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The Punishment Of Sterry

He awoke with a cry so shrill and terrible that it made the place ring—the little cell, lighted only by a dim, yellow glare.

One of the wardens—spectral watchers, noiseless as shadows—who had been seated in a corner of the cell, was at the side of his narrow pallet bed in an instant.

"Hold on, Sterry!" he said. "What's the matter?"

The man in the bed raised himself up, his face deadly white and beaded with perspiration, while with one hand he clutched the bedclothes convulsively.

"I'm dying," he gasped, "I'm dying, I'm dying." His eyes were staring, his breathing so wide open, as if in desperate vision.

"A dream!" he muttered, as if speaking to himself rather than to the man questioning him.

Then, seeming to realize his position, he shook himself.

"Did I shout, Pearson?" he asked, with a horrible attempt at a laugh. "Sorry if I startled you. I had a dream—that's all!"

He settled himself once more in the little bed, and the warden retreated to his corner.

"I should say it was a precious bad dream," whispered Pearson's companion. "I wouldn't care to have on my conscience what 'ud make me scared like that!"

"I bet if you was going to be hanged in a few days' time you'd be inclined to dream a bit!" replied Pearson.

"And if you was innocent, as it seems there's a good chance of that, chap being, you'd dream all the same. Not having done a thing doesn't make it any the sweeter being hanged for it!"

"I wish the Home Sec. 'ud hurry up with his blessed commutation of sentence!" grumbled the other. "This business fair gets on my nerves, watching him day and night. And for blessed nothing," he added, "for there won't be a hanging after all!"

"I only wish the addle-headed old fellows of juries who brought him in guilty had the job," said Pearson. "It 'ud do them good! They say thirty thousand people signed the petitions to-day."

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the solicitor said, save the jury, really believed Sterry guilty.

But Sterry knew of one who was certain, in some strange way, of his guilt—was certain of it, in spite of all defect in the evidence.

During the days of the trial he had watched that pale-faced woman with the great eyes that had clearly wept so much—so large and dark in the sunken hollows of the white face. She was the widow of the man he had murdered. And she knew Sterry was guilty!

He wondered whether, in some strange way, she had influenced the jury, not by actual communication with them, but by her presence, by the sight of her agonized face, by the horror and fierce hate of him that flashed from her eyes, by the terrible, silent appeal for justice that seemed to emanate from her.

"So he was condemned to the gallows! The thought filled him with an unpeppable dread, which, he felt, would make him tremble if he did not shake the idea from him, and remember that it was really impossible the sentence should be carried out on his cry upon his lips, and tossed out on his bed till morning in fierce battle against his need of sleep, let the dream should come to him again!"

"There is still better news, Sterry," said his solicitor, calling on him during the day. "Twenty thousand signatures at Bristol, twenty-seven thousand at Liverpool, thirty at Manchester, and forty at Birmingham! I haven't heard from the London district yet, but the number of signatures must be enormous!"

He had been astonished at the apathy with which Sterry had received the news.

"Poor fellow!" muttered the solicitor. "The strain is telling sadly upon him!"

And that night once more Sterry awoke with the cry. He had tried not to fall asleep, but had done so from sheer exhaustion.

"It's simply abominable, the Home Secretary keeping an innocent man on the rack!" declared the solicitor to the governor of the prison the next day, at the conclusion of his interview with his client. "By the time the reprieve comes he will be a wreck!"

That night again, after falling into the sleep he could not keep from his eyes, Sterry startled his wardens with his cry. But, indeed, he hardly started them now. They had come to look upon the happening as a thing that must come.

"The dream—that dream!" said Sterry shuddering, looking pitifully at Pearson.

Pearson felt almost contempt for the man who could be such a coward. Why, how many men, sentenced to be hanged, had known who had shown none of the white, feeble-like this? But he was a good-natured fellow.

"Cheer up!" he said. "What's a dream? Things aren't so bad as all that!"

"They are," said Sterry doggedly. "they are. There's only one way—one way—"

He broke off, and Pearson looked significantly at his companion.

"If we don't look mighty sharp after him," he said, "he'll try to put himself away—and all for fear of being hanged!"

The solicitor's face was beaming the next morning when he called to see Sterry, a wonderful contrast to the face of his client, which had a look upon it which he could in no way comprehend.

"I think I may say," exclaimed the solicitor, "that our terrible period of waiting will close to-day. I am informed that the Home Secretary—"

"It will close to-day," interrupted Sterry. "Yes, it closes to-day. People think they will get me off, do they? They won't! I've learnt the last three nights there's something a mighty sight worse than being hanged! No, it isn't penal servitude for life. But I'll be hanged sooner than suffer the other. I did it! I confess. I'm the murderer! The sentence is right. Send for the governor and let him take it down!"

"Mad!" gasped the solicitor. "You're mad!"

"Mad!" exclaimed Sterry angrily. "Let the governor come and hear what I'll tell him, and I'll give him proof of every word I say!"

"You understand what this means?" asked the solicitor.

"Better than you do!" replied Sterry.

Had the fear of death really driven him mad? No; the confession bore every stamp of truth! The governor took it down, and Sterry signed it.

He drew a deep breath of relief—a breath that seemed strange to his hearers, who felt themselves choking.

"And now," said Sterry, "I want to write a letter. I shall die on Tuesday. A dying man may write, mayn't he?"

"Whom is the letter to?" demanded the governor.

"To the widow of him—the man I murdered," replied Sterry.

"Madam, I confess the crime of which I was found guilty—the murder of your husband, the man you loved. People tell me that I shall not suffer; that the sentence will be commuted. But I would rather suffer, and this is why—"

"Three nights now I have dreamed, and in my dreams I have seen you. The dream is always the same—all ways the same.

"I have seen you and your two children—the two little girls. I never saw them in my life, but I have seen them in the dream. One is about seven, and the other is just a mite. And this is what I dreamed:

"It is night, and you have been putting the little ones to bed. They occupy the same bed in a little room. And when all else is finished you all kneel down, and I have heard you say the prayer, and the children repeat it after you word by word:

"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us—all save the man who took daddy from us!"

"And the children have said it after you, and it is more than I can bear! I will not cheat the punishment I deserve. I shall die on Tuesday. It is all I can do. Will you take pity on a dying man, and teach the children to leave that out, even if they cannot put in a word for me—for the man who took daddy from them? He will have suffered for it!—I am, begging you most humbly for mercy, John Sterry."

"I almost think," said the governor of the prison to the solicitor, as he held the letter in his hand, "that I'll put a telegram-form in it, so that she may wire, if she does forgive him."

A telegram came: "Forgiven. The children pray for you to-night."

The cry was heard no more, and four days later John Sterry walked calmly to the scaffold.

(The End.)

Minard's Liniment For Burns, Etc.



The Guest You Miss. Perhaps there is no time when more young women neglect to show the traits of a gentleman than when they are in a whirl of gayeries away from home.

Recently a careful mother wrote a letter to one of her daughters who was visiting some friends in Toronto. The letter reached the girl on the first morning of her visit.

Because it was not an ordinary letter a part of it is printed here.

"I am glad that you can visit none of the white, feeble-like this?" But he was a good-natured fellow.

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"Use your own stationery,—except when you write special notes for which their embossed paper would be appropriate,—and always keep a supply of stamps on hand, so that you will not need to use any of theirs."

"If you read a book or a magazine, be careful to replace it exactly where it belongs as soon as you have finished reading it."

"Consult Mrs. Mabie or Louise about your dress for special occasions, so that you will wear your prettiest things when they wish you to, and so that your dress will be in harmony with Louise's. When a young man calls on Louise, meet him pleasantly and enter into the conversation, but be sure to make some excuse to leave the room, so as to let them have at least a few minutes together; and whatever

lap like 'patience on a monument,' but nibble along slowly with them.

"Be careful to turn off your lights every time you leave your room, so that you will not increase the bill for lighting."

"Be sure to throw the covers back over the foot of the bed and open your windows wide, so that the room can air when you go down to breakfast. Be dainty about your room. Do not get spots on the bureau cover or muslin counterpane; and of course never lie or sit on the bed without removing the counterpane."

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NEW SOURCES OF PAPER MAKING

WORLD-WIDE SEARCH FOR SUBSTITUTES.

Inventive Genius Stimulated by Present Scarcity of Wood Pulp.

The comparative scarcity of pulp for paper-making and the consequent high prices for newsprint are reflected in the stimulus given to research all over the world in an endeavor to widen the field of raw material for paper manufacture.

A brief review of some of the possible competitors with Canadian spruce and balsam may be interesting.

Eucalyptus is a grasslike plant found in Spain, Algeria, and Tripoli. It was used for paper-making in Great Britain as early as 1857.

During the war, the scarcity of other sources of pulp gave it greater prominence. The fibres are short and weak, and the pulp is best used for filling and is employed largely in mixtures with longer and stronger fibres.

In papers in which considerable strength is needed, not more than 20 per cent of eucalyptus can be used.

Zacaton is a plant belonging to an American genus of the same family as eucalyptus. It is principally found in Mexico, where it grows profusely in certain regions.

Experiments with this material, conducted by the Bureau of Plant Industry of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, showed that a satisfactory paper could be made from it by means of the soda process.

Indeed, the report of the investigation was published on paper made from zacaton. The experiments were not, however, conducted on a scale sufficient to make any estimate of the cost of manufacture.

At present, zacaton is a waste product and flourishes in a region remote from paper-manufacturing centres.

Makes Good Grade of Paper. Hemp hurds have also been investigated by the Bureau of Plant Industry. After several trials, under conditions of treatment and manufacture regarded as favorable in comparison with those used for pulpwood, paper was produced which received very favorable comment both from investigators and from the trade, and which, according to official tests, would be classed as No. 4 machine-finish printing paper. The quantity available is not great, however.

Flax straw and tow may replace imported flax waste in the manufacture of wrapping and writing paper. If this can be done, a market would be furnished to Canadian farmers for disposing of what is now a waste product.

Bamboo is coming to the fore in India and Burma. Mr. William Raitt, consulting cellulose expert to the Indian Government, states that there remains no practical difficulties in transforming bamboo into pulp.

Bamboo has the great advantage that it renews itself annually, whereas pulpwood takes half a century to grow.

Tropical reeds and grasses found in the Nile "sudd" of the Bahra-Grazal province of the Sudan have been experimented with for paper-making, and while complete success has not been attained, it is quite possible that the difficulties will be eventually overcome. The supply is unlimited.

Ashlinga, a plant growing along the banks of the sluggish rivers of that state of Para, Brazil, is stated to be an excellent paper-making material, but the great profits to be obtained in the rubber industry have hitherto hindered its exploitation. Mills are now, however, being put in operation for the utilization of this fibre.

A Japanese Product. Ajimo is a seaweed found in Japan. It reproduces itself in less than six months. It is said that paper can be produced from it at much less cost than from wood, and a Japanese company has been formed for the purpose of turning out ajimo paper.

Jack-pine is a promising material in the paper-making field. As jack-pine is very common in Canada's northern hinterland, the commercial exploitation of this species would prove very valuable to supplement our dwindling stocks of spruce and balsam.

In the manufacture of newsprint wood-pulp still dominates the field, but one dare not predict that this will always, or even will long, be so in the temperate zones, however, and proximity to the world's industrial centres is an important factor—there appear at present no serious rivals to our great pulp-wood forest species.

The Real Success. It isn't power or wealth or fame; it's holding fast to an honored name; it's doing right in the face of sneers; it's putting might in the place of fears; it's helping others to happiness—That means success!

Not always crowned by a laurel wreath, it may be held by the man beneath whose shabby but yet has the inner glow Of the eyes that see, and a heart to know That it's serving you fellows amid the strains—That means success!

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