

HE HAD A GOOD LAWYER.

HOW a strong chain of circumstantial evidence may be broken by a good lawyer has just been shown by the trial of a case in the state of Belgium. A tragedy whose details as they were unraveled riveted the attention of not only France, Belgium, but almost the whole of Europe, has come to an unexpected termination. It is thus told in a late Paris letter:

The main actor in the Belgian tragedy is a boy of 19, and the victim his aged relative—his mother's mother. Over two hundred witnesses were called, among them the heads of various gymnastic institutions, circus people, acrobats, and all manner of personages acquainted with the handling of ropes and the possibility of the human body under given circumstances. The main features in the case are that Jean Retson, who was born in Antwerp in 1859, was found by the police in his grandmother's apartment last November, tied hand and foot.

His shouts had attracted the attention of the police, who, on entering, first discovered the house thrown into indescribable confusion; the chairs were overturned, the tables knocked over, the ornaments scattered on the floor and broken in every shape, while in the midst of these was the figure of the old grandmother lying on the floor with her head crushed in and a folded table-cloth wedged into her mouth; in the next apartment, lying with his back on the floor, hands and feet tied and a gag just escaped from his mouth, was found the accused in an almost fainting condition. They proceeded at once to untie the lad, and by his story it was supposed that two assassins had entered, had attracted the old woman, and, discovering the presence of the lad, who began to shout and tried to escape, tied together his hands, and made a threat to shoot him if he made any noise. This theory, however, was at once suspected.

It seems that the grandson of the victim was seen to enter the house about nine o'clock in the evening, and, as the public prosecutor insisted, came to get money he needed, as was substantially proven: that the widow refused, as she had frequently done of late, and that, taking advantage of a moment when her back was turned, he struck her on the head, felled her to the floor; and that the native strength of the well-preserved woman rallied, and a frightful struggle ensued, the noise of which was distinctly heard, it is insisted, by the rest of the house. The screams of the victim were suppressed by the folded tablecloth thrust between her teeth. The prosecution stated that, had the deed been committed by professional assassins, the confusion manifested in the chamber would not have taken place. The instant the medical men examined the position of the grandson they declared the story was incredible; that his ligatures were never tied by other than his own hands, since the ropes could not have been drawn so tight by any one else without strangling him. The boy described the affair with great exactitude, which displayed him an extraordinary adept. One of the men, he declared, was black and wore a cotton cap, but he could not tell what took place after he was tied, because he fainted. Suspicion was aroused by the incredulity of the officers, which set the whole neighborhood at work, and a pyramid of dubious antecedents soon arrayed themselves between this extraordinary youth and the probability of his narrative.

In the first place, the porter of the house declared that no one had entered by the front door for madame on the night of the murder, and an ominous circumstance for the youth was that the police on removing his overcoat discovered that the undercoat was marked with spots of blood; that these marks of blood corresponded exactly with the wounds received on the body of the murdered woman; and from this the lawyer for the prosecution proved, by disposing two bodies on the witness stand, that the youth must have thrown himself upon the struggling victim and choked her, and that while doing this the blood flowing from her wounds stained his own clothing. All the main wounds on the dead body were found on the right side, while the spots on the youth's clothing were on the left side, a fact which the lawyer's claim goes to prove that he pressed his left side to the victim; that the accused himself, in order to prevent suspicion, had the forethought to put off his overcoat, supposing that he would not be suspected if all signs were hidden, that he had removed the coat as well to give himself more liberty in the murder, but on tying himself he had resumed it, for, while the undercloth was dabbled in blood, this overcoat had not the least trace.

The defence of the youth met this apparently damning testimony by the not less probable statement that the spots of blood remarked on his clothes were made by the assassins, who flung themselves upon him to hold him down,

and that the coat was not closed until they began to tie him. But the police once set on the suspected trail furnish other evidence as to his probable guilt. In the pocket of his overcoat were found slight fibres of the same cord as that with which his body was tied, and even in the cotton cap, which, according to him, one of the murderers wore, hairs were found which on examination proved to correspond exactly with those of the lad, and the prosecution claimed that the youth had put this cap upon himself several times in order to make it seem to have been used. He had even put spots upon it in various places to correspond with the story that one of the assassins was black. All these points were elaborated on by the experts, the hairs being submitted to close analysis, as well as the morsels of fibre.

Taking the character of the youth into consideration, public opinion gave him up as good as hanged three weeks ago. It was proved on the witness stand that he was a youth of strong passions, that he was always in need of money and always borrowing it, and that he was once heard to say "I should be well satisfied if the old woman, (meaning his grandmother) would kick the bucket, for I need her pennies pretty bad." This the public prosecutor declared alone sufficient evidence of the crime, for the youth who would talk like that of his mother's mother, would not hesitate to put his plan for her "taking off" into execution.

Against all this the defense raised the objection that from all the testimony there was not a single penny disturbed in the house of the grandmother, and that if money had been the motive, two murders would have been necessary to make the work available to the accused, since his mother is inheritor and not he, to which the prosecution responded that Retson was not without intelligence and knew very well that to have robbed his grandmother on the night of the murder would have been a sure method of convicting himself of the fact, and that the money once in his mother's hands he was sure of sharing as much as he wanted of it.

The appearance of the lad himself spoke very much in his favor, for he had a mild blue eye, light complexion and brown hair, and seemed deeply moved by every question asked him, and almost fainted when the lawyers made an allusion to him as the culprit. So soon as put on the stand he answered all the interrogatories with self-possession and intelligence, disconcerted his adversaries in every respect, and visibly affected the opinions of the jury. The whole trial, however, hinged on the problem of whether a man could tie himself in such a fashion or not, and to give the jury the fullest light on the subject fifty persons—athletes, experienced gymnasts, circus-riders and what not—tied and untied themselves by the hour in the court room, the whole thing winding up by leaving the question just as undecided as ever; for while experts were able to tie themselves, no single man, unaccustomed to gymnastic exercises, was able to put a cord around his own body, arms and neck, in the same way that the youth was found bound, for, as the police testified, the body was so tightly corded that the blood broke through the skin in many places. The accused was asked to tie himself, which he did repeatedly, but his success or unsuccess could hardly be taken as evidence, since if he had the astuteness to conceive in the first place, he would not be idiot enough to "give himself away" by repeating, to his own destruction, that which he had invented for his own salvation. The jury deliberated for a long time, and finally the youth escaped by a discriminating eight to four.

A Rye Beach Romance.

Rye Beach, N. H., furnishes the latest romance, Miss Sarah Brown, a beautiful Pennsylvania heiress, having become engaged to Mr. Robert G. Miller, the son of a Rye Beach fisherman, and himself nothing more than the skipper of one of the hotel yachts. Miss Brown went out frequently to sail in Robert's yacht, and he fell dead in love with her, but kept the secret to himself, only paying her great attention. In return, the young lady was very courteous. A few days ago Miss Brown got a fish bone in her throat, and her position became so dangerous that it was decided to send to Portsmouth, ten miles off, for a doctor. Robert insisted on being the messenger, and mounting a swift horse, started off at great speed. When half way to town he unfortunately fell from his horse, dislocating one ankle and breaking an arm, but with heroic courage remounted and drove on, but fainted with pain and exhaustion after delivering his message at the doctor's office. The doctor, on reaching Miss Brown, quickly removed the fish bone, but declared that she could not have lived five minutes longer, and that she owed her life to the heroism of young Miller, narrating the circum-

stances here related. Miss Brown thereupon fell in love with Robert, and is to marry him as soon as he recovers sufficiently from his injuries.

Sowing and Reaping.

"Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" both in the natural and in the moral world. Every seed in the one and every deed in the other, yield in fruit after its kind. This principle of sowing and reaping is especially important to the young, who are just beginning to shape their character and destiny.

In the spring time of life we sow what we must reap in the autumn of age, and perhaps through the endless ages of eternity. The chief possibilities of good or evil for all the future are bound up in the period of youth.

The sowing may be done thoughtlessly and carelessly, but it will report itself in due time according to this law.

Men in age often say: "If I could but live my life over again how differently it would be." While this is impossible, still the young may have the advantages of a second life by trying the counsels and experiences of the aged.

It is of the utmost importance for them to understand this relation of sowing and reaping, which is affixed to our physical, mental and moral nature.

Men who in early life vortex the brain or body in the frenzy to get rich; men who over-load the wheels of life by gluttony; men who bestialize themselves with sensuality; men who burn out the vital forces with the damning fires of alcohol; all are liable to a strict account in after years.

When remembrances and retribution come upon them, then too late they begin to realize that "whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Beginning of a Fortune.

John Jacob Astor said it was comparatively easy to make a million dollars, after getting the first thousand. The hard rub was in getting started.

Mr. Isaac Rich died recently in Boston worth nearly two million dollars, made in the fish business. He used often to tell how he climbed the first round in the ladder to wealth. He was a mere boy, selling fish from a hand cart. Mr. Boyden the keeper of the Tremont house in Boston, liking his bright face, and quick business habits, asked him, one day, why he did not keep salmon.

"I haven't money enough to buy them," was the answer.

"How much money will it take?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"I'll lend you the money; buy up the next boat load!"

The ambitious lad boarded the next salmon boat in his little dory, bargained for the whole load, and when they questioned his ability to pay, showed the ready money. He made a handsome sum by the venture, soon paid back his loan, and began at once the wholesale business, in which he made his large fortune.

He Never Drank.

Early in the war, when General Grant was before Vicksburg, a young officer at a society gathering was invited to drink, but declined, saying he never drank.

A few days afterward he received a note from General Grant to report at headquarters. He did so, and the General said to him:

"You are the officer, I believe,"—for their acquaintance was slight—"who remarked the other evening that you never drank?"

The officer modestly answered that he was.

"Then," continued the General, "you are the man I have been looking for to take charge of the Commissary Department, and I order that you be detailed to that duty."

In the year of Grant's Presidency, when the trouble on the border between Texas and Mexico, along the Rio Grande, attracted the attention of Congress, a commission was ordered to ascertain the facts and report. Again President Grant remembered the man who "never drank," and appointed him chairman of the board.

A Big Irishman.

The Emerald Isle, says Chambers' Journal, has long been famous for producing giants. The most celebrated of these was the well-known O'Brien, who we first hear of as a great raw youth crying in a public house because he was unable to pay the bill, having been left penniless through a quarrel with his exhibitor. A gentleman taking compassion on him, paid his debt, and advised the giant to set up on his own account. Acting on this recommendation, O'Brien started a public inn in Bristol, being known by the sign of the giant's castle. A memorial tablet in Trencord street Roman Catholic Chapel records his stature as having been eight

feet three inches. He was very anxious that his remains should not fall to the anatomists, and gave directions for securing his grave against desecration from body-snatchers. It has, however, been disputed whether the giant's bones still rest in his grave, or form one of the curiosities of the Hunterian Museum, though we believe they still lie undisturbed in a deep-sunk grave. Poor O'Brien had to take his constitutionals under cover of darkness to avoid being mobbed by the curious, and like most big fellows, proved himself a simple and inoffensive man, though once he inadvertently terrified a watchman almost to death by lighting his pipe at a street lamp, the sudden appearance of which strange apparition threw the watchman into a fit. His colossal proportions once saved the giant from being robbed, the highwayman who stopped his carriage, riding away in terror at the sight of O'Brien's huge face thrust through the window to see what the matter was.

The Sand Blast.

Among the wonderful and useful inventions of the times is the common sand blast. Suppose you desire to letter a piece of marble; you cover the stone with a sheet of wax no thicker than a wafer, then cut in the wax the inscription desired. Now pass it under the blast and the wax will not be injured at all, but the sand will cut the letters deep into the stone. Or if you desire raised letters, a flower or other emblem, cut the letters, flowers, etc., in wax and stick them upon the stone under the blast, and the sand will cut it away. Remove the wax and you have the raised letters. Or take a piece of French plate glass, say two feet by six, and cover it with fine lace; pass it under the blast, and not a thread will be injured, but the sand will cut deep into the glass, wherever it is not covered by the lace. Now remove the lace and you have every delicate and beautiful figure raised upon the glass. In this way beautiful figures of all kinds are cut in glass, and at a small expense. The workmen can hold their hands under the blast without harm, even when it is rapidly cutting away the hardest glass, iron or stone, but they must look out for finger nails, for they will be whittled off right hastily. Wrap a piece of soft cotton around the nails, and they are safe. The sand whittles away and destroys any hard substance, even glass, but does not effect substances that are soft and yielding, like wax, cotton or fine lace, or even the human hand.

Same as it Used to Be.

Dr. Leonard Bacon thinks there are some things in the past and present which are alike, and relates the following:

About sixty years ago a somewhat typical minister of a Connecticut church made a visit to Boston and returned—a trip which was by no means as easy then as now.

"Well, doctor," said one of his parishioners to him, "do you bring us any news from Boston?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "the Lord reigns and the devil is trying to."

That was the summary and upshot of the news sixty years ago; and it is to-day.

The Darkey Preacher's Experience.

The colored people of Dorsey county, Ark., prayed very earnestly for rain. The leading church engaged in this labor organized a sort of "prayer-bee" and sent over into an adjoining county and borrowed a few members, agreeing to pay a heavy interest in hymn-books. Even this failed; but the cow of emergency was taken by the horns when the preacher issued the following proclamation: "We're bound for to have enough members in dis church to meet de occasion, and I hereby set my hand and seal to de artikel what says 'all colored persons, respectable or otherwise, in dis county and all de counties Jinin, is declared members of dis church till after de next rain.'"

"Will you give me your hand?" sternly said a country schoolmaster to a girl who had refused to hold her hand out to be feruled. As she answered not, he said:

"Do you 'refuse' to give me your hand?"

"I must," she sobbed, "unless pa consents."

She was pretty, and the man had 160 acres, all paid for, and well stocked, and so there was no difficulty in adjusting matters.

A World of Good.

One of the most popular medicines now before the American public, is Hop Bitters. You see it everywhere. People take it with good effect. It builds them up. It is not as pleasant to the taste as some other Bitters as it is not a whiskey drink. It is more like the old fashioned bone set tea that has done a world of good. If you don't feel just right try Hop Bitters.—Nunda News.

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