

# BIG TOM, THE CONVICT



HERE WERE those who said that convict 1280 was innocent of the crime which sent him to prison for such a long term of years that there was scarce a hope of his ever being a free man again. They meant that he was technically guilty. He had sought to save a woman from a beating at the hands of her husband, and in the struggle and excitement he had struck a blow which caused the death of the man. It was accident, in a sense, but it was also manslaughter. No man who is a man will stand by and see a woman beaten, and yet if he interferes he must take his chances with the law. "Big Tom," as the convict was sometimes referred to, was like most big men—a child in his gentleness and good nature. He went to prison weeping. He did not complain, but he grieved. He thought of the years and years which must drag away before the prison doors would open to him, and he moved about like a weak, old man. The prison officials felt to pity the man, but a convict is a convict and all must be treated alike—all who show obedience to the rules. They sized him up as a child-like and good-natured, and yet they said to each other as they talked of him:

"Look out for Big Tom! He will break loose some day and do some desperate thing!"

They thought it would come during the first six months of his term—then during the second—then they almost became afraid of him. Men who are slow to anger—who go on grieving, brooding and bearing a mental burden for weeks and months are devils when the climax comes. Big Tom had the management of the trip-hammer in the machine shop. Had they put him in the shoe shop or tailor shop he would have rebelled at once. His place was beside the biggest piece of machinery in the shops. Two pieces of machinery, at it were—"Tom and Trip." Day by day, and week by week, and month by month, as the ponderous hammer rose and fell and its blows shook the very earth for yards around, making the convict smile and look proud, the guards had an eye on him and kept saying to each other:

"It will come! It is only delayed! When he breaks loose he will kill some one and have to be killed in turn!"

Nearly half of the second year had passed and the giant convict had never even sulked, when one day there came into the shop as sightseers a husband, wife and little girl 4 or 5 years old. Children are seldom seen in prisons, and it is a rare thing that they are taken into the shops in the yards. If any one in that prison knew that convict No. 1280 had a daughter—a fair-haired, handsome child who could only walk alone when the jury pronounced his verdict of "guilty," they had forgotten the fact. His wife had visited him as often as visitors were allowed, but the child had never been seen within the grim walls. Knowing that her husband had killed a man by ac-

back to the wall and sunk down. The father stood staring, as if struck dumb, but presently held out his hands in silent supplication. Big Tom glowered and muttered in reply. He was a convict—a childless father. He was dead to his child—she was dead to him. He could not make another father's heart ache and throb and grieve as his did, but he would secure revenge. After muttering he was silent. No one cried out. Guards and convicts were seemingly stupefied. There was the hum of machinery, but not of voices. Convicts turned from forge and anvil and bench and lathe and held their breath. The two shop guards leaned forward in their chairs and looked, but they did not move nor cry out.

"What will he do with the child?"

The two men working at the trip-hammer with Big Tom had fallen back. He had control of the machinery which worked it. The answer to the question could be read in his eyes. Mer had wronged him under cover of the law. He had been deprived of liberty degraded and disgraced. Death were more merciful than such a sentence as his, and in dying he would secure revenge. A piece of iron had been left under the hammer. There was heard the sound of crash! crash! crash! as the mass of iron rose and fell at regular intervals—that sound above the monotonous hum of the machinery.

"He will thrust her under the hammer!"

So thought each guard and each convict—so thought the father whose feet seemed chained to the floor and whose face was whiter than the dead. One of the guards could have touched a button and signalled the engineer to shut off steam, but he did not move a hand. Either guard had a fair mark to shoot at, but their pistols were not lifted. Up and down—up and down went the hammer, but suddenly the bell was thrown over on the loose pulley and the mass rested on the anvil. It seemed to those who looked as if they had been looking through a mist—such a mist as rises from earth of a summer morning. It seemed to them that this mist thinned out—cleared away before the influence of a rising sun, and by and by they saw the child nestling on Big Tom's hairy breast, one hand smoothing his cheek, and seeming to come from a long distance off they heard her childish voice saying:

"No, you wouldn't hurt Nellie—you wouldn't hurt Nellie! What makes you cry? Have you got a little girl, too? Won't they let you go home to see your little girl?"

And the convicts advanced step by step—and the guards crept forward, and lo! Big Tom's tears were falling as he hugged the child more tightly and kissed her fair hair and rosy cheek. There was silence yet—silence as he walked to and fro and wept and sobbed and lifted the child till she could clasp her tiny arms about his neck and rest her cheek against his. Not a whisper among the convicts—not a move from father or mother or the guards. By and by Big Tom placed the child in his father's arms, wiped the tears from his eyes on the sleeve of his striped jacket, and with a "God bless the little darling!" and a "Thank ye, air!" he returned to his work and the hammer was lifted and held in waiting for the hot iron to be placed on the anvil beneath. The guards motioned for the other convicts to go back to their benches and forges, and a minute later the visitors had gone and work was in full blast. The long-expected outbreak had come and gone. For thirty seconds Big Tom had felt such a raging hate in his soul that he was transformed into a human devil. The child had smiled into his burning eyes—her soft touch had lulled him—her words had brought back his reason. Was he punished? No! A year later he was pardoned, and to-day another fair-haired, blue-eyed smiling child puts her arms about his neck and says:

"You are such a great, big papa, but you wouldn't hurt nobody, would you?"

An Art Gallery Experiment.

An interesting experiment is now in progress in South Kensington museum. It relates to showing pictures under artificial light without changing the color. Capt. Abney has so arranged it that the most important actinic rays of light are excluded. It is on the principle that while the rays which cause the paintings to fade are excluded the effect of white light is obtained. The method adopted is the closing of a skylight with alternate layers of green, blue and yellow glass. Visiting artists declare that the pictures exhibited under this light are seen in their true colors. The public has not the least idea that there is any difference between the lighting of this and that of any other gallery. The experiment is being tried in what is known as the Raphael cartoon gallery.—Exchange.

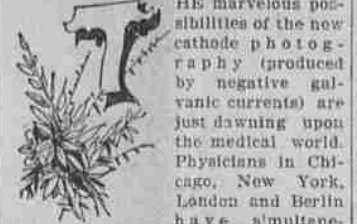
Cheap Whalebone.

A French chemist has discovered a process of making a cheap substitute for whalebone. He takes animal skins, removes the hair by shaving, and, after immersing them in a bath of bichromate of potash, stretches them on a frame to dry. They are then treated in a bath of bisulphide of soda or lime until they are of an olive green color, again dried and cut into strips.

# DEATH TO DISEASE.

## CATHODE RAYS WILL END ALL HUMAN SUFFERINGS.

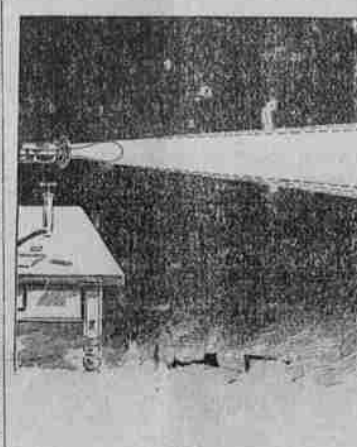
Will Kill All Kinds of Microbes by Letting in the Light—More Fatal than the Rays of the Sun—An Experiment at Chicago.



THE marvelous possibilities of the new cathode photography (produced by negative galvanic currents) are just dawning upon the medical world. Physicians in Chicago, New York, London and Berlin have simultaneously begun experiments upon the most astonishing theory which has ever startled the scientists of the great capitals. It is believed that in the wonderful cathode light invented by Professor Roentgen lies the perfect cure of diseases which have hitherto resisted the tireless efforts of medical science. If the theory of these doctors is correct, the cure for consumption, cholera, typhoid, typhus fever and smallpox is at last discovered.

While experimenting and testing the powers of the new cathode light, the Berlin scientists found that its rays possessed many of the properties of sunlight. By spectrum analysis it was proved that the cathode rays registered a strong violet—stronger than the violet rays of sunlight.

Professor Marshall Hall, the eminent British scientist, proved long ago that rays of sunlight destroyed the germs of disease. The deadly microbes of the most fatal maladies were killed by exposure to the sun's rays. Experimenting further, Professor Marshall Hall



AN EXPERIMENT WITH THE CATHODE RAYS IN CHICAGO.

found that the violet rays were the germicide rays.

When the laboratory experiments of the German scientists brought out the fact that the new cathode light showed the same chemical composition as the violet rays of sunshine the medical men knew what this discovery meant. They knew that at last they had within their grasp a light which can penetrate to the interior organs of the human body, and carry along with it the power to destroy the microbes of disease.

This is what the physicians of London and Berlin are now earnestly experimenting to prove.

If this marvelous cathode light, which pierces clothes and flesh (but not bones), still carries along through the outer covering of the body the germicide rays of sunlight—if, in other words, the mere flooding of the lungs with the new cathode light destroys the germs of tuberculosis—then the cure of consumption has been found!

If the penetrating flashes of the cathode light can illuminate the bowels with a chemical ray deadly to the cholera bacillus—then cholera is a disease no longer to be feared!

If the fevered blood vessels and arteries which burn with the bacilli of typhus, typhoid or scarlet fever can be flushed with the germicide rays of the cathode light—then these diseases are within the easy grasp of modern science.

With the entire world of science and medicine concentrating its skill and ingenuity on the possibilities of the new cathode light, no one can foretell what the laboratory experiments of Europe and America will bring forth.

Her Ugly Husband.

Mrs. Mary L. Burton edits the Jamestown, Kan., Optimist. She has been away on a visit. During her absence "the old man" filled her sheet with awful man stories. She has returned and serves the following roast: "The editor disclaims responsibility for anything appearing in this paper for the past month or two. She fears she will have trouble to get herself right with her friends, and probably will have to get well, get a divorce before she is able to recover her past reputation for respectability, peace and dignity."

# THE WONDERFUL MAXIM GUN.

Every Time It Kicks a New Cartridge Goes In.

The following description of the Maxim gun, taken from an account by Dr. Henry M. Field of a visit to the inventor, contributed to the Evangelist, New York, Oct. 19, is reproduced here for the powerful and vivid impression it gives of Maxim's remarkable engine of destruction:

His (Mr. Maxim's) special pet, his "daily," is the marvelous gun that does not fire single shots but literally "rains bullets," as the elements in their fury rain hailstones. It is a light affair to look at, having the appearance of a small brass cannon, mounted on a tripod and aimed and worked by one man, who sits behind it on a saddle like that of a bicycle, from which he can point it up and down with as much ease as if it were a pistol or swing it to the right or left as an enemy approaches from one or another quarter.

"But how is the gun loaded?" Ah, here is the beauty of it; it loads itself! The originality of the invention lies in this, that it utilizes the recoil, so that (as the cartridges are strung on a belt, that carries from 150 to 400 rounds) every kick of the gun throws out the exploded cartridge on one side of the gun and on the other throws the next cartridge into place, so that the discharge is incessant. You have only to press the button and the gun does the rest. As long as you keep your finger on the button the firing goes on, the gun throwing eleven minie bullets a second, 666 a minute!

"But not so fast," I hear some one say who has made a study of firearms. "Don't you know that this incessant firing would heat the gun so that it would explode and do more destruction at the rear end than at the muzzle?" Oh, yes, gentle critic, I know all this and am glad you spoke of it, as it gives me occasion to point out one more contrivance of this marvelous machine.

# CONSUMPTION

## CURED AT LAST.

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Confident of the Value of His Discoveries, He will Send Free, Two Bottles, Upon Application, to Any Person Suffering from Chest, Lung, and Pulmonary Affections.

THE appalling ravages of lung troubles and consumption in this country, continued from year to year, present a showing before which all lovers of humanity must stand aghast.

Lung troubles lead to consumption; loss of flesh, and wasting conditions. Of all the diseases which afflict the human race, consumption is the most fatal. Its ravages are by no means confined to the lungs alone. It attacks, in fact, almost every part of the body. Last year, as proven by the official records at Washington, over 263,000 died from consumption in the United States—representing an average of 5,000 every week, and 700 every day; a waste of life that seems incredible. More than four-fifths of this number might to-day be living, had they but known wherein restoration lay, and made timely use of the only infallible remedies that have thus far been discovered.

Slocum's remedy is the only one whose results have been practically successful.

Thousands of witnesses could be brought forward—whose testimony is incontrovertible—to prove not only that the Slocum System of Scientific Treatment is wonderfully efficacious in the cure of throat, chest and lung affections; all pulmonary disorders—and conditions of wasting—but that it does cure in cases of well defined and unmistakable consumption.

Consumption has, it is now believed, at last been conquered, and through this paper the distinguished chemist offers his discovery free.

For the purpose of bringing these remedies to the attention of the public; and making their great merits known, Mr. Slocum now makes a most generous offer that should certainly be taken advantage of.

He will send free two bottles, to any sufferer applying. Simply write express and postoffice address.

This proposition speaks eloquently indeed of the "good faith" of the great chemist.

Nothing could be fairer or more philanthropic.

There will be no mistake in sending—the mistake will be in overlooking the generous invitation.

Sufferers may address T. A. Slocum, M. C., 185 Pearl Street, New York. When writing the Doctor, please mention reading this in this paper and greatly oblige.

Green postcards to be in great favor for spring and summer trade.

# Scrofula

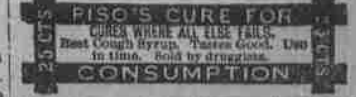
Is a deep-seated blood disease which all the mineral mixtures in the world cannot cure. S.S.S. (guaranteed purely vegetable) is a real blood remedy for blood diseases and has no equal.

Mrs. Y. T. Buck, of Delaney, Ark., had Scrofula for twenty-five years and most of the time was under the care of the doctors who could not relieve her. A specialist said he could cure her, but he filled her with arsenic and potash which almost ruined her constitution. She then took nearly every so-called blood medicine and drank them by the wholesale, but they did not reach her trouble. Some one advised her to try S.S.S. and she very soon found that she had a real blood remedy at last. She says: "After taking one dozen bottles of S.S.S. I am perfectly well, my skin is clear and healthy and I would not be in my former condition for two thousand dollars. Instead of drying up the poison in my system, like the potash and arsenic, S.S.S. drove the disease out through the skin, and I was permanently rid of it."

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"GOD BLESS THE LITTLE DARNING."

cident the wife could bear to see him wearing the horrible stripes of a convict, but to let the child look upon him—to gaze in wonder at the iron bars—to ask why all those men were there—a thousand times no! And so this was the first child Big Tom had seen since the heavy doors shut him in. Father, mother and child came close to him and gazed at the ponderous hammer with wondering eyes. You would have argued that the sight of the child would have softened the convict's heart and brought tears to his eyes, but it did not—it brought a feeling of madness—of desperation—of frenzy. To save a woman from a brutal beating at the hands of a drunken, worthless thing not fit to be classed with men, he had struck a blow. A jury had called it murder in the second degree, and he was here in prison on a sentence almost never-ending. He had been wronged, and the knowledge of it fired his heart and brought the long-expected outbreak. With a sudden cry which startled every one in the noisy shop Big Tom made a spring forward, seized the child in his arms, and there was a shout of defiance on his lips as he held her at arm's length and glared about him. The mother of the child gasped for breath and staggered