

FOR A HUNDRED POUNDS.

THE SLAUGHTER OF A FAMILY FOR A PURSE OF GOLD.

Story of the Mispeck Tragedy of Thirty-Seven Years Ago—How Robert McKenzie and His Household Were Murdered for the Sake of Money—A Grosseome Tale of Crime.

Some months ago, there died in this city the widow of one of the principals in the Mispeck Tragedy of thirty-seven years ago.

On the Mispeck road about ten miles from St. John, may be seen today a deserted farm, some scattered brick and stone showing where had once stood the chimney of a dwelling.

That evening, Breen, Slavin and the latter's son Pat Slavin, started on their bloody mission. Young Slavin was 15 years old, ignorant and not very bright.

The oaks had been gathered, the work was done, and McKenzie and his wife, unsuspecting of danger, were probably looking forward to a welcome rest on Sunday.

In the house of which the ruins are now seen once lived Robert McKenzie, with his wife and four children.

McKenzie had considerable money at one time. Some years before the tragedy he was believed to be worth over \$30,000.

Apparently he lived there, lonely as it was, without fear of danger to himself or his property, for though a man of slight physique he seems to have taken no special precautions to protect the place, though he made no secret of the fact that he kept a considerable sum of money in the house.

Most of the few people in that scattered neighborhood seemed to be ignorant, simple minded folk, who lived as he did, at peace with the world.

Among these people, however, there were all sorts of belief as to McKenzie's great wealth. One rumor had it that he was worth thirty thousand pounds.

In the latter part of October, 1857, McKenzie was desirous of securing a farm laborer. He had a spare house, smaller and older than his own, for a man to occupy, nearly opposite the farm house.

Breen and the victim had determined to murder McKenzie and his family, and that night had been fixed for the deed.

So far as I can judge, Breen was not the leader and projector in the horrid enterprise.

making money by murder into the mind of old Slavin, and McKenzie was not the first victim suggested.

Then the murder of McKenzie was discussed. Old Slavin took the credit of this to himself, afterwards declaring that "it was myself was the head and foundation and backsetting of robbing and murdering McKenzie."

The story of how the murder was committed was told afterwards both by Breen and old Slavin, the murderers and living witnesses.

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McKenzie was not quite dead, however, and uttered a groan. Then Slavin hit him blow after blow on the breast until life was extinct.

After McKenzie was killed, young Slavin secured the key to an iron chest in which the murdered man had kept his money.

Reaching the house, Breen found an axe outside the porch, which he handed to Slavin. Then Breen opened the door of the common sitting room where Mrs. McKenzie and the children were.

Mrs. McKenzie was sitting in a rocking chair near the stove with her youngest child in her arms and the other three children around her.

Then Slavin stepped behind the woman, swung the axe and hit her a fearful blow on the side of the head.

Three then left the house and went to the woods, near at hand. After a while they came up to the house and heard what they took to be some of the dying children moaning.

Young Slavin began to complain of being hungry, and the three went into the pantry where they ate some bread and drank milk, returning to the woods again.

At the McKenzie farm the fire made rapid headway. In a short time both houses were wholly consumed.

A small red and white dog wandered around the fields, howling mournfully in terror of the desolation it had seen.

in truth it was. It had come into the room after the murderers had done their work.

The second act in the Mispeck tragedy—the discovery, the pursuit and the bringing to justice of the murderers—will be told in another issue.

THE SHEEP OF PLANTS.

What Was Seen During a Nocturnal Ramble in the Garden.

To ramble at night in field or garden is to open a strange and almost fantastic chapter of plant life, for so essential is light to healthful vegetation, that scarcely a tree, shrub, or blossom but in some way changes its aspect when daylight fades.

We see ourselves in a "pleasing land of drowsyhead," where familiar plants have assumed the most wondrous postures, or even changed their posture altogether.

All the clovers are a drowsy family, and keep early hours like the daisy, which Chaucer poetically tells us "fears night and hateth darkness."

And whence that it is eve, I rume blithe, So soon as eve ye some sinitch west, You see this more howe we go to rest.

The sleep of plants is so conspicuous a phenomenon that it excited discussion and speculation as early as the time of Pliny, and many explanations were given which science has since disproved.

The drooping of the leaves was attributed by some botanists to an aversion to sunlight, a theory which had to be abandoned when such movements were made on cloudy days and dewless nights.

By the difference in the amount of light the plants receive during the night and day, many plants, notably the nasturtium, unless brightly illumined in the day, will not sleep at night.

It is the radiation of heat which the peasants of Southern Europe fear, more than cold winds, for their olives, and which induces gardeners to cover seedlings with thin layers of straw and spread branches over the wall-fruits.

The drooping of foliage leaves has another use beside the prevention of excessive radiation; by this means the tissues bearing chlorophyll—the green coloring-matter of plants—is preserved from injury.

Whilst foliage seems most effected by alternations of light and darkness, blossoms are most sensitive to changes of temperature. The marigold, which says Shakespeare,

Will expand its petals, in dry weather, between six and eight o'clock in the morning; but in rainy weather, or under clouds, it remains closed.

I have used MINARD'S LINIMENT in my stable for over a year, and consider it the VERY BEST for horse flesh I can get, and would strongly recommend it to all horsemen.

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Advertisement for Wm. Harland & Sons' English Varnishes, listing various types of varnishes and their prices.

Advertisement for W. H. Thorne & Co., Market Square, St. John, featuring Ice Cream Freezers and listing various models and prices.

Advertisement for Emerson & Fisher, Prince Wm. St., featuring various photographic and optical instruments.

Advertisement for T. N'Avity & Sons, St. John, featuring Bicycles and Brantford Bicycles, New Designs.

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