

FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH.

DOUGLAS PELLY'S RECEPTION AT HIS NATIVE TOWN.

Received as From the 'end—He Thinks Birchall Tried Three Times to Murder Him—He Suspected His False Friend—He Is Reticent Respecting Mrs. Birchall.

The *Herts and Essex Observer*, published at Pelly's home, gives the following account of his return to his family—Seldom indeed does it fall to the lot of a young man to meet with such unenviable experience as Mr. Douglas Pelly, the son of the vicar of Saf-fon Walden, who was so nearly connected with the Benwell murder case, which has created so much excitement, not only abroad but at home, and who ran so narrow a risk of himself being a victim.

Mr. Pelly, anxious to return to his family whose anxiety since the first intimation of the murder has been very great, left Woodstock half an hour after the verdict had been given in the trial, and crossed in the Majestic to England, arriving at Liverpool on Wednesday morning. He was met there by his father, and the meeting was naturally an affecting one. They journeyed to London immediately, and catching the 5-15 train ex-Liverpool street, arrived at Walden just before seven o'clock. The knowledge of the arrival had become known, and the result was that a crowd of some thousands had assembled in the vicinity of the railway station in order to give a welcome to the returned voyager. The arrival of the train was signalled by a feu de joie. Mrs. Pelly, with Miss Geraldine and Miss Daisy Pelly, were on the platform, and the greetings between mother and son, sisters and brothers were very warm. These over, a move was made for the carriage in waiting, and as soon as Mr. Douglas Pelly appeared on the outside of the station he was received with prolonged and deafening cheers. The horses were unharnessed and the car was drawn to Walden place by willing hands, preceded by the Excelsior band playing *Relling Home to Dear Old England*, and men carrying lighted torches. In addition to the large following, crowds had assembled all along the line of route, and as the carriages passed along the occupants were repeatedly cheered. Flags were hung from various private houses, and the residence of Mrs. Bellingham was illuminated with colored lights.

At the entrance to Walden place a triumphal arch had been erected, having on the front the words "Welcome Home." A large portion of the crowd followed the carriage into the grounds, and upon alighting Mr. Douglas Pelly briefly thanked them for their kindness, at the same time intimating that he would do so more fully on another occasion. The band took up a position on the lawn, and under the leadership of Mr. W. Auger played a suitable selection, while a large number of people perambulated the grounds, which presented a pretty appearance, the trees and shrubs being hung with colored fairy lights.

On Thursday morning a representative of the *Observer* had an interview with Mr. Douglas Pelly, and something like the following occurred:

What is your private opinion as regards the Benwell murder case, and the condemned man?

Personally, well I think he had a very fair trial, and every chance a man could have to clear himself. Really nothing could have been fairer. The judge gave his counsel every sort of license and as much time as he asked for. After he had practically closed the case he allowed him to call another witness or two because he thought it was important. Birchall could not complain of not having a fair trial and a fair chance, and there is no doubt the verdict was an absolutely just one in every way. As Mr. Osler, the crown counsel, remarked, all the time he has been saying he had an explanation, but if there was one he would have made it a long time ago. His counsel spoke for nearly five hours and made a most wonderful speech; he is a very clever man, too, and did everything he possibly could for Birchall.

Did you have any impression as to there being anything wrong beyond what has already appeared in the papers?

I hardly know what has appeared in the English papers.

Was there not something about a cigar?

Well, people said he gave me a cigar that was drugged, but I have hardly made up my mind whether there was anything in it. The people in the house where I was staying were very sure about it.

You happened to meet with a friend and threw it away, did you not?

No; there was something in the flavor I did not like and threw it away, but felt the effects of it for some hours afterward. Honestly speaking, I don't know if there was anything wrong with it. He (Birchall) was a most extraordinary character, perfectly cool to the very last. I was not there when the verdict was pronounced.

What is your opinion with regard to Mrs. Birchall?

I cannot help thinking that she must have known a great deal about it, because I don't see how it could have been otherwise. My suspicions were aroused, so how much more must her's have been, living as she was in such close relationship with him. Of course she must have known about the fraud part of the business, or one would think so.

But not about the actual crime?

It is a difficult thing to say. One would not like to accuse anyone of that sort of thing. Look at it in this light. She knew there was no farm and no business, in fact, nothing at all, and yet she allowed Benwell to go off with Birchall on the understanding that he was going to see a farm, the neighborhood where it was, and be introduced to friends, knowing there was no such place at all. As to her idea of what was going to occur that day it is impossible to speak, but there must have been something in her mind. I never expected to see Benwell back that day and I cannot conceive where she imagined he was going to, because she knew that as soon as Benwell arrived up there he would find there was no such place as mentioned.

How many times do you now think you escaped being a victim of Birchall?

Well, looking at things now, I think I had three pretty narrow escapes, leaving the cigar business out. Once he took me down—I had been suspecting him of being a fraud, and was waiting until I had some specific grounds to go on, because one could not make a charge of that sort without strong reasons. I spoke to him, telling him I thought he was different to what he had made out, and the representation he had made before starting seemed to be ab-

solutely without foundation. He made a shuffling explanation and I mentally decided to give him another week, and unless things were in full swing by the end of the week I would leave him. Of course before the week was over he was in prison. We were walking along the river road which goes from the village up to the Niagara Falls—this was about ten minutes after had quarrelled with him—when we came to a place where a good many years ago some religious body used to hold their camp meetings, and it was thought that it would be nice to bathe in the river, so a stairway was made straight down the cliff with the idea that they could go down it to bathe, but it was found impossible to bathe there because the current was so strong. Birchall said, "Oh you have never been down there; you ought to go, it is the best view of the falls." I told him I should like to go down, and went down first, but soon noticed what a rotten, wretched-looking place it was, and, curious to say, there was a man waiting at the bottom of the stairway. No one had been down the stairs for years. I could not say exactly I had any grave suspicions at that moment, but I did not like the look of the place, so I went back. In the light of after events, knowing he had murdered Benwell, and that it was to his highest interest to get rid of me, it seems he must have intended to put me away. Well then, another time he took me down to the cliffs close to the cantiever bridge. Underneath this bridge you cannot be seen; you get in between the brickwork of the span and the edge. Well, he took me in there so as to get a better view of the rapids. He tried to persuade me to stand close by him at the edge, but becoming suspicious and noticing something in his manner I did not like, I felt frightened and would not go near the edge, but made some excuse and went away. This was the second time. It would have been so easy for him a little push, and there you are, gone into the rapids, and just there is the place where bodies are never found. I had for some days seen a heading in the papers about a murder near Woodstock, but had never read or taken any notice of it until the Friday, when first mention was made of the cigar case having been found. On that day, early in the morning, Birchall wanted me to go up at once to Princeton to see if it was Benwell's body. Then I was completely frightened and got a revolver, which I put in my pocket and never moved without it, feeling so sure there was something wrong. We went to the station, but there was no train; and the things he said to me, which appeared in the papers, no doubt, made me feel there was something wrong with him, and that he knew something about Benwell's disappearance. I wanted to telegraph to New York, thinking Benwell was there, but he refused to do that, and decided to go over to the American side, where he had opened a banking account. It began to rain while we were there and he wanted to stay on the American side, but it seemed absurd because his wife was at the boarding house still and would expect us back that same night. I would not stay on that side of the bridge, and as we were walking across the lower suspension bridge exactly over the commencement of the whirlpool rapids he wanted me to go to the edge of the bridge, the balustrade of which was only about eighteen inches high, and nothing would have been easier than to push anyone over. He made a weak excuse for asking me to join him at the edge, but it was a sort of revelation to me and I would not go. He was very cross and white, but said nothing. I believe if I had gone to the edge of that bridge I should never have got across. Of course naturally one sees all these things afterwards in a more pronounced light than at the time.

As to the country, Canada what impression have you formed of it during your short stay?

I think parts of Canada are particularly nice. I have seen pretty well the whole of the country, and it is not in any way what emigration agents would have you believe. There are one or two places which you might say were perfection. In the eastern states and Ontario was the finest farming country in the world.

You don't think of going out there again?

I may go out to see Canada again, because I have made a great many friends there. Clerks engaged in London businesses going out there can get any amount of occupation the pay is better, living cheaper, hours shorter, and they would have a far happier existence.

Did anyone connected with the trial come home with you?

No one at all. I only just caught the steamer, and left Woodstock half an hour after the verdict. I left at half-past seven on Oct. 1, and arrived at Liverpool about eight o'clock yesterday morning. We had a wonderful passage and beautiful weather.

Is it true that you have had offers made to you? Did someone wish you to sing at a hall?

Oh, yes (smiling). It was done simply as a matter of advertisement. They will do anything there to make money, which is their sole idea. I must say a man might do very much worse than to go over there. With a small income a man can live there very well and have an enjoyable life. After the offices are closed the clerks are allowed to smoke inside, and people there don't think of going to business in a black coat. The people showed me enormous kindness—in fact I never met such people for kindness.

Insurance Companies in Mexico.

Reports from Mexico state that a bill has been submitted to Congress which proposes to deal with insurance companies in a manner quite heroic. Among other things, the bill provides that in order to do business a company must first obtain a license from the Department of Finance; that said license shall not exceed ninety-nine years duration; that each company shall erect office buildings costing not less than \$50,000; that the government shall appoint a commissioner to supervise the operations of each company and his salary shall be paid by such company; that every company shall deposit forfeit money to the amount of at least \$200,000 in public debt bonds; and that every year, in January, companies must submit a balance sheet showing their transactions during the preceding year. Infractions of the law shall be visited with a fine of \$100,000, or, in default, imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years. What has led to these stringent measures being adopted does not appear, whether owing to frauds having been perpetrated upon the people, or to the persuasion that "prevention is better than cure."

All Sorts of Girls.

There's the pretty girl,
And the girl that bangs her hair;
And the girl that's a flirt,
And the girl that is pert,
And the girl with the baby stare.

There's the dowdy girl,
And the rowdy girl,
And the girl that is always late;
There's the girl of style,
And the girl of wit,
And the girl with the minging gait.

There's the tender girl,
And the slender girl,
And the girl that says her prayers;
There's the haughty girl,
And the naughty girl,
And the girl that puts on airs.

There's the tolu girl,
And the "fool you" girl,
And the girl that bets on the races;
There's the candid girl,
And the handy girl,
And the girl that has two faces.

There's the well-bred girl,
And the well-read girl,
And the girl with a sense of duty;
There's the dainty girl,
And the "fainty" girl,
And the girl that has no beauty.

There are many others,
Oh, men and brothers,
Than are named in this narration;
There are girls and girls,
And they're all of them pearls—
They're the best things in creation.

Are People Losing Faith?

If it be true that men have faith in what they are willing to pay for, and, *vice versa*, there is no great reason for any feeling of alarm at the assertion so confidently made by some, that the people are losing faith in Christianity. Said a New York clergyman recently, "I hear a great deal about the spread of agnosticism nowadays, yet I never heard before of such a time as this for building new churches. I see reports of them every week, and believe that you will find that since January last more than a hundred of them have been built in this city or hereabouts. Some of them are grand and costly edifices, too. We are raising places of worship all the time for believers of every creed. Only last Sunday a new church was dedicated in this city, and another in Brooklyn, and another in Woodhaven, and the corner stone of another was laid in Jersey City, yet it was rather a poor Sunday for new churches. You can find, too, that most of the churches in New York and vicinity are well filled, and that some of them are crowded at every service. If there is a tremendous spread of agnosticism and infidelity, you can't prove that there is by getting up a list of the new churches that have been built this year, or last year, or within the past ten years." And this witness is irrefutable. It is estimated that in the United States, alone the evangelical churches are building on an average four churches a day, a rate which does not betoken the widespread revolt from Christianity which some of her enemies would have the world believe.

Cavalry in War.

The invention of smokeless powder and the perfecting of the implements of warfare render it improbable that the exciting spectacles of former days when armies met in the shock of battle, will ever again be witnessed. Says a German writer on this subject: "The time for brilliant cavalry attacks upon infantry will be past and the future duties of cavalry will be to escort single detachments and so forth. An attack cannot be risked by cavalry except upon a body of the enemy's cavalry, and whenever it is not stronger than the enemy it would be better to dismount and protect itself by firing. If the cavalry of the future is to be efficient, continues the writer, it should be armed with rifles and instructed in quick firing. The lance, which is being introduced again in France and Germany, is an absolutely useless weapon, and in the age of repeating rifles and smokeless powder the cavalry will never have an opportunity of using it." Now when the dazzling uniforms shall have given place to hues more sombre, and the glittering bayonets shall have been robbed of their power to shine, and armies shall no longer confront each other on the open field but seek the protection of hill or wood, it may happen that much of the fascination of warfare shall have passed away. And this is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Velocipedes in War.

Velocipedes are now desired in France for naval as well as military service. Four years ago, at the mobilization of a French army corps, they carried messages to and from headquarters with such rapidity as to receive a regular organization in the military establishment of France; and Russia is now following that example. The wheelmen wear loose artillery jackets and canvas trousers, and may have, for rain, a rubber cloak with a hood; their despatches are carried in a leather wallet, and the weapon is a revolver. But while all this is easy to understand, and also that bicycle or tricycles are allowed at the option of the riders, the former having the superiority in speed and the latter in stability, it may not be quite so clear how the cycle is of avail for the sailor. The explanation is that it is not intended for use on shipboard, but for landing parties, and even then mainly for scouting and reconnaissance. It must be said that this is going to extremes in the anxiety to use the new appliance, and that the occasions when it would be of value could hardly pay for the trouble of taking care of the machine. The uses of the wheel in army manoeuvres are apparent, but naval cyclists seem to be as superfluous as horse marines.

Skillful doctors at Berlin speak in the gravest way about the trouble the young Emperor of Germany constantly suffers with his ear. It seems to be a commonplace of medicine that in such troubles, when of long standing and remaining obstinate in spite of the best treatment, nearly all have tuberculosis as their real cause, in which case an early death or insanity seem to threaten the Emperor's lifework. It is an open secret that his restless travelling is in search of sleep and health, an unceasing struggle with the pain and misery that the inflammation in his ear is ever causing him.

About Old Ocean.

The sea occupies three-fourths of the surface of the earth. At the depth of about 3500 feet waves are not felt. The temperature is the same, varying only a trifle from the ice of the pole to the burning sun of the equator. A mile down the water has a pressure of over a ton to the square inch. If a box six feet deep were filled with seawater and allowed to evaporate under the sun there would be two inches of salt left on the bottom. Taking the average depth of the ocean to be three miles, there would be a layer of pure salt 230 feet thick on the bed of the Atlantic. The water is colder at the bottom than at the surface. In the many bays on the coast of Norway the water often freezes at the bottom before it does above. Waves are very deceptive. To look at them in a storm one would think the water travelled. The water stays in the same place, but the motion goes on. Sometimes in storms these waves are forty feet high, and travel fifty miles an hour—more than twice as fast as the swiftest steamship. The distance from valley to valley is generally fifteen times the height, hence a wave five feet high will extend over seventy-five feet of water. The force of the sea dashing on the Bell Rock is said to be seventeen tons for each square yard. Evaporation is a wonderful power in drawing water from the sea. Every year a layer of the entire sea fourteen feet thick is taken up into the clouds. The winds bear their burden into the land, and the water comes down in rain upon the fields, to flow back at last through rivers. The depth of the sea presents an interesting problem. If the Atlantic were lowered from 6564 feet, the distance from shore to shore would be half as great, or 1500 miles. If lowered a little more than three miles, say 19,680 feet, there would be a road of dry land from Newfoundland to Ireland. This is the plain on which the great Atlantic cables were laid. The Mediterranean is comparatively shallow. A drying up of 660 feet would leave three different seas, and Africa would be joined with Italy. The British channel is more like a pond, which accounts for its choppy waves. It has been found difficult to get the correct soundings of the Atlantic. A midshipman of the navy overcame the difficulty, and shot weighing thirty pounds carries down the line. A hole is bored through the sinker, through which a rod of iron is passed, moving easy back and forth. In the end of the bar a cup is dug out, and the inside coated with lard. The bar is made fast to the line, and a sling holds the shot on. When the bar, which extends below the ball, touches the earth, the sling unhooks, and the shot slides off. The lard in the end of the bar holds some of the sands or whatever may be on the bottom, and a drop shuts over the cup to keep the water from washing the sand out. When the ground is reached a shock is felt, as if an electric current had passed through the line.

An Antarctic Expedition.

Now that the Australian colonies have agreed to pay the \$25,000 which Baron Nordenskiold and Baron Dickson proposed as the condition on which they would fit out an Antarctic expedition, it is probable that steps will be taken at once to consummate the scheme. Considering the reliability, experience and resources of the principal promoters of the expedition, it is safe to predict that this exploring party will be the best equipped that has ever entered the Southern Seas. What the results will be can only be conjectured. Two ends will be kept in view by the expedition, one scientific and the other monetary. It is expected that much useful scientific information will be gained; that, owing to the great improvements which the last fifty years have wrought in means and methods of scientific investigation, our present knowledge of the air and sea and land of those regions will be considerably enlarged. Penetrating further towards the Southern pole, these explorers will learn what currents move those seas, and what plants and animals inhabit them; what meteorological conditions prevail; and whether the mighty wall of ice and snow, which former explorers have brought us word, engirds a continent or an archipelago. Moreover, it is known that the Antarctic waters are the home of myriads of whales and seals, and of fishes also, which are of great commercial value. Hitherto their remoteness from the markets of the world has caused them to be neglected. But now that the mammalian hosts of the Northern Seas are so decimated, the eyes of whalers and sealers are turned toward the vast resources of the South. With the Antarctic waters as near to Australia as Baffin's Bay is to England, there is good reason to look for the establishment of paying commercial enterprises on and within the Antarctic circle.

There are other attractions than those which nature provides which invest a country or a locality with interest to the traveler. The works of his fellowmen, especially those works which indicate the possession of rare gifts or genius can never fail to delight and attract, for nothing is more interesting to man than man. This fact is sometimes overlooked by those who institute comparisons between new and old lands, between a country, on the one hand, without traditions, history, or monuments, and a country which has been the theatre where have transpired events that have given direction to history, and the home where have lived some of the wisest, the noblest and best of mankind. Into this error the author of "Our Italy," by which he means Southern California, has fallen when he says that the latter is more attractive than the former. By going to Italy one gets a knowledge of the records and works of mankind that cannot be got anywhere else, and this knowledge is more valuable than any other.

A judgment has just been rendered at Ottawa in connection with an insurance case which is of more than ordinary interest to the public. It appears that the Ottawa agent for the Mutual Reserve Life Association, of New York, sent in two applications which were rejected by the company, but upon which the premium had been paid at the time applications were made, and that the agent when requested to refund the money, seeing that the policies were not issued, refused to do so. Instead of suing the agent, the parties interested instituted action against the company and succeeded in winning their suit, the judge holding that the agent having taken the applications and received the money for the policies, the company was bound to make repayment. The effect of this judgment will doubtless be to induce insurance companies to exercise more caution in selecting their agents while it will give greater security to the insuring public.

TO PREVENT PREMATURE BURIALS.

A Society to Institute Precautions Against the Interment of the Living.

Medical literature contains many true stories, sadder than fiction, of people who have been buried alive; of the resuscitation of persons supposed to be dead; of the deception of physicians and friends by the apparent symptoms of death, and kindred tales. Some time ago the subject was discussed at a meeting of the Medico-Legal Society, and it was shown that there are good grounds for believing that men, women and children are frequently buried alive; that our laws permit of too hasty interment of persons supposed to be dead, and that common sense dictates the adoption of some measures, whereby the occurrence of such horrors may be prevented.

The outcome of the discussion has been the suggestion of a society for the purpose of taking precautions against premature burials. The originator of the movement was Dr. S. Newton Leo of New York. Speaking on this subject the other day Dr. Leo said: "There are a number of prominent men in various walks of life whom I know to be interested in this movement who would prefer not to have their names mentioned at present. But the society is progressing, and I have no doubt that a permanent organization will be formed. I will take this occasion to explain that there seems to be an impression among some medical men that these statements as to premature burials that have been made from time to time have not been sufficiently authenticated to lead to the conclusion that they were based on absolute facts. In this they are mistaken. Who knows how many such cases are concealed in deep graves: in the cremating furnaces; in the tombs of the wealthy? It is idle to say that these things do not happen. They do happen. This nobody can deny; that no harm and possibly great good must result from the adoption of common sense precautions to prevent such horrible things.

"The obvious point is this: People who have been pronounced dead are often with undue haste placed upon ice. This renders it impossible for them to revive in many cases where the vital spark has not left the body. If they are not dead the ice kills them, or the air-tight coffin kills them. Sometimes when after a lapse of time coffins have been opened, and bodies are found to have been displaced, the terrible reflections of friends have been quieted by the assurance that gases of the decaying body must have done the work. But the probability is that the unfortunate victim has been prematurely buried, and has writhed in unspeakable torture until relieved by welcome death.

"The main cause of premature interment is the custom of haste to prepare the subject for the grave. The undertaker is sent for on the instant. He may hint that there is no hurry, but it is at the risk of losing his business. If one undertaker will not hurry another one will. People must be educated up to the idea that it is not only necessary to hurry, but is the dictate of humanity and common sense to go slowly in such matters. Of course, in cases of death by diphtheria or contagious disease, such as cholera or small-pox, haste is pardonable for the sake of living, but, in most cases, undue haste is at the risk of homicide. The Board of Health will take care of urgent cases. In all others it would be better to proceed carefully.

It is best to call in a physician who is fully qualified and familiar with the signs of death, and not to be too hasty in taking it for granted that death has actually occurred, even in cases where people have been long sick, and where death has been for some time regarded as a forgone conclusion. Too much care cannot be taken before making preparations for a funeral, to make it absolutely certain by the most unmistakable evidence that death has really taken place.

Our society proposes to adopt these obviously necessary precautions: To exercise vigilance; to employ medical appliances which have been invented for the purpose of making such thorough and scientific examination in every case of alleged death a render it absolutely impossible for any person not dead to be treated as if he were dead. Precautions will be taken to watch the subject from the time the physician of the society are notified of the death of member to the end. The closest supervision and most perfect tests will be maintained until the final moment of consigning the body to its last resting place, that it will be impossible for any person to be either prematurely killed or interred alive.

Styles for the Ladies.

In collars fashion is so varied that it is hardly possible to make a choice out of them. We must be guided by the make of the dress, whether the bodice is open at the neck or quite high at the throat, both styles being equally in style. Medici collars are more worn on capes, jackets, and cloaks, than on dresses, whilst the high, straight collars is reserved for tailor-made costumes.

Dresses cut in a short V back and front may be worn without any collar at all, on condition that the neck itself be faultless in shape, otherwise the V must be filled in with lace, gauze, tulle, or silk fichu, fastened at the neck by a brooch or pin. The V may also be edged round with a full ruffling of lace or feathers, boa fashion, which will generally trim the neck sufficiently, even without the under fichu.

Neck ribbons and necklets are also returning to fashion, and are worn with open V-bodices. Necklets may be made of silver, steel, and Strass diamonds, boldly asserting their common origin, however, without any pretence to assume more than they really are. For day wear, indeed, much mock jewelry is allowed.

Young ladies having pretty throats find the large pleated lace or muslin collars becoming. The Pierrot collar is of this style, fastening in the back or on one side, and may be sufficiently deep to reach the waistline, front and back.

Empire laces in yandique patterns form box-pleated ruches in white, red, black, and evening shades, that sit up in the back like a Medici collar, and may taper toward the front to leave a tiny V at the throat. Box-pleated ruches or ruffs of tulle or crepe are just long enough to surround the neck, and tie with long loops in the back. They are worn with low-necked evening frocks and high visiting or theatre toilettes.

Ostrich feather ruffs and boas are also worn; lace boas, and those of a cream marabout tinged with brown on the ends. The neck is now made quite an important factor in one's general appearance, and the varieties of turn-over frills and standing ruffs is immense, though, like all other novelties, pretentious articles bring pretty prices.