A DECOY LETTER.

Mr. C. B. Barrett, formerly Chief Inspector of the United States Secret Service, had a queer experience some time age in a beautiful little town way down in Maryland. Mr. Barrett's long experience with this sort of work has taught him just how to dig a pit for his game, as the train neared the village he walked through the smoker to the mail car, asked for the mail clerk, showed his commission and said he had some thing which he wanted done.

"What is it?" asked the clerk nervously, eying the Chief Inspector.

"Where is the mail pouch you throw off at the next stop?"

It was produced.

"Open it." It was opened, for an inspector has absolute authority, not only over mail clerks, but over the postmasters of the larger cities.

Here is a letter," said Mr. Barrett, "addressed to James Lancaster, a fictitious name. The letter contains a \$10 bill. I want you to examine it, take the address, put it in that pouch and lock it with your own hands."

All this was done, and Mr. Barrett went back to his seat in one of the day coaches, confident that the next move in the game would answer his expectations.

The Secret Service agent stood upon the platform of the mail car when the train stopped and the pouch was thrown off, when he at once stepped to the platform. A boy, whose business it was to carry the mail, took the pouch over his shouler and started up the village street, never dreaming that a Chief Inspec tor of the Postal Service was following him on the other side of the street and was watching him like a hawk, while seeming to watch nothing. It was a beautiful June day, the birds were singing, and although it was high noon the leafy, lotty trees lining the quiet street cast such deep. cool shadows that Mr. Barrett did not find walking unpleasant. For about a quarter of a mile the boy kept on, followed by the Inspector, and then turned into a small frame building, with a white and black sign over the door labelled "Postoffice."

"Now," said Mr. Barrett, inwardly, "my letter has reached its destination."

There was a crowd of visitors inside of the little Post-office and outside who swarmed towards the desk "to get their mail," and Mr. Barrett waited some fifteen minutes until they had all gone before he entered place, and saw a handsome girl, about seventeen years old, dressed in an old-fashioned bodice and light colored skirt, sitting behind the wire grating in a rocking chair sewing.

"Is there a letter here for James Lancaster?" said the Inspector, and every one who knows his face and figure will not wonder that the girl took him for a well to do country

"No," she said, after sorting some letters in a case marked "L. "Won't you look again?" and she

didlook, but with no better result. "I am sure the letter must have come," said Mr. Barrett, and I, who know him well, can imagine how gently he said it. 'It's not here.

"Are you the Postmaster?" "No. I am the assistant. My father is the Postmaster." "Who opened the pouch that came bo the last train?"

"I did." "No one to help you?"

"No, sir. The girl's bright eyes looked as innocently at Mr. Barrett as any girl's bright eyes ever looked at any

"Maybe it stuck in the pouch. I've heard of such things," he said. "Won't you look?" She took the pouch, tarned it up-

tele down, shook it and looked inside. 'Won't you let me come in and

help you look for it?" said Mr. Bar-'No. No one is allowed in here. The Chief Inspector drew from his pocket his commission from the United States Government, with its offi-

it to the girl, asking as she read it, "Can I come in now? 'Yes," blushing. "I beg your par-

cial signatures and seals, and showed

'You did perfectly right, my child," said the venerable agent of the Secret

There was a board partition six feet high beyond the wired window, and a gate in the end of this partition, toward which the Postmaster's daughter went, but Mr. Barrett thought she moved very slowly. At last she turned the key in the lock, opened the solid gate and admitted Japan, where, to his astonishment, the Inspector. He walked forward he had seen more than three hundred a few feet and looked around

There was nothing in sight but bare deal shelves and the letter boxes, and he knew his mission was not

"I mailed a letter myself to James
Lancoster," he said at last. "That
is a fletitious name, 'Lancaster' being my mother's maiden name. That
letter was put in that pouch in my

purpose, then, would they wish to
use this monstrous cauchron?" asked
the first traveler, sneeringly. "For
cooking the cubbage-plants, sir, such
as you were telling us about just
new," was the answer

Secretary also sent to flancroft this
letter."

presence. When that pouch was put off at the station I followed it and kept it in sight until it was taken into the Postoffice. Now you say you opened it alone, that no one else touched it. Where is my letter?"

"I never saw st. sir. If you doubt me you can search me."

Mr. Barrett said that he would not do that, and that he had never done such a thing to a woman, and he began to pace the floor in deep thought. The girl, more beautiful than ever in her excitement, sat down in the rocking chair, crossed her limbs and began to rock.

"Call your mother, and she can earch you in my presence," said he at length.

"My mother is dead." Again the Secret Service agent paced the floor. He looked into an adjoining room, brightly and neatly furnished, and wondered whether the girl could have secreted the letter there while she pretended to be going to the gate to let him in. As he paced back and forth he noticed the swinging feet of the Postmaster's daughter, that one of her stockings had sagged down, and that under that stocking

was the shape of an envelope. "Your stocking has dropped," he

The girl turned scarlet and white, and stopped rocking. She caught her breath, as if to faint. "Now, give me my letter," said the

Inspector. She took it from its hiding place, handed it to him and burst into a

flood of passionate tears. The decoy letter, as is usual in cases of this sort, had been fixed so that it would be apparent to anyone that money was enclosed. It had

"Where is your father?" asked Mr. Barrett.

"In the garden," sobbed the girl. Mr. Barrett went out into the garden, tound the old man hoeing and brought him in, and when he was told all he bowed his white head and sobbed with his child. The inspector learned that the girl had admirers, as was natural; that her father was very miserly, not giving her even the money needed for a bright bit of ribbon, a new hat or a new dress; that she had been tempted to take money from the mails for bits of finery, and had done so. Mr. Barrett bitterly accused the old man of being the one to blame, and he acknowledged it.

"I suppose you will arrest her?" said the girl's father.

"Will you make restitution of the sum (it was about \$10), she has taken on account of your miserli-

"Yes; here it is," and it was handed "Will you arrest her?" "If I did what would be her future"

No. Unless you or she tells this it will never be known in the village." Inspector Barrett left after forcing the old man to promise his daughter should never be compelled or allowed to handle the mails again, and when he submitted his full report to the

ton his course was fully approved. Patti and the Burglar.

head of the department at Washing-

It is said that shortly before Mme. Patti left Wales for her South American tour had a thrilling experience with a burglar. The songstress was alone in her chamber preparing to retire for the night, when she heard a sound in an adjoining room, as if someone were moving about. Patti hastily donned a wrapper, and walked boldly into the room from which the sounds came, and stood face to face with a gigantic burglar. He wore a mask to conceal his features, and in his hand he carried a heavy club. The plucky woman asked him what

he was doing there.
"Don't you see," he replied in a broad Welsh dialect, "I am stealing your diamonds?"

And he held up to her astonished

She simply walked across the room, pressed an electric button to summon the servant. Instead of the servant, however, Signor Nicolini appeared on the scene. The burglar attempted game was trustrated by Patti. She the air. Nicolini and the burglar then clinched, and in the struggle that ensued the enterprising but altogether too candid thief was pitched out of a second story window. He descended gracefully and broke a leg. He was found to be a peasant whom Patti had frequently befriended.— London Cor. New York Press.

Two Great Curiosities.

A traveler once with great micas ness related to a large company that he had traveled through all too world, and had seen at least one curiosity which had never yet been mentioned by any author.

This wonder, according to his assertion, was a cabbage-plant so large that under one single leaf fifty armed horsemen in battle array could station themselves and perform their evolutions. No one who heard this evaggeration deemed it worthy of refutation; but one said, with the utmost composure and coolness. that, he, too, had been somewhat of a traveler, and had been as far as he had seen more than three hundred coppersmiths at work upon an im- tain Christians who landed in New mense cauldron, and that five hun- England: "They praised tiod and dred men were to be employed to fell upon their knees—then they fell smooth and polish it. "For what upon the aborigi-nese." The expurpose, then, would they wish to Secretary also sent to Bancroft this use this monstrous cauldron?" asked letter:

Segato's Ghastly Table.

Fifty years ago or thereabouts Giuseppe Segato, a Florentine plosician, announced that he had discovered a way of petrifying the human body so as to preserve its form without change of appearance. He submitted specimens of his work to the grand duke of Tuscany, who thought well of the discovery, and offered to buy it from Segato. The physician refused the offer, and while he waited for a higher biddied, either suddenly or after a very short illness. He never revealed his process, and his secret was buried with him.

The following description of Segato's best known specimen, first published about a year age in a medical journal, has since appeared in almost every newspaper in the country:

In the Pitti palace, at Florence, is a table which for originality in the matter of construction, and ghastliness in conception, is probably without a rival. It was made by Guiseppe Segato, who passed several years of his life in its manufacture. To the casual observer it gives the impression of a curious mosaic of marbles of different shades and colors, for it looks like polished stone. In reality it is composed of human muscles and viscera. No less than a hundred bodies were requisitioned for the material. The table is round and about a yard in diameter, with a pedestal and four claw feet, the whole being formed of petrified humam remains. The ornaments of the pedestal are made form the intestines, the claws with hearts, livers and lungs, the natural color of which is preserved. The table top is constructed of muscles artistically arranged, and it is bordered with upwards of a hundred eyes, the effect of which is said to be highly artistic, since they retain all their luster, and seem to follow the observer. Segato died about 50 years ago. He obtained bodies from the hospitals and indurated them by impregnation with mineral salts.

Curiosity led the present writer, when in Florence recently, to obtain a view of this curious piece of furniture. What he saw was so entirely different from what he had been led to expect, that he is moved to tell

the readers of the Sun about it.

In the first place, the "table" is not in the Pitti palace, but in the anatomical collection of the new St. Mary's Hospital; there the present writer had an opportunity of examining it, in company with Dr. Stanislao Bianchi, who is in charge of the collection.

The "table" is oval, of what looks like mahogany; it is about 18 inches long by 12 wide, and consists of a top only, it has no appearance what-ever of ever having had a pedestal. The human putrifactions on it consist or thin of small sections or slices about 1-64 of an inch think, which are veneered upon it; some are diamond shaped, some oval, others square, with surface like fine grained wood, all arranged in a symmetrical rectangular oblong design; there is a border around it, presenting at first sight the appearance of a checker board. Some of these veneers, by the effects of dampness, have become detached; one or two have fallen off altogether. Prof. Bianchi pointed out that these were small bits of organisms of the human body, such as the loins, kidneys, liver, spleen. lungs, skin, all of natural color, and that probably, in order to get them of small size they had been taken from boys' cadavers. There were, however, no human eyes

in the border or anywhere else. Dr. Bianchi showed other specimens of Segato's process-a female scalp of perfectly natural color, with eyes the most beautiful bracelet which long flowing hair attached; a womshe possessed. Patti did not scream. an's breast, fair and white, perfectly life-like. In these cases the parts preserved were like medium pasteboard in thickness and firmness. He showed also petrified reptiles, fish, and separate parts of the human body, all to strike him with his club, but his prepared by Segato, and doubtless submitted by him when he offered to grasped the club as it was raised in sell his secret to the Tuscan govern-

It was difficult to get an expression of opinion from the doctor about the value of Segato's process, and the consequent importance to science of its loss. "It has not been discovered since; it is a pity that it still remains unknown," was all that the kind and courteous professor would say on the Segato asked rather a subject. large price, perhaps, but he knew his own business, doubtless.

The "table" is not seen by many

visitors to Florence, or even by many Florentines; the custodians of Segato's specimens, even if they do not discourage sightseers, certainly evince no great enthusiasm for the objects of their care.-New York Sun.

A Humorous Senator.

Senator Evarts has a command a cententious humor that is rarely hinted at in such of his oblong periotls as are most familiar to the publie. A correspondent says that he remarked of Rhode Island that "it was settled by the Dutch; the Yankees settled the Dutch;" and of cer-

The Judge and the Baby.

The Judge of the County Court was

He had adjourned his court, the jurors had gone home, and he was left alone with the Sheriff.

No- not entirely alone-a sallowfaced woman in a limp and faded gingham sunbonnet and a limper and more faded homespun dress crouched down by the door of the Court House with a baby in her lap.

The Judge stepped outside for a moment and looked down the one straggling street which constituted the main thoroughfare of Blue Rock. A dreary, drizzling rain was falling,

and there was scarcely a sign of life in the little village.

"Jim!" In response to the call the sheriff followed the Judge-he was a big, tall fellow, with a good natured face, and his shambling walk impressed one with an idea of his laziness and gen-

eral incapacity. "Jim," said the Judge, "I'll be durned if I know what to do with

Sally Black. The sheriff hitched up his baggy jeans trousers and then scratched his

"We're in a fix, Jedge," was his re ply, and a broad grin spread over his

Undoubtedly the Judge was in a fix-he knew that well enough without hearing from the sheriff. Sally Black had been convicted of vagrancy in his court, and he had sentenced her to six months' imprisonment-a sentence which was to be carried out by knocking down the prisoner to the highest bidder.

As a rule, the prisoners disposed of in this manner were negroes, and the farmers of the country were always ready to bid for them and put them to work on their plantations, where they were treated like the other hands until their term of service expired.

The farmers around Blue Rock were a simple-minded, old-fashioned set of people, and the county court in their eyes was not a mill ofcriminal justice it was merely an agency through which they were supplied with laborers. They wanted Sally Black put through, as they expressed it, because she was the only regular tramp and beggar in the country-a goodfor-nothing white woman, who had come from no one knew where, and was evidently going to the devil.

But when their wish was gratified when the forlorn woman inher rags and desolation had been tried, convicted and sentenced, the honest countrymen slipped out of the court room with downcast faces and started homeward. Sheriff Jim spent an hour on a stump in front of the temple of justice vainly endeavoring to auction off his human merchandise, but nobody would offer a bid.

Of course it was no feeling of compassion for Sally Black that they held them back—it was the baby! Billy Betts would take her, said the Judge, coming out of a brown

"All right, Jedge," answered Jim.

His Honor looked inside the door. Sally Black still sat on the floor region swears by the Chicago market leaning against the wall with her that the place is sure enough hauntbaby in her lap. She did not look up at the Judge's stern face, but the little girl did, and began to laugh and crow in a spasm of delight.

The Judge hastily beat a retreat. "Jim," he said, "you needn't go after Betts. "All right, Jedge."

"The fact is, Betts is not the right sort to have a convict; he's a hard man-too rough, you know." 'Jesso, Jedge.

"We'll lock her up in jail until tomorrow," said the other. The Judge walked inside the court house and stooped down to tell the woman of his determination.

A pair of blue eyes flashed at him in riotou merriment, and a pair of pink fists struck at him and then gered; men of rank swaggered, genthe child's long fingers entwined themselves in his long beard.

'Oo's oo?" chirruped the baby. His Honor pushed his captor back, very gently, and then looked at the

"She's a peart gal," remarked The Judge bolted out of the door, followed by the faithful officer.

'Jim, this is getting serious.' "Looks like a tough old case," volunteered the Sheriff.

"I can't lock that baby up in our dirty old jail, and I won't How will you fix it, Jedge?" asked the other. "Under the law we can't

bid for the prisoner. "I know what I'll do," said the Judge-"I say, Bob, come here!" shouted to a man on the other side of the street,

l'ob crossed over very reluctantly. He was a tenant on a small farm belonging to the judge, and he was behind with his rent.

He expected to be dunned, but he was mistaken. In a word the situation was explained to him.

But I can't bid," he objected, "I "D-n it, man!" shouted the Judge, offer a dollar. But I can't pay that-I awe you

nev dollars now. Confound you." ros.coff the Judge. Do as I tell you, and you shall have your own time about paying the

back rent. "All right," replied the fellow slowly. work, and I cannot afford to feed "See here, Bob," growled the Judge. with a determined look, "you just

put this woman and her baby in the little cabin on the hill. They won't starve. I'll send them enough to

Bob had no more to say. It was a good bargain for him, and in less than five minutes he was marching down the street, followed by Sally Black and the baby.

The next day the Judge sent in his resignation to the Governor.

To his friends he made a very satisfactory explanation. "Under our special act," he said, "I receive no salary. I am paid in fees, and I don't get any. Then I have to lend the prisoners money to pay their fines, and it is getting so

that I will have to support some of

the convicts. This court business will run me in debt if I stick to it, and that is why I resigned."
So Sally Black and the baby were quartered in a comfortable log cabin on the Judge's plantation, and their rations were sent to them every week from the big white house over

the river. What became of them after Sally's

term was out? The Blue Rock people would laugh at such a queston. They knew the Judge. Sally Black needs no written lease- no contract with witnesses. She will stay in the little cabin as long as she and the baby like it, and the neighbors think she is settled there for life.-Atlanta Constitution.

Cowboy and Spook.

beyenne Leader This is hardly the season for ghost stories, but one which reached the ears of a reporter the other evening may entertain those fond of spooklore. The Leader can vouch for the reliability of all the persons mentioned, except the ghost itself. The narra-

tive runs in this wise Joe Henley, a rollicking cowboy who rides the range for the Carlisle Cattle Company, was engaged in transferring a bunch of horses from one ranch on the Sweetwater to another and passed the historical Independence rock after nightfall. When near the noted landmark Joe was nearly scared out of his wits and his charges almost stampeded by the appearance of a ghastly apparation across the trail. The figure was that of a man and white in color. The outlines were clearly defined but the cowboy is unable to describe the costume of the unearthly tramp.

Healey, who is a quick-witted chap of great nerve, hurried his horse to a corral, about a mile distant, and returned to visit the uncanny thing. The goblin damned, like the village maiden, was over modest and kept its distance. At times it floated rapidly through the air and again locomoted stendy by jerks, as the toad walks. The adventurous puncher proposed to drive the ghost into the horse herd and then rope it. He was unsuccessful, however, but hausted his mount and emptied his six shooters in the attempt, and what more could be required of an honest cowboy?

is usually the finally melted away, leaving the purstudy. "I think, Jim, I'll send you suers completely mystified. Anoth-down to the house." venture in the same locality last year, and every range-rider in that

Swagger in the Old Days,

From Besant's "Fifty Years Ago."

There is still swagger, even in these days; cavalry officers in garrison towns are still supposed to swagger. Eton boys swagger in their own little village: undergraduates swagger. The putting on of "side" by the way, is a peculiarly modern form of swagger; it is the assumption of certain qualities and powers which are considered as deserving of respect.
Swagger, fifty years ago, was a conser kind of thing. Officers swaggered; men of rank swaggered, genqualities and powers which are contlemen in military frogs-there are no longer any military frogs-swaggered in taverns, clubs, and in the streets. The adoption of quiet manners; the wearing of rank with unobtrusive dignity; the possession of wealth without ostentation; of wit without the desire to be always showing it-these are points in which we are decidedly in advance of our fathers There was a great deal of cuff and collar, stock and breastpin about the young fellows of the day. were oppressive in their gallantry; in public places they asserted themselves; they were loud in their talk.

A Pike County Story.

The Paupack Creek, in Pike County, Pennsylvania, is the dwelling place of a monster more wonderful than the sea serpent, if one can believe the stories told by people in the vicinity. They describs the beast as having a head like an ape and square shoulders like a human being. From the shoulders of the creature there extend legs arms, which terminate in great claws. The body of the mon. tend legs arms, which terminate in great claws. The body of the mon-ster, which is fully six feet in length, is of a reddish brown tint, very like that of a lizard, and terminates in a tail like that of a fish. The creature's body is bare of any covering, but about the head and neck is a mane of reddish hair. It is needless to say that the county is excited over the strange animals. Various parties surround the creek each day in hopes of capturing the beast, but up to the present time their endeavors have not been crowned with success.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON IV, APRIL 26-THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Golden Text: "Ye Cannot Serve God and Mammon," Luke xvi, 13 - The Relations of the Present Life to the Future.



UR LESSON for today includes from the 19th to the 31st verses of Luke, chapter 16.

study the series of parables recorded only by Luke, illuminating a people needed to know and feel. There are many sides to truth, and there is danger of emphasizing one to the exclusion of others.
In the last lesson we

saw as in a heavenly vision the love of the Father and hope for the lost through repentence; and heard the joyful songs of the angels

over the returning wanderer.

Today we see in the rarable of the unjust steward how to make this word the means of reaching the everlasting habitations; and in that of the rich man and Lazarus the danger of eternal loss if we misuse this world

and its goods.

Place in the Life of Christ.—Still in the
Perean ministry, about three months before the crucifixion.

Jesus is giving a series of personal and notional instructions with vivid illustrations.

The full text of today's lesson is as follows:

19. There was a certain rich man, which There was a certain rich man, which clothed in purple and fine linen, and

fared sumptuously every day:
20. And there was a certain beggar named
Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of And desiring to be fed with the crumbs

which fell from the rich man's table: mo 22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died and was buried.

23. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24. And he cried out and said, Father

Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Laza-tus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. 26. And beside all this, between us and

you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot: neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.
27. Then he said. I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my

28. For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29. Abraham saith unto him. They have

29. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. 30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

21. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Explanations to today's lesson follow:

Explanations to today's lesson follow:

19. "A certain rich man." His name is not given, rerhaps to show that in heaven's estimation it has no worth. "Was clothed in purple." His outer robe was made of silk or wool dyed purple, very costly, and worn by kings and heroes. "And fine linen." The under-garment, or tunic, of fine linen.—Godet. It was made from the Expytian byssus a flax that grew on the banks of the Nile. "And fared sumptuously every day." Literally. "making merry every day, splendidly." It indicates a life of banquets.

20. "Laid at his gate." The entrance from

a life of banquets.

20. "Laid at his gate." The entrance from the the outside to the first court, "so that the rich man saw the wretched object every time he man saw the wretched object every time he

sores." "Ulcerated all over," so that he do nothing to gain his living. 21. "And desiring." In the Greek the word is used of the prodigal who would fain eat of the husks. He was eager; he set his ardent desires upon "the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." Lazarus was not where he could have picked them us as they where he could have picked them us as they fell; he would share the leavings with the dogs when all the garbage and remnants were thrown out into the street, after the common practice.—Prof. I. Hall. "Moreover" (R. V... "yea even") "the dogs came," in strange contrast with the other brute clothed in purple. The dogs showed kindness where the rich man was indifferent. was indifferent.

22. "The beggar died." Nothing is said of his burial, because probably his body "was without honor thrown into a ditch," but his without honor thrown into a ditch." but his soul, his real self, was "carried by the angels." blessed bearers, glorious funeral train! "into Abraham's bosom." the stype of Paradise, where Abraham was the host of a great feast (Matt. xxii, 2: Rev. xix, 7-9); and "to lie in his bosom, as St. John in that of our Lord (John xiii, 23), was to be there as the most favored guest."—Ellicott.

connected as it is with what is immediately to follow.—Trench. The last prvice his wealth could give him was a burial "crowned with the vain and extravagant pomp of his life." with rich men and not angels for his pall-bearers.

pall-bearers.

23. "And in hell" (R. V., Hades). The unseen world, including both the Paradise of the good and Gehenna, "the hell of fire" for the wicked. It was "the grave, the intermediate condition of the dead between death and the final judgment."—Cambridge Bible. "Heing in torments," "tormented in this fiame," not literal fire, for a spirit cannot be touched by flame, but "an anguish of soul as intolerable as the touch of earthly flame is to the nerves of the mortal body."—Ellicott. "And seeth Abraham afar off." So represented, because both in condition and character they were as far apart as possible. "And Lasarus in his bosom." Reclining in honor at the banquet of bilms.—G. W. Clark.

24. "And he cried and said." "We have

FIGS AND THISTLES.

Truth never blushes when you look

The devil gets all the votes, some men run for office. Don't fool with sin. It is safer to play with a rattlesnake.

The people who talk the most, do not always say the most. Every true prayer begins with a right

feeling toward men.

Good furtune does not always ride in old-mounted carriage.