in sin, for the murderer standing on the drop of the gallows. It is an ocean of mercy, if Europe and Asia and Africa, North and South America, and all the islands of the sea went down in it to-day they would have room enough to wash and come up clean.

Let no man think that his case is too tough a one for God to set upon. Though your sin may be deep and raging, let me tell you that God's grace is a bridge not built on earthly piers, but suspended and spanning the awful chasm of your guilt, one end resting upon the rock of eternal promises and the other on the foundations of heaven. Demetrius wore a robe so incrustated with jewels that no one after him ever dared to wear it. But our King, Jesus, takes off the robe of His righteousness, a robe blood dyed and heaven wreathed, and reaches it out to the worst wretches in all the earth and says: "Put that on! Wear it now! Wear it forever!"

Again, the grace of God is like salt in the way we come at it. The salt on the surface is almost always impure—that which remains the Rocky Mountains and the South American ranges and the Andes—but the miners go down through the shafts and through the dark labyrinths and along by galleries of rock, and with torches and pickaxes, find their way under the foundations of the earth to where the salt lies that make up the nation's wealth. To get to the best saline springs of the earth huge machinery goes down, boring depth below depth, depth below depth, until from under the very roofs of the mountains the saline water supplies the aqueduct. This water is brought to the surface and is exposed in tanks to the sun for evaporation, or it is put in boilers mightily heated and the water evaporates, and the salt gathers at the bottom of the tank. The work is completed, and the fortune is made.

Have you not been in enough trouble to have that work go on? I was reading of Aristotle, who said there was a field of flowers in Sicily so sweet that once a hound, coming on the track of game, came to the field and was bewitched by the perfumes and so lost the track. Oh, that our souls might become like a field which the Lord hath blessed! and exhale so much of the sweetness of Christian character that the hounds of temptation, coming on our track, might lose it and go howling with disappointment.

But I remark again that the grace of God is like salt in its preservative quality. You know that salt absorbs the moisture of articles of food and infuses them with brine, which preserves them for a step in our social life, the Christian preserver of the world. Experimenters in preserving wood, have tried sugar and smoke and air-tight jars and everything else, but as long as the world stands "salt's words will be suggestive, and men will admit that as a great preservative 'salt is good.'"

But for the grace of God the earth would have become a stale carcass long before this. That grace is the only preservative of laws and constitutions and literatures. It keeps in our social life, the salt of divine grace it preserves. The philosophy of this day, so far as it is antagonistic to this religion, putrefies and stinks. The great want of our schools of learning and our institutions of science to-day is not more Leyden jars and galvanic batteries and spectroscopes and philosophical apparatus, but more of that grace that will teach our men of science that the God of the universe is the God of the Bible.

How strange it is that in all their magnificent sweep of the telescope they have not seen the morning star of Jesus, and that in all their experiments with light and heat they have not seen the light and felt the warmth of the Sun of Righteousness! We want more of the salt of God's grace in our homes, in our schools, in our colleges, in our social life, in our business. And that which has it will live; that which has it not will die. I proclaim the tendency of everything earthly to putrefaction and death, the religion of Christ the only preservative.

My subject is one of great congratulation to those who have within their souls this gospel antiseptic. This salt will preserve them through the temptations and sorrows of life and through the ages of eternity. I do not mean to say that you will have a smooth time because you are a stepchild of the world. You will have your whole duty I will promise you a rough time. You march through an enemy's country, and they will try to double up both flanks and to cut you off from your source of supplies. The war you wage will be with toy arrows, but every arrow aimed to the hit, and spurring on your steed over heaps of the slain. But I think that God omnipotent will see you through. I know He will. But why do I talk like an atheist when I ought to say I know He will? "Keep by the power of God through faith unto complete salvation."

When Governor Geary, of Pennsylvania, died years ago I lost a good friend. He impressed me mightily with the horrors of war. In the eight hours that we rode together in the cars he recited to me the ice and snow and blood and carnage of the civil war. He said that there came one battle upon which everything seemed to pivot. Telegrams from Washington said that the life of the nation depended on that struggle. He said to me: "I went into that battle with my son. His mother and I thought everything of him. You know how a father will feel toward his son who is coming up manly and brave and good. Well, the battle opened and concentrated, and it was awful. Horses and riders bent and twisted, and piled up together. It was awful, sir. We quit firing, and took to the point of the bayonet. Well, sir, I didn't feel like myself that day. I had prayed to God for strength for that particular battle, and I went into it feeling that I had in my right arm the power of ten giants," and as the Governor brought his arm down on the back of the seat it fairly made the car tremble. "Well," he said, "the battle was desperate, but after awhile we gained a little, and we marched on a little. I turned round to the troops and shouted, 'Come on, boys!' and I was my son! I saw at the first glance he was dead, and yet I did not dare to stop a minute, for the crisis had come in the battle, so I just got down on my knees, and I threw my arms around him, and I gave him one good kiss and said, 'God bless you, dear,' and sprang up and shouted, 'Come on, boys!'" So it is in the Christian conflict. It is a fierce fight. Heaven is waiting for the bulletins to announce the tremendous issue. Hail of shot, gash of sabre, fall of battlements, crashing on every side. We cannot stop for loss or bereavement or anything else. With one ardent embrace and loving kiss we utter our farewells and then cry: "Come on, boys!" There are other heights to be captured, there are other foes to be conquered, there are other crowns to be won.

Yet as one of the Lord's surgeons I must bind up two or three wounds. Just lift them now, whatever they be. I have been told there is nothing like salt to stop the bleeding of a wound, and so I take the salt of the gospel and put it on the lacerated soul. It smarts a little at first, but see, the bleeding stops, and lo the flesh comes again as the flesh of a little child! "Salt is good." Comfort one another with these words.

Great Britain imported 16,000,000 great hundreds (1,920,000,000) of eggs last year.

## THE GREAT DESTROYER.

### SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

Our Coming Banner—Poverty Can Be Traced to Liquor in at Least Twenty-Five Per Cent. of Cases—Evil of Drunkenness Decreasing in This Country.

O say! do you see on our star-spangled flag  
The red stains of a crime that dishonors the nation,  
Which soon in its course would to infamy drag  
And make of our land one vast desolation?  
See the woe and despair! hark! what cries fill the air  
As the wide flood of ruin pours on every-where!

'Tis the curse of the demon that fain would enslave  
All the free, and defile all the good and the brave.  
Long—long doth the tyrant his iron sway wield  
In paths drenched in blood, law and order defying,  
Till thousands of homes of the drunkards are filled  
With vain prayers for help or the groans of the dying;  
Yet the lava-tide flows, amid shrieks, wails and throes  
Of victims that know not relief nor repose,  
And the striped banner in mockery waves  
Over millions of souls rushing on to their graves.

O! then, let us rise in our God-given might  
To drive out the foe and all his pollution  
With prayers and with ballots, to urge on the fight,  
And courage that never will know diminution.  
So, with victory blest, in peace we shall  
Assured of our birthright of Freedom possessed,  
While the Star-spangled Banner forever shall wave  
O'er the land of the free—the pure—and the brave!

—National Advocate.

### Liquor-Drinking in America.

In a very interesting and instructive book written by a John Koren, some results are given of the inquiry of the "Committee of Fifty" into the liquor problem, or drinking customs, of the United States. Among those who come under the notice of the charity organization societies poverty can be traced to liquor in at least 25 per cent. of the cases. Of those in almshouses 37 of every 100 would not be there but for drink. The committee investigated into the cases of no less than 13,400 convicts, and found that in one-half of the cases the crime was chiefly due to intemperance, and it was a leading cause in 31 per cent., and a sole cause in 16 per cent. of the cases.

Some, however, can only be made to view intemperance through the pocket, and even in this aspect it is something awful. The value of the liquor produced annually in this country is about \$290,000,000. Not less than \$1,000,000,000 of capital is employed in the business. A revenue of nearly \$200,000,000 is collected annually from the business. To cap all, no less than 1,800,000 persons directly derive their support from the liquor business, which is ruining the lives here of their fellow-beings and destroying their hopes of happiness hereafter. Most sincerely might all wish that both persons and money might far otherwise be employed.

Notwithstanding the undeniable statistics adduced it is asserted by some that poverty is not so much an effect of intemperance as it is a cause of intemperance. This is simply a baseless assertion scarcely worthy of serious consideration. There must in the first place be something morally wrong with the man or woman who "dies to drink" to drown sorrow or other trouble. There must not only be a weakness, but an inherent desire in the individual for liquor, otherwise he would not adopt that mode of dulling his memory in preference to another, or rather than fight against it as becomes a man. In those who thus "take to drink" we think there can be traced not only a weakness, but a decided tendency to serious business, which is ruining the lives here of their fellow-beings and destroying their hopes of happiness hereafter. Most sincerely might all wish that both persons and money might far otherwise be employed.

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According to official reports nearly 4000 of the men who have gone to South Africa on active service are members of the Army Temperance Association. Lord Roberts, in commenting on this report, added that he had been struck by the returns from India, where there was a remarkable difference between the convictions recorded in 1898 among abstainers and non-abstainers. Among the former only 412 in 1000 had been court-martialed, while among the non-abstainers the figures were 378 in 1000. In 1897 the figures were much the same. The admissions into hospitals were also largely in excess in the case of non-abstainers. It appeared that during the Tirah war 2000 men went through the whole campaign without taking a drop of alcohol.

This new and significant tendency in the army appears to be the result not so much of any religious or moral enterprise as of a growing conviction that a free use of alcohol interferes with the efficiency of the troops. General Kitchener prohibited all drinks containing alcohol in the Sudan campaign, except the few that were prescribed by the medical officers, and after a little preliminary grumbling the men discovered for themselves that the Commander-in-Chief was right when he expatriated them from the desert of a cart of Scotch whisky that had been smuggled into Berber for sale to the troops. In the Ashanti war and the Kaffir war the good health of the troops was also secured by the suspension of the rum ration.—Independent.

Respect yourself, your parents, brothers and sisters, shun the company of toppers, and never darken the door of a saloon.  
One immutable truth is that, whether alcohol be fuel food or not, it is so dangerous that it would be better to live most abstemiously than to depend on it for any portion of sustenance where anything else can be obtained.  
An Ohio woman has just been given a verdict for \$2000 against two saloon keepers who sold liquor to her husband, which caused him to become helpless, and he lay outside and was badly frozen. His hand had to be amputated. The case was bitterly fought by the saloon men.