

southern Kansas, southern Missouri and the Indian Territory; and it was not long before he was prepared to reinstate his Indian contingent in their former holdings. A council of war was thereupon called to consider ways and means and settle details of the reoccupation, old Opothloholo presiding; and it soon became apparent that an essential feature of the program, to the mind of the Indians, was a strict retaliation on the enemy; the matter of the women and children having, it appears, stuck in the minds of the exiles.

When this became clear, Colonel Furnas arose in the council and undertook a remonstrance; he pleaded against the barbarity of such a course, representing that it was not the enemies' women and children that had offended against them, and that consequently they were not the ones upon whom vengeance should fall. The colonel's views were listened to, and a respectful silence followed.

Then Opothloholo spoke. "If we have a bad breed of dogs," he said, "the sure way to get rid of them is to kill off all the females."

Then Billy Bowlegs spoke. "If our children are suffering with vermin, to cleanse them we must kill both the young and old," he said.

Then another silence followed, and the eyes of the assemblage were turned upon Colonel Furnas. It was felt that he had thus far spoken as a man, and not as the representative of the United States. He on his side found some difficulty in raising his eyes to meet those of the deeply-injured men around him. He knew their stories, and knew what special picture was at that moment standing before the vision of each one of them; the wrongs were theirs, the judgment his. The silence became prolonged; but finally the colonel lifted his gaze from the ground, gave a long look around the circle, and slowly shook his head; it was not to be.

And it was not.

**INTERESTING,
IF TRUE.** The French still cling to the manner of punishing criminals which Herod used on John the Baptist, except that they have improved machinery for the purpose; and it is a question which their writers are always fond of discussing, whether life ceases at once upon the severing of the spinal cord, or whether it may not continue for two or three minutes or longer. This has no doubt been a subject for speculation in all ages; there is recorded in the poetic memorials of our own ancestors a curious experiment in regard to it.

We are told that one morning in the year 994 one of our piratical Danish forefathers was sitting on a log by the sea's rim, after breakfast. His long hair was entwined with the twigs of a tree-branch, which was bent down from the tree to him; a Norwegian acquaint-

ance of his, named Thorkell, was standing near him with an axe; it was a good axe, and had taken the heads off some eighteen Danes already that morning. Their conversation, as was perhaps natural, turned upon death. "There is a thing I have always wanted to know," said the Dane on the log, whose name has not come down to us; "that is whether a man dies as soon as his head is off; and I'll tell you what we'll do; I will hold my knife in my hand, thus, and as soon as I feel that my head is gone I will, if possible, stick it into you; thus we will know the right of the matter, once and for all." The thing pleased Thorkell, especially as there was the suspicion of an adventure in it for himself; and it was so done. The spectators being ready, Thorkell gave a wide sweep with his axe, and the tree sprang erect, with the head that had devised the experiment dangling among its boughs; but the hand that was to execute it dropped, and the expectant knife fell to the ground. Considering all the circumstances, this would appear to be conclusive as to the body. The theory to which the French are so oddly attached is, however, that the head lives, retaining perhaps full consciousness, for a longer or shorter time after it is detached; as simple and horrible an idea as probably ever entered the mind of man. For more experiences are possible to a head in that condition than one would think at the first glance; it might feel the executioner pull its hair as he held it up for the crowd to view; it might hear the shouts of the multitude, and seeing the well-known street, recall the times it had run about it with the body; and it might perceive an odor of fresh blood.

The other adventures of that pleasant morning by the sea are not without interest, as showing what kind of men our fathers were. Our teachers have always preferred telling us about the fathers of the Jews and Greeks.

While he was resting Thorkell asked the next man on the log what he thought of death on the whole. The Dane replied that he thought nothing of it, one way or the other. "Here," he said, "you chop me square in the face, and let all the boys observe whether I so much as wink." Thorkell split his head to the chin, and the by-standers all bore witness that he appeared to have minded it no more than a fleabite.

Next was a young man named Sigurd, known to be very vain of his person. He asked that instead of tying his long yellow curls to a tree, or having any of the meaner men hold them up, some distinguished warrior might perform that office for him. A follower of Hakon, the great Jarl, undertook to do so; but when the axe-stroke was discharged, Sigurd plunged his head forward so vigorously that the blade missed it, and cut off both hands of the obliging Norwegian instead. This was a

joke indeed; the Norwegians could not sufficiently applaud it, and it was resolved to let Sigurd live, in the hope that he would do some more funny things, no doubt.

This did not suit Thorkell. There were only fourteen of the Danes left, and he had counted on using his axe on all of them. So he made a rush at them, while the rest of the party were still pounding Sigurd on the back and organizing their witticisms upon the man who had held his hair.

There was among the Danes a young man named Vagn, who had been a pirate from his twelfth year, being able at that age to hold his own against a grown warrior; he had come on the present expedition with the recorded purpose of carrying off Thorkell's daughter. Seeing the old man and his axe coming, he threw himself before his feet, tripping him up; then he found means to cut his bonds upon the edge of the axe, and when his hands were free was able to wrest the weapon from Thorkell's grasp and give him his death wound with it.

If Sigurd's feat had tickled the Norwegians, this compelled their entire admiration; and one of the chiefs approached the young man and asked if he would accept his life from his hands. Vagn was at first backward about taking presents from a stranger; but learning that he who made the offer was of suitable rank, being the son of Jarl Hakon himself, he finally gave his consent, on condition that the twelve who remained of his party should be allowed to go too. The end of it was that they all sailed away together on the best of terms; and it is recorded that Vagn married Thorkell's daughter according to his vow.

The number of
NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS OF THE THE CONSERVATIVE
CONSERVATIVE. TIVE which you
get has been paid
for in gold standard money.

THE CONSERVATIVE is not circulated gratuitously. It drafts no one into the ranks of its subscribers by sending copies with the intention of presenting a bill later on.

It has been paid for. It is sent you by those who believe in the teachings of THE CONSERVATIVE and desire to increase the numbers of its readers. THE CONSERVATIVE is an independent journal.

Grumblers are a necessary antithesis to contented citizenship. There must be bad to contrast with good. There must be disease to give the race an appreciation of health. There must be indolence and intemperance to illustrate the value of industry and moderation.

If all humanity became good and healthy and wise tomorrow morning what would the clergy, the medical faculty and the lawyers find to do?

There must be sinners, invalids and fools upon which to subsist the learned professions.