

The Middleburgh Post.

T. H. HARTER. He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave. EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR
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POETRY: THE WILL AND THE WAY.

It was a noble Roman,
In Rome's imperial day,
Who heard a coward croaker,
Before the battle, say:
"They're safe in such a fortress;
There is no way to shake it—
"On!" exclaimed the hero,
"I'll find a way, or make it!"
Is fame your aspiration?
Her path is steep and high;
In vain she seeks the temple
Content to gaze and sigh!
The shining throne is waiting,
But he alone can take it
Who says, with Roman firmness,
"I'll find a way, or make it!"
Is learning your ambition?
There is no royal road;
Alike the peer and peasant
Must climb to her abode,
Who feels the thirst for knowledge,
In Helicon may seek it,
If he has still the Roman will,
To "find a way, or make it!"
Are riches worth your getting?
They must be bravely sought;
With wishing and with fretting
The boon cannot be bought.
To all the prize is open,
But only he can take it
Who says, with Roman courage,
"I'll find a way, or make it!"
—John G. Saxe.

TEXAS PLUCK.

SEVEN DESPERADORS KILLED SINGLE
HANDED BY WALTER RIDGELY, A
BRAVE TEXAN.

[From the Police Gazette of April 30.]

Four men outside the pages of yellow-backed literature have seven killings credited to them. Among the few—the only, probably, the readers of this paper have ever been made acquainted with through the record of his deeds—is Walter Ridgely, the man who exterminated the Murphy family, killing the last three on the morning of April 15. Mr. Walter Ridgely has been compelled to make several visits to the police on each occasion he wasted neither his talent, his time nor his ammunition. On each of three occasions the parties who compelled him to pull trigger belonged to the Murphy family, and on each occasion the aggressors have not been permitted to live long enough even to regret their rashness. On the 3rd day of March Mr. Ridgely killed two men; two weeks later he killed two more, and again, on April 15, he killed three of the same tribe. In the last encounter with the Murphys Mr. Ridgely was desperately wounded, so that in order to see him it became necessary to go to the Ridgely plantation and invade the presence of a very sick man.

The Ridgely farm is situated some twenty-eight miles northwest from here, on Red River, Texas, and just opposite the Indian Territory. As he approached the grounds of the Ridgely residence, after a lonely drive of nearly thirty miles through thinly-populated country, the reporter saw much to indicate that the owner was a man of refined and noble taste—improvements of convenience of the most modern style everywhere meeting his eyes. The road and garden were beautifully and systematically laid off, and bore evidence of the most careful cultivation and keeping. The tenants' stables, barns, stables, cattle-pens and fields were such as could only result from the highest grade of intelligent judgment and taste.

The scribe entered the yard and was greeted by one of the farmhands, who had charge of the room occupied by the wounded man, and upon consented that the reporter permitted to enter that chamber the condition that he should not disturb the patient by asking him questions, or even hinting that was a newspaper man.

The house is a large, two-story structure, and is elegantly and fully furnished. Accompanied by the nurse mentioned the reporter entered the sick room. Ridgely lying quietly, and was evidently resting nicely, and when introduced to the reporter held out his hand and said in very feeble voice: "I am pleased to meet you, sir, but am very weak, and as I am under care from my physician not to have any conversation with you, I trust you will excuse me from conversation; but," he added, "if you have any curiosity to know anything of the unfortunate case which has befallen me, I will

present condition, Jenkins there, who is my trusted friend as well as employe, and at present my nurse, can advise you fully."

After expressing sympathy for his present condition and hopes for his speedy recovery, the reporter requested Mr. Jenkins to retire with him to another room, when the following facts were obtained relative to the life history of Walter Ridgely and his recent troubles with the Murphys:

Ridgely was born in Red River county, in the state of Texas, in the year 1855, and is therefore now 31 years of age.

The story of his clash with the Murphys is best told as follows: Two brothers, Joe and Robert Murphy, kept a ferry at Ropemeyer's store, some eight miles west of the Ridgely plantation, and the regular fee for crossing a man and horse was fifty cents. On Wednesday, March 2 last, a drummer on horseback crossed the river there and was charged the usual price of half a dollar. Having transacted his business in the Indian Nation, which is on the north side of the river, he returned to the ferry the next day, and calling the ferry-men, was re-crossed to the Texas side. When the landing was reached the drummer put his hand in his pocket, and taking out fifty cents handed it toward one of the men, who coolly informed him that the charge was \$5 and that he must pay it. Astonished beyond measure, the drummer told them that he would not pay it. The Murphys said: "All right; We will just keep this (indicating the drummer's sample case), until you do pay it." They quietly and in a very business-like manner tied the boat to the Texas bank and leisurely ascended the hill to the store of Ropemeyer, one of them carrying the sample case and the drummer following.

All entered the store, where, as usual at that hour, a number of farmers were talking about their crops, prospects for rain &c. The drummer renewed his argument with the ferry-men and for the edification of the crowd present rehearsed the ferry-boat transaction. Walter Ridgely was one of the listeners, and when the drummer had ended his story he inquired of the Murphys if what the knight of the road had just stated was correct, and received from them an answer in the affirmative. Ridgely then told that, as the drummer's time was valuable and he was in a hurry, it would not be exactly the proper thing to "carry their joke" for such he thought it was at that time any further, and that they had best take the fifty cents and give up the sample case and let the man go.

At this both men became quite indignant, and informed Ridgely that he would do well to mind his own business, and that whenever they should need his advice or assistance in running their ferry they would let him know. To this Ridgely responded with spirit telling them they ought to be ashamed of themselves for trying to impose upon a friendless stranger, and that if they were really serious about the matter they had better take his advice as already given or they would run the risk of answering to the Grand Jury.

At this both men sprang at Ridgely, and the latter, who is a fine specimen of physical manhood, knocked the foremost one down. The other halted and reached for his pistol, but Ridgely, who saw his intention, succeeded in getting his revolver out first, and fired, shooting his assailant through the heart and dropping him dead in his tracks. The other Murphy by this time had regained his feet, and seeing what had happened made a motion as if to draw his pistol, when he too was mortally wounded by Ridgely and died the next day. Ridgely immediately gave himself up to the Sheriff, and upon preliminary examination was discharged on the ground of self defense.

John Murphy, a brother of the men killed, and an uncle, Thomas, soon after came into the neighborhood and made loud and repeated threats that they would kill Ridgely the first opportunity. For two weeks nothing occurred, but the two Murphys, uncle and brother to the deceased ferryman, were frequently seen near the Ridgely farm, heavily armed, and it was plain that

the matter would not end without further bloodshed. Ridgely observed the greatest caution during this time, staying indoors, and going nowhere except upon the most pressing and important matters of business. On March 22 Ridgely found it necessary to go to the farm of a neighbor about two miles distant.

He left home about 3 o'clock P. M. but when he had completed his business it was after sundown in fact, growing dusk. He then mounted his horse and started for home, riding a medium gait. When a little more than halfway home, and while passing through a strip of woods, suddenly there sounded the report of two guns from behind trees, and at the reports Ridgely's horse fell dead under him, Ridgely, who, as the sequel proved was himself unhurt, falling upon the opposite side of his horse from that where the firing occurred. He did not move or make any noise, and the would-be assassins, evidently thinking that they had killed him, left cover and started, presumably, to take a view of the corpse. The corpse, however, proving an exceedingly lively one, and when the two men, proved to be the two Murphys, were within eight or ten feet the corpse suddenly sprang to his feet, with a six shooter in either hand, and began firing upon them. They were taken so completely by surprise that Ridgely thinks they made no effort or thought of returning his fire, and quicker than it takes to tell it they had both bitten the dust and their spirits departed to the happy hunting-grounds to join the two ferrymen who had previously "taken passage" at Ridgely's hands.

Ridgely kept himself confined closely to his own premises, not going off his farm on any occasion, and it is but fair to presume that the Murphy party, growing impatient, and perhaps worn out with the siege, thought to execute their purpose by stratagem. With this object in view, at 2 o'clock on Friday morning they caused a disturbance, well knowing that Ridgely's great care for his horses would, in all probability, cause him to come out in person to ascertain what was wrong. The ruse operated exactly as the Murphys intended it should. Mr. Ridgely was aroused from his slumbers by the noise in the stable yard, and did just as any other sensible farmer would do under like circumstances. He got into his boots and trousers as quickly as possible, and taking a pair of revolvers, the same 4-calibre weapons he had used on previous occasions, and which, obeying the dictates of common sense, he had kept with convenient reach ever since his trouble with the Murphys began, he started for the barn. He passed the door of a room in which a couple of his hired men were sleeping, and called to them to get up and follow him quickly. Mr. Ridgely passed on out the door and across the house yard to the gate opening into the barn lot. Here he paused a moment and listened. All was quiet, and no animated object was in sight. He entered the barnyard and was walking at an ordinary gait toward the big barn when suddenly a human form sprang up from behind a wagon and fired at him.

The bullet passed through his hat, and Ridgely, though unhurt, dropped to his knees, and less time than it requires for telling it his trusty revolver responded. It was too dark to take aim, or even to discern plainly what or who he was shooting at. Mr. Ridgely's shot sped well, as was evidenced by the yell and oath which answered it as the man by the wagon dropped. Mr. Ridgely says he did not think of the Murphys until the first shot was fired; then he realized the situation, and took it for granted that there was to be a desperate conflict. Ridgely was standing near the wagon when a man behind the wagon fired at him. Immediately after the shooting Ridgely sprang to his feet and ran toward the wagon, and had reached it when two men rose up, one on each side of the inclined drive to the barn, and started toward him. Both these men opened fire on Ridgely, and he responded. The shooting in the dark was necessarily wild, but at the third shot, he thinks, Ridgely was struck in the left arm, and he was then half disarmed, the weapon in his left hand, of course, being useless. At the same instant one of his foes fell. This one Ridgely thinks, shot once after he fell and sent a bullet into Ridgely's right breast. Ridgely fell, but turned over on his right side and sent a bullet at the only one of his assailants who was on his feet. This shot killed the man; he was fired at, and still lying on his side, Ridgely shot at the other man, who was just trying to get up. The

bullet hit him square in the top of his head and killed him.

"All of this, you must understand," said the narrator, "took place in a very short space of time, so that by the time any of the men could get to the scene the battle was over."
Lanterns were brought and Ridgely was carried into the house. Then the field of slaughter was searched, and as a result two dead Murphys and one live one were brought in and laid on the porch. The live one died in less than an hour, and it was thought Ridgely would expire before a doctor could be secured to attend his wounds. But he didn't. He is still alive and with care will recover. Ridgely was shot in three places—in the right breast, in the left arm, and just under the left shoulder blade. The last mentioned wound puzzles Ridgely. He knows when he was shot in the arm and when the bullet struck him in the breast, but he doesn't remember receiving the other wound. He thinks the man behind the wagon, who opened the battle must have got in another shot while he (Ridgely) was engaged with the other two.

The history of the Murphy family is difficult to write as a whole. Where they originally came from or what their career was prior to their appearance in that section nobody appears to know. It is only certain that since their coming they have been, in every sense, what is termed "bad citizens."

They have long been looked upon with disgust; wherever known being regarded as dangerous and desperate men; and their taking off is looked upon by the peaceable and law-abiding element as little less than a god-send. The country breathes even again for the first time in several years and Ridgely is regarded not only as a public benefactor, but a great hero as well.

In personal appearance Ridgely is a notable man, and would attract attention in any crowd. He is 5 feet 11 inches in height, dark wavy hair, black mustache, black eyes, a prominent nose and a countenance that the most asthetic physiognomist could not fail to admire. He has never married, but goes into society convenience and business will allow. His home, however, is as well kept as any your correspondent has seen in this part of the country. He is a very quiet man, and is very particular in his habits. He is a very quiet man, and is very particular in his habits. He is a very quiet man, and is very particular in his habits. He is a very quiet man, and is very particular in his habits.

The Human Hand

Take care of your hands. Few things are as agreeable as the pressure of a warm, soft hand. The poet who remembers his best girl, now, alas! his lost girl, says,—
If the world were mine, I give it all,
All for one touch of her beautiful hands.

And Penneyson, in one of the best things he ever wrote, says,—
And oh! for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.
A bony hand itself is no credit to anybody, any more than a dirty hand. Work is a credit to all, but even those who perform the roughest, severest labor may have agreeable hands. They owe it to others to keep them as decent as possible. Even in foundries and rolling mills, where men carry constantly rough iron castings and gritty substances, those mechanics who are neat have a preparation containing oil which they use upon their hands when washing them, which makes them white and comparatively soft. If these can have pleasant hands, anybody can.

That man, whether a farmer or other person, who prides himself on a smoked, bacon-colored fat, hard as a horse's hoof, with black nails and creases of dirt in all the wrinkles, is not a nice man to live with.

Above all is the touch of a woman's warm, elastic palm soothing. Therefore, all the sex, including even scrub women, should keep their hands as pretty as possible.

It is easier than you think for. Don't go out without gloves. It is not neat or ladylike to do so. Keep your hands clean, but don't overdo it. Don't scour them constantly with soap. At night, just before retiring, wash them well, then moisten them lightly with water, and pour into the palm of one a drop or two of glycerine. Rub this thoroughly all over your hands and wrists. It will make the skin delicate and silky to the touch. It will also prevent the blisters from chapping. No matter how rough your work is, do this every night of your life, and you will have nice hands. Oh, loose gloves drawn on after the glycerine is applied, and worn at night, are still better. Do not apply the glycerine without the water. It is too heavy and heating. Glycerine is the best adjunct of a woman's toilet that has been discovered in a century. It is extremely healing to cuts and wounds upon the skin. Be sure, however, to get a pure article. Otherwise it will grow stale and make the skin yellow.

Finally, for goodness sake don't bite your nails. Let them grow as even as possible, then cut or file them neatly. A nail brush bristly applied is good for removing from around them whatever oughtn't to be there. The manicures and druggists now keep neat little sets of instruments for the nails. They consist of file, scissors, brush, polisher, and little boxes of powder. This is a rosy powder, with which the nails are polished till they shine brilliantly. A coloring matter is also used which gives nails and finer tips a soft pink hue. The pointed fashion of trimming the nails is all out of fashion now. So is that hideous, barbarous fancy of letting the nail grow long like a vulture's claw. Don't do it. Trim the nails to a neat, tapering shape. If you let them grow naturally they will shape themselves in the best form. Some say anybody's finger ends can be made to taper by squeezing and molding and pulling them gently from the sides with the thumb and finger of the other hand. Do this several times a day, and it is claimed that at length they will be "whipped in."

A Black Irishman
In the Court of Common Pleas last week Judge Bookstaver made Americans of a great many men of different nationalities. One of these was a gentleman of color. The Judge was curious as to this man's antecedents. He asked of the colored gentleman: "Where were you born, and what is your name?" "Edward Thoru, sir; I was born in Ireland."
"What part of Ireland?"
"Cork," was the answer.
"How did that happen?" was the query of the Court.
"My father was a cook on a vessel that lay in that port when I was born. This little incident afforded considerable amusement to Court and

His Life Had Been Wasted
An old soldier lay dying in a little town in Pennsylvania. "Is there anything on your mind that troubles you?" asked his pastor, as an expression of grave concern passed over the veteran's face. "Yes," said the dying man, "there is. I have not made use of my opportunities. I was in the war about four years, in many battles, and thought I tried to do my duty. But I never picked up a lighted shell, with its burning fuses sputtering close to the shell, and threw it over the parapet of the fort."

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