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The Dakota Student

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# The Student

UNIVERSITY, NORTH DAKOTA

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## △ △ △ LITERARY △ △ △

### Saved from the Gallows.

For days I had been working arduously and had confined myself to my apartment, where I might pursue my researches unmolested. The fact is, I was preparing a novel for publication and was desirous of having it in readiness to present to the printer within the coming week. I had become so absorbed in my work that I entirely neglected to take, as was my custom, an hour each morning to look over the daily papers. In truth, during the last ten days I had not so much as glanced at the columns of the newspapers.

It was September ninth and Thursday evening of the third week of my labor, and as my book was nearing completion, I decided that a little rest and recreation would benefit me. Accordingly, after attending to my toilet, which as you may suppose had been sadly neglected of late, I sauntered out into the streets. All was quiet, for at that season of the year our little town of York had lapsed into inactivity after the rush of the summer visitors. I was walking leisurely down Younge street when the cry, «Evening Post! Evening Post!» was sounded at my heels and turning sharply I looked into the sad, care-worn face of the little news-boy. The pleading look of his brown eyes appealed to my sympathy and handing him a coin I

was about to pass on still leaving him in possession of his paper when my eye was attracted by a heading in large type.

I thought of giving my readers the substance of this article but as I have at hand the clipping from the Evening Post of September ninth I shall give it as given there. It was as follows:

WANTED—The man who, on the night of August twelfth took passage on the Y. & L. railway from York to Casselton.

(In smaller type was the following explanation.)

On the night of August twelfth Nathan Gray, night watchman for the Rigby Iron Works Co., was murdered. George Keenan has been convicted of the murder and is sentenced to be hanged at 9:30 A. M. Friday, September tenth. He, however, protests that he is innocent and desires to find the man who was his fellow-passenger on the Y. & L. railway on the night upon which the murder occurred. If he can be found he can prove Mr. Keenan's innocence, as the murder occurred between 9:00 and 11:30 p. m., during which time, the accused claims to have been seated in a coach of the Y. & L. railway with this gentleman as his only fellow passenger.

Judge of my feelings as it dawned upon me that I, and I alone, was the man who could save George Keenan from unmerited death upon the gallows.



A description of Keenan was added to the article I have quoted and tallied exactly with my recollections of the man who had been my companion on the night of the twelfth of August. My duty was plain. I must save this man at all hazard, but how? It was past 10 p. m. and the regular passenger train to Casselton had already passed. There was no other train that would run in time to reach Casselton, where the accused man was imprisoned, before 9 a. m. in the morning. What was I to do? Delay meant death to an innocent man yet delay seemed inevitable.

The thought of telegraphing came to me and in less time than I could have made the distance of five blocks at any other time I was standing breathlessly within the office, hardly able to gasp out my errand. Imagine my blank amazement when I learned that the severe electrical storm which had passed about 4 p. m. had ruptured the wires and all connection with Casselton, either by telegraph or telephone was cut off.

The operator informed me that the fast mail train would pass at 4:20 a. m. the following morning, reaching Casselton at 9:25 of the same morning. Here was my last and only hope. It was a through train and did not stop at York, but owing to the fact that the track lay through the heart of the town it was customary to slacken speed so that, in passing, the train would run at a rate of from twelve to fifteen miles per hour. I determined to take the desperate risk and station myself in a favorable position to board the train as it passed. I realized fully the danger of this undertaking, knowing that if I were to fall, the violence of the shock might prove serious and even fatal. However I had played football in my

college days and knew something of the art of padding. I at once proceeded to pad my clothes in football style and by four o'clock was in readiness. At fifteen minutes past four I prepared for my perilous adventure and had placed myself in position just as I saw the train come thundering round the curve a half mile distant. But what now? The train slackens speed and comes slowly panting onward like a jaded steed and the engine stops within three yards of me. Immediately I board her to learn the cause. The engineer is dead of heart-disease and the fireman has for the time guided the locomotive, but has stopped here in hope of finding a man to run her. I am an engineer myself, as the fireman and the conductor both well know, and at my earnest request am given charge.

A delay of six minutes has been caused, and running at the usual speed, the train will reach Casselton at thirty-one minutes past nine, which will be too late for my purpose. I put on steam and give old Ninety-nine full headway. On we go with almost lightning speed and shriek by town after town until at 9:23 a. m. we reach the station at Casselton, just seven minutes before the time set for the execution.

Leaving the care of the engine to the fireman I am on the platform in a moment and as fast as my legs can carry me run for the court-house. As I near the court-yard my strength almost forsakes me for, standing upon the gallows I see the doomed man. In two minutes more he will die if I do not save him. I swing my hat above my head and shout, «Hold, Hold!» at the top of my voice, as I run through the crowd of people who fall back amazed and allow me to pass on toward the gallows. The command



which will send an innocent man to eternity is just about to be given as I clamber upon the platform and demand his release.

Imagine my chagrin to find my arms pinioned behind me and two burly policemen trying to carry me forcibly away. For the first time I awoke to a realization of the fact that my stuffed clothes gave me a most ridiculous appearance and that I was looked upon as a madman. I tried to explain but it was useless. They would not listen to a madman. At this moment the sheriff caught sight of my face and at once recognized me as the man who had on a previous occasion extricated him from a difficulty which it is not necessary to discuss here. He was a man much averse to taking of human life and eagerly listened to my story. The word was quickly passed that I was the man who had been so long and eagerly sought to prove the prisoner's innocence, and cheer after cheer rent the heavens as people gave vent to their joy.

All eyes were now turned toward the prisoner. He had fainted, but recovered shortly, pressed my hand and looked the gratitude he could not express.

F. J. T.

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#### A Vital Question

While I believe that life is too short to be spent wholly in jesting I hold that it is too long to be entirely absorbed by seriousness. It is against my principles to ask you to abandon your thoughts of the present and go searching with me the dusty halls of time or go poring over the pages of history to find a subject on which our minds may dwell for seven or eight minutes. Nor do I any more consider it just to ask you to shut your eyes and take a daring leap into

the future to contemplate the possibilities of things which in all probability will never come to pass.

My subject deals with the present. It is a riddle much guessed at by all classes of people. It has been a topic of discussion for ages past and it will continue to be a stumbling block till time shall be no more. The good mother thinks of it all day and dreams of it all night. The feeble gray headed man, who has reached his second childhood, leans back in his easy-chair and thinks of it. For him it has fond recollections bringing smiles, and bitter recollections bringing tears. It causes a young girl's mind to wander from her studies and it keeps our president on the alert week in and week out, every single day and sometimes during the night. Have you guessed it? It is boys.

There are so many different kinds of boys that the term «a boy» is hard to define. A boy is not a girl and hence many of his peculiar disadvantages. A boy is a sort of a reserve fund laid aside to be drawn upon at all future occurrences and still one which is incessantly drawn upon in the present.

Some boys are alternately petted and abused. Others are tied to their mother's apron strings until old enough to look around for a wife. Many are cast in the midst of the desert of life and left, all alone, to find their way over the rocky passes of adversity and past the snares of hypocrisy which abound in this world. Is it then to be wondered at that there are all kinds of boys? But be he the pet, the abused one, the apron-string boy or the orphan, a boy has many serious troubles. He is obliged to pass through a stage at which his make up is all out of proportion. One might think that the dif-



ferent parts of his body had come one from each of the outermost parts of the world, so little regard is paid to the fitness of the one for the other. At such a stage many a boy is pointed at and laughed at because he is pigeon-toed, bow-legged, hollow-chested, slope-shouldered and generally out of shape. At this stage some move about in a helter-skelter-happy-go-lucky-way, with a swinging of arms, a shuffling of feet, an unkempt head, and a loud cracked voice. In short there is a general looseness about those individuals which seems to forecast a collapse at any moment, much like an old rickety binder which is driven fast and carelessly and makes more noise than sheaves.

Others move about in a set way as if they were afraid of something catching somewhere and interfering with the working of the whole machinery. While spotless in reputation and purely innocent such boys often cast frightened glances of suspicion as if they had stolen a near neighbor's turkey and were afraid of being seized and doomed to the lower realms there to perform labors equal in difficulty to those of Hercules.

Between these two classes is a third. That is the self-satisfied, the cozy class. They are equally satisfied with themselves and with the world. They look upon things in a philosophical way. They do not bite their finger-nails on account of their impatient longing for the time when they shall be men. No they were never known to have that feeling for they can not remember nor does anybody else remember the time when they did not think they were men already. They have a set of acquired faces all their own. Each face is put on and serves only on special occasions. They

stand with their hands in their pockets or with their thumbs under their vests and their feet from twenty-four to thirty-six inches apart.

Over some of us old age has prematurely cast his shroud and so completely has he wrapped the victim in the folds of his mantle that getting out is hopeless. If ever those little old men manage to get a peep from under that shroud they appear as freaks of nature to be laughed at by people who do not understand them. Such boys seldom smile and never laugh. They shrink from a base-ball or a foot-ball as they would shrink from a poisonous snake were they to meet one at some time when walking alone with head down and thinking of no one knows what. Such boys have friends but none who know them well enough to be able to form a fairly reasonable opinion as to what kind of men they are going to make.

But this is skimming along the surface. It is picking out little things which please the gossiping world, things which a loving mother frequently does not see, things which a father too often ignores. Some people can not be satisfied. They want a boy «just so» and if they should happen, by miracle or accident, to find a boy to suit their own «just so» they would immediately adopt somebody's else «just so.» It is of importance how a boy lives, for nine times out of ten the man lives as the boy played. The thing of vital importance, the thing always to be remembered and never to be forgotten is: what kind of a man is the boy going to make? Is he going to be a poor excuse for a man, a useless thing, a burden, or is he going to be a man who deserves to be called a man.

Be he the pet, the abused one, the apron-



string boy or the orphan, a boy has no excuse for not becoming a good man. Some people are forever pitying the poor boy and everlastingly complaining of their own poverty-stricken condition. They work themselves up to hating the rich and call their gains illgotten. I have no pity for such people. I am sorry that they do not know enough to turn their backs on the world, to find some lone secluded corner where the public eye can not penetrate, where no mortal ear can hear them and where they can pour out to themselves alone their dismal tale of self made woe.

A boy may be seriously hampered by circumstance. Aged parents may need his strong protecting arm. If he is a good son he will protect them. No matter what kind of a boy he is it is his duty to do so. It will not take him forever and when he has done it and done it well he has in him that which will cause him to live in such a way that his children will not have to do for him what he did for his father and mother.

A poor boy may be thrust into the world penniless, friendless, with enemies perhaps, and without a coat to cover his back. If that boy has a pair of broad shoulders, two willing hands at the ends of two sinewy arms, a fair share of common sense and a little bit of ambition he is going to rise in spite of his painful poverty, in spite of his lack of friends, in spite of his enemies, in spite of any obstacle which the ingenuity of mortal meanness can put in his road. In spite of the world he is going to rise.

Therefore I claim, and I hope that you agree with me, that any average boy who is willing to use to the best advantage the abilities with which he is endowed can in spite of the peculiarities he may have and

in spite of his drawbacks, secure a position of honor and trust in the world. A poor boy has only a poor excuse for becoming a poor man. He himself will be to blame if he does not become and live and die as a man at whose grave you or I or anyone can stand and say, with a clear conscience, "He was a man."

S. G. S.

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△ △ SCIENCE △ △

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**The Opening of a Mining District.**

If there is any single metal which the practical world cannot do without, it is iron. This metal enters into our daily life more than we realize. The houses we live in are held together by it. It is the essential part of the complicated machinery that hurries us across continents and over seas. It is the foundation of the systems of transportation which make our commerce with the world possible. Into what industry does it not enter?

Since this is an article of such world-wide usefulness, it would seem that its supply would be a question of considerable interest. And it is. The iron industry is one of the greatest the world has ever seen. Moreover, it is not full-grown. The demand for iron is an increasing one. New processes open up new fields to its usefulness.

New machinery is being made, railroads are spreading into new countries; iron is fast becoming the king of metals.

The world is looking with a little apprehension at its supply, and uneasily calculating the time before it will reach a limit.

To manufacturing countries like Great Britain and the United States the iron supply is a serious question, involving millions



of dollars on both sides. Great Britain has long been the leader in iron manufactures and has worked her mines and her coal resources nearly to their limit. As Great Britain falls off, the United States advances. Better economy and modern machinery are securing for the Americans the lead in the manufacture of iron.

As an example of the characteristic American progressiveness, let me remind you of an event which has a great significance to this country and more especially to the Eastern States. Two years ago Thos. Edison perfected a new process for recovering the iron in low grades of magnetic iron ore. For eight years, Mr. Edison labored with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and as usual overcame them. The process itself is a peculiar one, unique and very interesting to the scientist. The details of the process, being rather technical, are not to be told here. The important fact is that it is being worked on a colossal scale and will influence a large territory. While Mr. Edison's machines are tearing away at the sides of the mountains of New Jersey, and transforming boulders into carloads of pig iron, let us consider the economical significance of the opening of this immense iron district.

For several years the supply of the quality of iron necessary for the manufacture of Bessemer steel had been decreasing with a consequent rise in price. The iron ranges of Minnesota and Michigan had been opened up, and slowly the trade in Bessemer was going westward, and leaving the Eastern States. Now Mr. Edison lays bare supplies of iron ore which mean continued prosperity to the blast-furnaces of the East. But the effect is not confined to local trade. This iron will before long supply English manufactories. It is an instance of American progressiveness and genius, which means that our manufactures will soon be found in all the markets of the world.

The English newspapers are today com-

plaining that the Americans are encroaching on markets properly British. And so we are by virtue of new processes, economical methods and by substituting wherever possible, mechanical for manual labor. Last summer an enormous British government contract was let to an American firm as being the lowest bidder among a crowd of iron manufacturers from all parts of the iron world. This fact that the English government had let so extensive a contract to an American firm, woke the British to the fact that they had a dangerous rival, and must look to their interests. Agents from the English manufacturers have been for some time looking into the cause of our growing prosperity. They observe our methods, investigate the whole process from the mining of the ore to the shipping of the finished goods. They recross the ocean remembering the sights they have seen. But still the American exports of iron grow, and still the American enters more markets where formerly the British were supreme; and the whole British nation are beginning to realize that they can no longer hold their high position alone. They can permanently mend their case only by improving their methods. Their natural resources are being worked to the limit; ore is being raised from deep mines now only at great expense, and the cost of coal is constantly increasing. Other veins cannot be followed up, for there is danger of flood by the sea breaking in. We on the other hand have all the necessities for a successful mining country—namely, a large supply of iron ore, and contiguous geographically, an unlimited supply of coal. With us the iron industry is still in its infancy and nature has so distributed the elements that they can be easily and cheaply brought together.

So the English and other manufacturing countries must face the inevitable—by virtue of our great natural advantages and our ability to utilize them, we are to put ourselves forward as the first of manufacturing nations.

C. B. S.