

CANADA'S ONLY LYNCHING HAPPENED 65 YEARS AGO

On Tenth-Concession of Lanark— Terrible Punishment of a Man Suspected of Murder—The Story.

By George Bolton, in Collier's Weekly.

"Canada has never had a lynching." This statement has been repeated so frequently that it is accepted as true by nearly all people who know anything of Canada. Of late it has appeared in several Canadian and American magazines. It is readily believed in view of the general law-abiding character of the Canadian people, who are the cream of the emigrants from Europe and the United States. It is quite in keeping with the respect for law prevalent in Canada among her native-born residents and all settlers and visitors; it is as much in keeping with the inextinguishable, yet equitable, justice of the land, and yet it is not true.

Canada had a lynching, and one of a peculiarly shocking character in its details. It did not occur on her frontier among any lawlessness that may have reigned temporarily in mining camps or other outposts of civilization, but was committed in the heart of an agricultural settlement in a district not fifty miles from the capital of the Dominion. The excuse for the act, if any excuse can be made for such an act, was the terrible character of the crime of which the victim was guilty, coupled with fear on the part of the community that he was about to escape its consequences. That such fear was apparently unfounded does not weaken the excuse.

Lanark County Has the Honor.

The man lynched was named Isbey; he was taken from the county jail at Perth, Ontario, in Lanark County. The men who lynched him were said to be his neighbors and some townsmen, and the crime of which he was guilty was the murder of his wife and all his family but one boy, supposed to be dumb at the time of the murder, but whose tongue was loosed as he grew older, and who gave the testimony upon which Isbey was imprisoned. Other strong circumstantial evidence, and at length a confession, with either falsehood or mystery as its chief component, brought home to all that Isbey was a murderer. He was a man of the repentance and contrition, and the espousing of his cause by the minister to whom this repentance was professed, along with a report that a plea of insanity, based on the facts of the confession, would be made the basis of an effort to save Isbey, were sufficient to arouse the fury of the settlers among whom he lived. In the night the jail door was broken in with a tree trunk as a battering ram in the powerful hands of the sturdy men, the deputy sheriff was overpowered with his guards, and Isbey was taken and hanged.

The Story of a Centenarian.

It must be more than sixty-five years since this occurrence, for it was told to me by a woman who was nearly one hundred years old when she talked to me about it. She has since died at the age of one hundred and three. Her name was Mrs. James Smith, of the tenth concession of Lanark. Her son, T. W. Smith, now a man of seventy-five years, still lives on the homestead, some six miles from the scene of the murder that brought about this terrible occurrence. R. L. Richardson, editor of the Winnipeg Tribune, has written a book, "Coin of the Ninth Concession," based somewhat upon this occurrence, the hero being the child who was witness in the case; the murder took place on the farm adjoining the author's boyhood home, and his mother took the supposedly dumb boy to care for after the murder of the mother and older children. Many others from Balderston, Ontario, the district in which the murder occurred, can corroborate any statements of the facts, including W. A. McIntyre, principal of the Manitoba Normal School, the editor of the Perth Courier, can produce from old files the main narrative of the events. "Yes," said old Mrs. Smith, remin-

iscently. "Some say now that he was only tongue-tied or slow of speech, but we called him 'the dumb boy,' and those that know it best say that the God opened his mouth that the guilty might be brought to judgment. Isbey was a settler like the rest of us; we knew little about him though, for he stayed by himself a lot. He had a handsome wife and four children besides the little lad just walking that we thought was dumb."

"One day Isbey came running through the woods, yelling to the neighbors nearest that his house was on fire. When they came nothing could be done; he said he had been chopping in the clearing beyond the hill and came home to find the house ablaze. He had the dumb boy with him; he said, the bodies of the others were found in the ruins of the burned building. A neighbor woman took the child, and no one doubted his story just then. Yes, some one did, for I told my husband that it seemed queer that when all of us were weeping over the remains of the poor mother and children, Isbey was eating a good supper of bread and pork, and James said: 'Don't make things any worse, unless—' and he would say no more."

The Dumb Speaks.

"Years after, the little dumb Isbey lad was watching the woman who kept him as she piled coals over the bake-oven on the hearth, when he spoke suddenly and said: 'That is what father did; he hit mother with the black stick and threw her and sister into the cellar.'"

"The woman called her husband, and the lad repeated his story. Before a week Isbey was in Perth jail, and the lad's evidence was heard by the magistrate. Other things now came to light, that the bodies had been found under the floor beams, and such things as men notice and remember when needed. Isbey finally broke down and confessed; he pretended repentance and conversion while there was hope for him, but on hearing he would go to the scaffold he broke into fearful cursing and told the true story of his crime."

"While drinking in Perth he quarrelled with a stranger, who taunted him with 'Go home to your beauty wife, and see who visits her when you're away.' The taunt was a lie, but Isbey brooded over it till, he said, the devil himself came to him as he chopped in the woods and told him he should kill her and her children; the devil was in the shape of a black man, he said, and held stakes for him to sharpen and harden in the fire, and with these he killed his wife and children. When he raised the black man, the dumb boy, the child looked up and smiled, and he thought the lad was dumb and could not tell anyway, so he did not hit him. This was his story."

Making Razor-Strops of the Victim.

"When it got abroad that Isbey's lawyer was going to save him from the gallows by this story, making him out to be insane, and people had also heard that the minister he confessed to was trying to save him, they broke into the jail and lynched him. The deputy was a strong and fearless man, and his guards were stronger and bigger, but the men who came were determined and strong also, and what could three do against a hundred?"

"Worse than hanging him, they flayed him and made razor-strops and pouches of his hide, after an Indian custom. I have seen these articles myself."

Returning to Lanark after many years' absence, I drove from Almonte to Perth, and at the fork of the road I saw the old chimney (built as one of those old Scotch masons could build) still standing by the roadside on a rise of ground that commands one of the most beautiful rural scenes in Canada. We walked over to the spot and found the well-preserved, but still distinguishable. A passing laborer said: "Yes, that is the old Isbey chimney," and with his pitchfork he pointed out the Richardson and McIntyre farm-houses and others whose names were famous in the Order of Geneva, the first settlers, now beautiful farms with all the pleasant surroundings and comforts of the best rural Canadian homes.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE IN SCOTLAND

Story of Stern Spiritual Government That Favored No Person—A Book Full of Interest.

Dr. Hay Fleming's "The Reformation in Scotland: Causes, Characteristics, Consequences" (Hodder and Stoughton, 10s 6d net) travels over a wide field and bristles with controversial topics. To the average man who is

not enamored of controversial questions, perhaps the most interesting part of the book is that which deals with discipline in the Reformed Church. Knox, Calvin, and others greatly admired, held the view that the Church had to do not only with the conversion of the individual, but also with the purification of social life. In the Order of Geneva is distinctly laid down that the church cannot fulfill its social function without "spiritual police and ecclesiastical discipline." It is zealously the Reformers set themselves to reproduce in Scotland the methods of Geneva as seen by the evidence afforded in Dr. Fleming's book.

Forms of Correction.

Church discipline, stern in its methods, was carried out without respect of persons. Not only the common people but the clergy had to submit to the public censure of the church. Thus we find the lord treasurer of Scotland for a breach of the Seventh Commandment compelled to give public satisfaction in the Church of St. Giles. In 1587 the Countess of Argyll was ordained to make public repentance for assisting at the baptism of James VI. "in a papistical manner," the repentance to take place in the chapel in which the baptism had been performed. For a grave breach of the Seventh Commandment, Paul Methven, minister of Jedburgh, who had a good reputation for honesty and godliness, was publicly excommunicated and deprived of all functions in the church. It sometimes happened that the accused parties rebelled against their ecclesiastical superiors, but frequently on second thoughts they concluded that discretion was the better part of valor and showed signs of repentance. In these cases provision was made for the submission of the penitent, but in order to mark the gravity of the offence the accused was ordered to stand for an hour in a humiliating position at the church door on Sabbath morning with a paper on his head, on which were written the words, "Behold the Contemner."

The Elder's Duty.

It might be supposed that such methods of discipline would gradually disappear as Scotland became more enlightened, but as a matter of fact during the eighteenth century the power of the kirk was consolidated and its system of discipline reduced to something like scientific precision. How completely the kirk set itself to the work of social reform is shown in the following extracts from the late Dr. John Watson's (Jan MacLaren)

book, "The Scot in the Eighteenth Century":

"It was the duty of the elders to go round a village at 10 p.m. and see that the people were in their homes, from which has arisen the phrase 'elder's hours.' And upon them lay the task, difficult in every age, of supervising the public-houses; for though drinking was one of the characteristic customs of the eighteenth century, drunkenness was treated as one of the sins of the flesh. The elders also patrolled the markets and fairs to see that nothing was done amiss; they were, indeed, under the direction of the minister, the moral police of the parish, and if they had no direct civil authority they could always appeal for the help of the magistrates, and, in some cases, it was arranged that a magistrate should sit in the session in order to take civil action when the limit of ecclesiastical authority had been reached. The whole range of transgressions, small and great, came within the range of this court's vision and the lash of its punishment."

Self-Imposed Tyranny.

In his chapters on Scotland, Buckle writing from the standpoint of modern Liberalism, was fairly baffled for an explanation of the strange fact that the Scots should submit to what he considered clerical despotism in its most tyrannical form. Had he known the working of Scottish ecclesiasticism from the inside, he would have said that the tyranny was self-imposed, and

that the clergy and the elders were as much the victims of it as the people. "If the session judged the people of the parish they were also in turn judged. From time to time a meeting of session was held. After devotional service, in which the elders had taken part, each elder in turn left the room, and in his absence his colleagues 'debated' or in other words, made any charges against him which they could, stating rumors or criticizing conduct. He was then called in and made his defence; if he could clear himself, the better for him; if he could not, he came under its weight himself. As a rule, and notwithstanding the case of Holy Willie, whom Burns put in the pillory, the elders were men of good character and carried themselves honestly before the community. Nor must it be supposed that the minister escaped, for his superior court, the presbytery, came to the parish now and again, and held an inquisition upon him. He was then questioned about his work and life. 'Is he a haunter of ale-houses?' 'Is he a swearer of small minced oaths, such as 'before God, it is so?' 'I protest before God,' or 'Lord, what is that?' 'Saw him ever drink healths?'"

In the name of Liberalism, Buckle denounced the Scottish clergy for their interference with the habits of the people, but had he lived in our time he would have seen the state in the name of Liberalism setting itself after the manner of Knox and his successors to the task of superintending the educational, industrial and social habits and morals of the community.

KING EDWARD'S GODSONS

The Oldest Was Born in 1863,
the Youngest Only Two
Months Ago

In making arrangements for the funeral procession of King Edward, it was proposed by one of the court officials that a place should be assigned to the adult godsons of the dead monarch, but for some reason this suggestion met with small encouragement and was finally ignored.

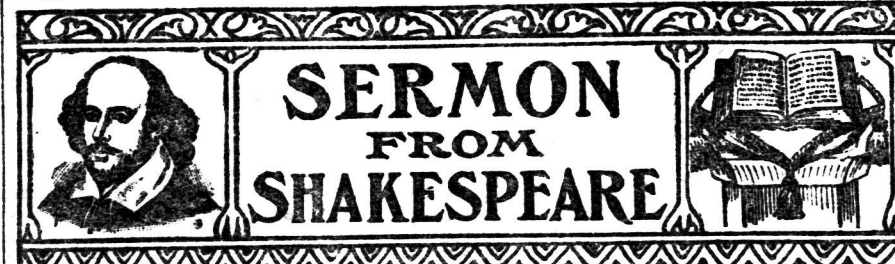
The oldest godson of the late King is Lord Castlemaine, who was born in 1863 while the youngest is the infant Lord Somerton, born two months ago to Lord and Lady Normanton. The heir apparent, Prince Eddie, was King Edward's nearest and dearest godson, while another favorite was Prince Olaf of Norway, who was christened at Sandringham last year. Count Gleichen, who is 42, was a godson who enjoyed King Edward's special favor, and the late sovereign had planned to attend his wedding in June, which was to be held in the Chapel Royal.

It was as Prince of Wales, of course, that King Edward stood sponsor for his

godchildren. In 1871 he became godfather to the prelate Duke of Marlborough, and a quarter of a century later he conferred the same honor upon the duke's elder son, Lord Blandford. Other ducal godsons were the Duke of St. Albans, who is now 37; Lord Hamilton eldest son of the Duke of Abercorn, and Lord Albert Edward Godolphin Osborne, brother of the Duke of Devonshire.

John Ward, brother of the Earl of Dudley, was a godson in whom he always took deep interest. When Mr. Ward married Miss Jane Reid, daughter of the American ambassador, King Edward attended the wedding, and he stood godfather to their son last spring.

The first godson the late King acquired after his accession was Edward Reid, the first child of the court physician, Sir James Reid. Sir James was for many years a personal friend of the late King, and he accompanied the King on his last trip to Biarritz and was in constant attendance during his final illness at Buckingham Palace.



And of all my lands
Is nothing left me but by body's length.

Henry VI, Part III, Act V, Sc. 2.

Warwick, in the battle of Barnet, had received his death wound. He was the wealthiest nobleman in England and the most powerful. He had been the "Proud scatterer-down of kings." In his dying moments what a weak thing he was, how powerless was his wealth to save him. He realized that his years of energetic action, his ambitious and successful schemes and plots had left him absolute owner of just as much land as would hold his body's length. A soldier thought that! The greedy robber, the land-grabber should take heed. Man's estate and power is evidently not to hoard and possess. He must have a higher destiny or else life is a failure and not worth the living.

It was natural that Shakespeare should make Warwick speak of his wealth in terms of land. England in the fifteenth century was an agricultural country. The ideal life for every Englishman was one spent, war or peace, on his estates. He was a knight in little; his retainers and his tenants were his subjects. He was proud of his broad fields, his parks with oak and chestnut shaded. It was the ideal of the age. Five hundred acres of land, with a wright like Shakespeare found his highest satisfaction in returning to his early home in Warwickshire and

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July 25, 1909.

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H. S. BALL.

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TERRIER CALLS UP CENTRAL.

The operator at Grimsby telephone exchange received an unexpected call from the premises of a firm of tobaccoists in the early hours of Sunday morning. Putting the instrument to his ear, his surprise developed into wonderment for all he got in reply to his usual query, "What number, please," was the vigorous barking of a dog.

Coming to the conclusion that there were burglars in the place, the operator informed the police. In the meantime the owner of the dog suddenly remembering that he had, contrary to practice, left the animal, a fox terrier, in the office, had gone to the premises to release it. When he arrived he found a couple of police officers about to force an entrance, and their astonishment was great when, reaching the office, they found that the terrier had climbed onto a desk five feet high and knocked the receiver of the telephone. Used to hearing its master's voice over the instrument, it had apparently barked into the mouthpiece to draw attention to its plight.—Sheffield Daily Telegraph.

CAUSE OF THE WHITE PLAGUE.

The reason why houses are haunted by the dread plague of tuberculosis lies open to all who know the lack of space, of air and light in the slums. Poor is the air of those streets. Poor as it is, the windows are stuffed with rags and paper to keep it out through the winter months. Small is the amount of sun which reaches over the high roofs of the tenement houses and falls upon the cloudy panes. Slight as that is, there are many rooms where sunlight never penetrates. New York alone has over one hundred thousand living rooms absolutely without windows, and nearly three hundred thousand without sufficient light or sunshine, while over twenty-eight thousand New York families live in cellars. Those facts are so horrible that comment becomes superfluous.—Atlantic Magazine.

Palpitation of the Heart.

One of the first danger signals that announces something wrong with the heart is the irregular or violent throb. Often there is only a fluttering sensation, or an "all gone" sinking feeling; or, again, there may be a most violent beating, with flushings of the skin, and visible pulsations of the arteries.

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