

## MOTHER AND SON.

**T**HURSDAY. And the *last* Thursday. You know we hang, Fridays. They say Dickie Crane ate well and slept well up to Thursday, or at least till the evening before. I saw him in the morning, and I know from his looks that he could not have slept much during the night.

You see it *is* hard to leave the sweet blue grass country, where the roads wind over streams, and between slopes, some soft and broad and sunny, some grown up in wood pastures and dappled by the tree shadows; where men are hearty and faithful, and women are fair. You should not wonder at Dickie. Naturally, he was down hearted. Still, he was plucky, and talked brightly—smiled, even, and joked. Only I noticed he did not listen well when I talked, and I had to repeat my answers to his questions. How was the crowd at the races yesterday? To-day, was the track in good form? Which was first, the handicap or the “free for all”? Did I think he could have a ladder, so that he could look out of the gratings and see the finish?

A good idea, I thought. Nothing could serve better to keep his thoughts from the morrow. So I went out to consult the turnkey about it. Shoafer—Shoafer is the turnkey—lives in the front part of the jail. I could not find him in the corridors, so I went through to the front, and pushed open the door of the room he and his wife use for a parlor.

Shoafer was in the room, talking with an old lady. Both were standing, and were plainly greatly excited. When he saw me, Shoafer beckoned, said a word to the woman, and came out. He led me out into the yard in front of the jail. He was trembling with excitement.

“That woman is Dickie Crane’s mother!” he said.

“No!” I stammered. “It can’t be! His mother?”

“It’s sure,” he replied. “She’s from Memphis, where Dickie tells of bein’ as a boy. She lost run of him twenty years ago, afore he was of age. Saw his trial in the papers, and here she is, to see if he is really her son.”

“But it can’t—it isn’t likely—my God! it’s awful for a man’s mother to turn up

just in time to see him hanged. But—why, maybe she’s crazy. Crazy people do such things.”

“No danger of that,” Shoafer said confidently. “She’s all right. Terrible worked up, and I didn’t dare let on Dickie was her boy. But he is. He is the living image of her; no jury on earth but would say so. And she described him. And she told things about him made me see ’twas him. You remember Dickie’s tellin’ of gettin’ drunk, an’ lamin’ his dad’s filly, as his first bad break? She told that. There ain’t no doubt.”

What was to be done? It was terrible; terrible for the son; awful for the mother. As for Dickie, I knew he was game. Shoafer and I went to the cell.

“Dickie,” said I, “we’ve got hard news.”

Dickie grinned. “It isn’t likely to be much harder than I’ve had,” he said. “In fact, my prospects are not so bright that any news is likely to make them worse.”

“Dickie,” said I, “there is a woman below, from Memphis, who wants to see you. She says her name is Mrs. Crane. She says she had a son Richard, whom she lost sight of twenty years ago. Dickie, it is your mother.”

Dickie Crane stared at us with frightened eyes, then fell to the floor, writhing in agony. He bit at the stones, and groaned aloud. It was not easy to say anything calculated to comfort a man at such a time as that, but Shoafer and I did what we could. Shoafer is a kind soul.

“Dickie,” said I presently, as he lay with his face still on the stones, “Shoafer will tell you about it.”

The turnkey hesitated a moment, then began as if he were reading from a book. He spoke in a low, steady voice, and repeated his conversation with the woman. As he went on, Dickie Crane arose, and took a seat on the bed. He was pale, but his jaw was set like a bulldog’s. He looked at us fixedly, when Shoafer had finished. Then he said,

“Gentlemen, say to the lady that *my* mother is dead; I saw her buried. I never was in Memphis in my life. I’m not *her*

boy. Tell her she can come, and see for herself."

Shoafersaid huskily to me, "I 'low he means to deny his own mother."

"You'd better call her," I said.

Dickie covered his face with his hands, and rocked himself from side to side. He groaned aloud and muttered, "'Twould kill her."

As footsteps came down the corridor, he took his hands from his face and got up.

Shoafersaid first; then the woman. As the turnkey had said, the resemblance was unmistakable. If ever mother and son stood face to face, it was in that cell.

In a second, she was upon his neck. She kissed his forehead, his eyes, his cheeks, his mouth. Her tears rained down, and all the while she moaned, "Richard boy, Richard boy, dear little boy, at last! At last!"

Dickie stood like a statue, his arms limp at his side. She had as well caressed a stone. In a little while she pushed herself off, and looked at him from arm's length. Then Dickie spoke.

"Madam, you are making a great mistake," he said. "I am not your son."

"Hush, hush!" cried she, and again she strained her old arms to draw herself more closely to him, "Richard boy, they shan't tear us apart now. Oh, Richard, thank God! I've found my boy, I've found my boy."

Dickie took hold of her hands, and unclasped them from about his neck. He was gentle, but he was very strong. He held her gently and he said,

"You must listen to me. You are greatly excited, and you imagine a likeness in me to somebody you love. But you were never more mistaken, never more mistaken. My mother was small and fair. You are tall and dark. Eight years ago my mother died, and was buried in Cincinnati; in Maplewood Cemetery, to be particular. Do you hear? She is dead. You see I am perfectly cool. Listen! *I never saw you before.*"

From time to time the woman broke out into piteous sobs, but he held her quietly off, and went on.

"No, Mrs. Crane—if that is your name—thank God, you have *not* found your son. Would you claim a condemned criminal for him? My mother died before I came to this; it was a mercy she did. When did you see your son last? Twenty years ago? Why, he's dead, of course. Left you because he was ashamed of himself, I would bet; straightened up, and made a man of

himself, depend on it. Likely, he thought you wouldn't want him around to make more trouble, and then, when he got square with the world, and everybody looked up to him, he was ashamed to go back home. But he didn't forget his mother—I would bet on that, too. Maybe he's dead—died peaceful and respected; or maybe he's alive and will come home all right yet. Whichever way, it is better than if it was me. Mourn for him, if you will, Mrs. Crane, but never believe that your boy died on the scaffold. Now look steady at me once, look steady, and you'll see *I* am not your boy." Dickie laughed. "Fact is, my name has only been Crane a year or two, since my own got inconvenient."

He released her, and they stood looking at each other. Mrs. Crane's chin trembled; Dickie Crane's was firm. But it was the same chin. Mrs. Crane's lips were parted; Dickie Crane's were compressed. But they were the same lips. Mrs. Crane's eyes stared wildly at her son, while Dickie's were cold and indifferent, but both had the same round, black eyes, with great puffs below them. Once Mrs. Crane cried, "Richard!" again, and started as if to spring toward him, but Dickie's mouth curved into a laugh, and she drew back quickly. Then he said,

"You had better go now, Mrs. Crane, and thank God that *your* boy did not die a murderer."

That assurance will comfort her to her grave, it may be. She gave him one last look, and fell sobbing against the wall. With tears blinding her eyes, she groped her way towards the door.

Shoafersaid dropped his hat as he unlocked the bar and swung the door open; and he kept his head bent, and his eyes on the ground, pretending to look for it, till Mrs. Crane had gone out. Dickie heard his mother's steps on the flagging till she got half way down the corridor. Then he heard her catch her breath in a sob. Then more steps—a few more—and she was gone.

Dickie heard old Mose Elliott, serving for his regular drunk, call to the nigger Rice, in the cell opposite, "Did you notice Peters today? Say, he's fillin' up ready for tomorrow's job, see?"

"Hit doan' take much fo' to brace up Mistah Petahs, sah," chuckled the nigger. "He's done swung up a mighty sight uh gen'lemen, sah. Yes, sah! An' he do it pow'ful sudden an' smaht. Yes, sah! Dat he do. Doan' nevah want Mistah Petahs' necktie roun' dis chile's neck. No, sah!"

Dickie Crane lay upon the bed. His face

was bloodless. We left him there with his anguish and God.

Toward evening he sent for me. He still lay upon the bed. His face—I shall never forget how peaceful and bright and full of light it was. But plainly he was utterly exhausted.

"Lift me up where I can see the sun go down, old man," he said. "I'll be all right again in the morning, but I'm no good at all tonight."

The ladder he had asked for was in its place. "You are a pretty good lift, Dickie," said I, "but we'll see what can be done." And I managed to shoulder him and hold him up to the grating. I have noticed that condemned men always want to see a last sunset.

He looked quietly out over Abdallah Park. The "free for all" was being trotted. In the grand stand, ladies waved gay parasols and handkerchiefs, but Dickie paid no atten-

tion to that; he looked far, far out over the fields beyond, and the peace of the evening reflected itself in his eyes. Presently he said,

"I'm heavy, old man. Better let me down now. It is all right."

I felt my way down the ladder, and laid him on the bed.

"I'll be O. K. in the morning," he said. "Have a good breakfast for me. I am not to see you again, I reckon, am I?"

We talked maybe half a minute, and then he reached me his hand.

"Good by, and God bless you, Peters," he said.

I am Peters.

He smiled up at me, and then dropped off to sleep. In a moment he smiled again, and murmured, "Yes, mamma, I've said them."

That was Thursday night. We hang, Fridays.

*William Bayard Hale.*



## SYMPATHY.

### I.

His voice called cheerily back from the sea ;  
 She smiled through tears, and her moist eyes shone ,  
 She waved her hand to him from the land,  
 Then bravely she turned from the beach—alone.

### II.

His voice called tenderly over the sea,  
 In the long, long hours of the silent night ;  
 And she smiled in sleep as her cheeks flushed deep,  
 And her weary heart once again grew light.

### III.

His voice called fearfully out of the sea,  
 From the horror of wreck, from the breakers' roar ;  
 And her heart stood still, and her lips were chill,  
 As her weak hands clung to the cottage door.

### IV.

His voice called solemnly out from the sea,  
 From depths far under its calm, smooth swell ;  
 And the answer tolled as the surges rolled  
 In a faint, low dirge from the harbor bell.

*Abbie Farwell Brown.*

## THE GREAT MASTERS OF MUSIC.

*The evolution of modern music, from Sebastian Bach to Richard Wagner—The men who gave the world its classics of opera and oratorio, of church and chamber music.*

WITHIN the past few weeks a "color organ" has been constructed. The rates of vibration of the light waves that produce different colors are said to vary in much the same ratio as the intervals in the sound vibrations that produce musical notes. The inventor of the color organ plays the music of the great composers upon the keyboard of his instrument; but instead of producing sounds, colors corresponding to the notes are thrown upon a screen, making rare harmonies in tints.

The eye is as noble an organ as the ear, and in the very necessities of life is more finely trained. The average human being can apprehend through the gift of sight more readily than through that of hearing, and in some cases it is said that the character of an author's work has been more accurately exhibited by the new means than it ever has been before, except to the truly musical ear. It is like having new interpretations, new light upon the lives of the great old masters of music. We seem led by these flashes of light back to their sources of inspiration. We seem to see, as Bach's splendid creations are flashed out before us, the child sitting in the moonlight, creating worlds of vibrating color and sound.

Sebastian Bach, left an orphan with the heritage of two hundred and fifty years of musical ancestry, showed his talent very young. It is told of him that when, as a little lad, a musical score was refused to him, he would wait until his brother, who was an organist with a fine musical library, supposed him asleep. Then he would creep to the cupboard, draw a piece of parchment music through the lattice with his baby hands, and sit in the moonlight without instrument or candle, thrilled by the very sight of the score, entranced by the imagined sound of the melody. The stillnesses of those nights remained with the man, and turned his thoughts toward solemn and lofty strains, making him the first great writer of music for the church.

Luther popularized church music in Ger-

many, and its highest development was reached in his country under Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. It was through these famous masters that it became an essential part of the education of every German, and that German music bears to the classical student a merit and beauty far surpassing that of any other school.

Bach's scores require a cultivated ear for their understanding, and for that reason they lay dormant for a century. In his day, when he himself sat at the organ and interpreted them, even the peasants would gather about the church and say, "It is Bach or the devil who plays." But after his death his work was almost forgotten, and in 1829, when Mendelssohn caused his grand Passion music to be played, it was like the revelation of a lost treasure. Since then many of Bach's three hundred great church compositions have been placed within the reach of the public. He never achieved the breadth and dash of Handel's famous "Messiah," but there are those who maintain that he originated every idea in music that has been in vogue since his day.

Haydn's "Creation" is deserving of a place by the side of Bach's Passion music and Handel's oratorios. Its libretto was taken from Milton's "Paradise Lost," which has always given it a peculiar place among English speaking people, although the words are entirely lost sight of in the sublime and noble music. The whole oratorio is full of fire, of the inspiration of a youthful view of life. It is almost impossible to believe, as we hear the sounding measures of such a chorus as "The Heavens Are Telling," that Haydn, when he composed it, was sixty six years of age, and a dying man.

Haydn's life was as cheerful and natural as his music. He made his way to the highest things by the force of his joyous personality and his genius. England delighted to honor this Austrian master, as she had honored the Prussian Handel; but unlike the composer of "The Messiah," Haydn did not settle in London. Nearly