

THE

*Ward*  
*Daniel Edgely*

# TRIAL AND BIOGRAPHY

OF

# RETURN J. M. WARD,

**The most Extraordinary Murderer**

NAMED IN THE CALENDAR OF CRIME.

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CONTAINING

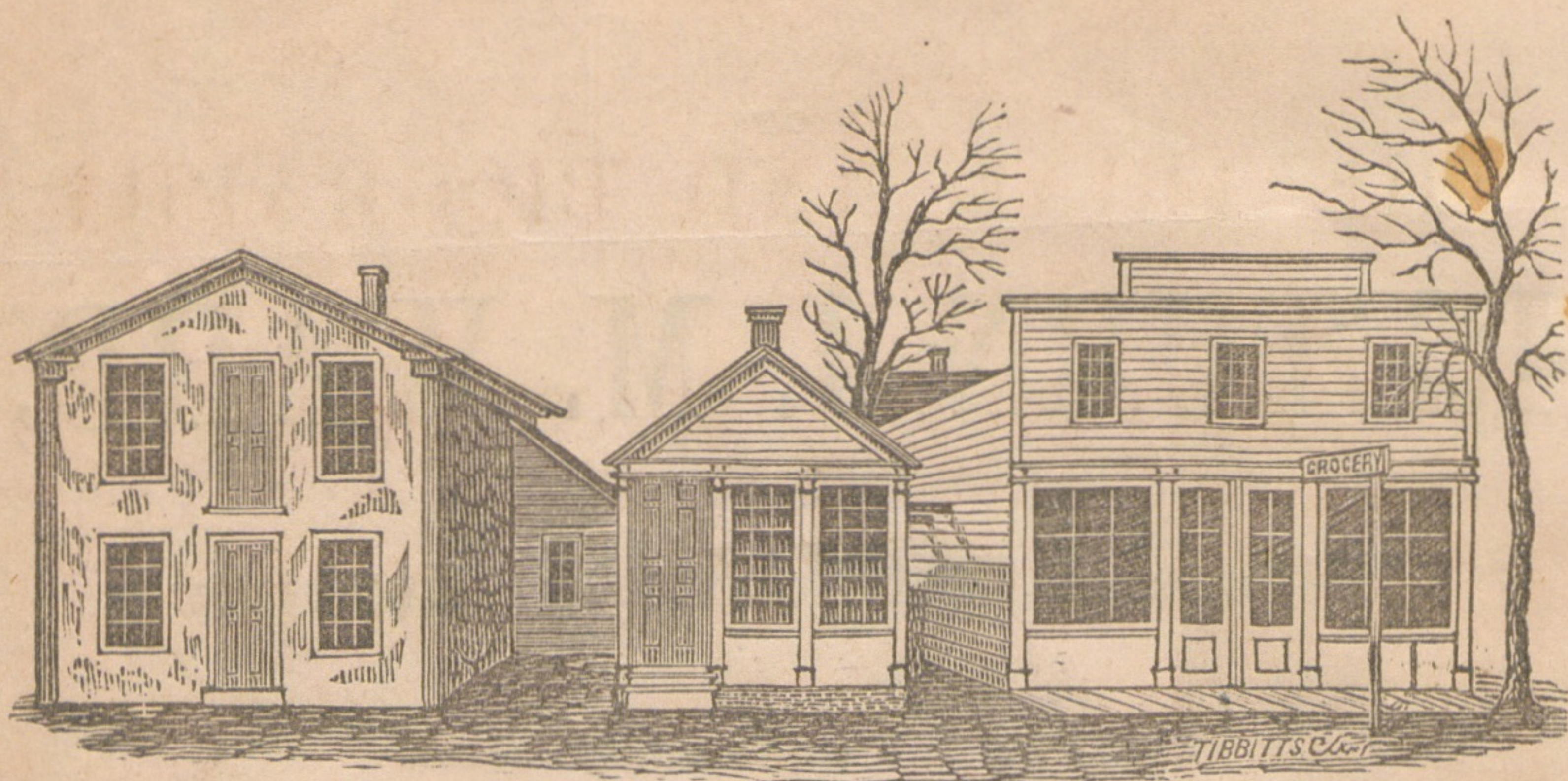
A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE—A SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE ON TRIAL—  
THE SENTENCE OF THE JUDGE—HIS FIRST AND LAST CONFESSION,  
WHEREIN HE TELLS HOW HE KILLED HIS WIFE AND HOW HE BURNED  
THE BODY, WITH THE DETAILS OF TWO OTHER HORRID MURDERS—  
HIS PORTRAIT—AN ACCURATE DRAWING OF THE HOUSE IN WHICH SHE  
WAS MURDERED, AND THAT PORTION OF THE JAW BONE IDENTIFIED  
AT THE TRIAL.

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CLEVELAND O.:

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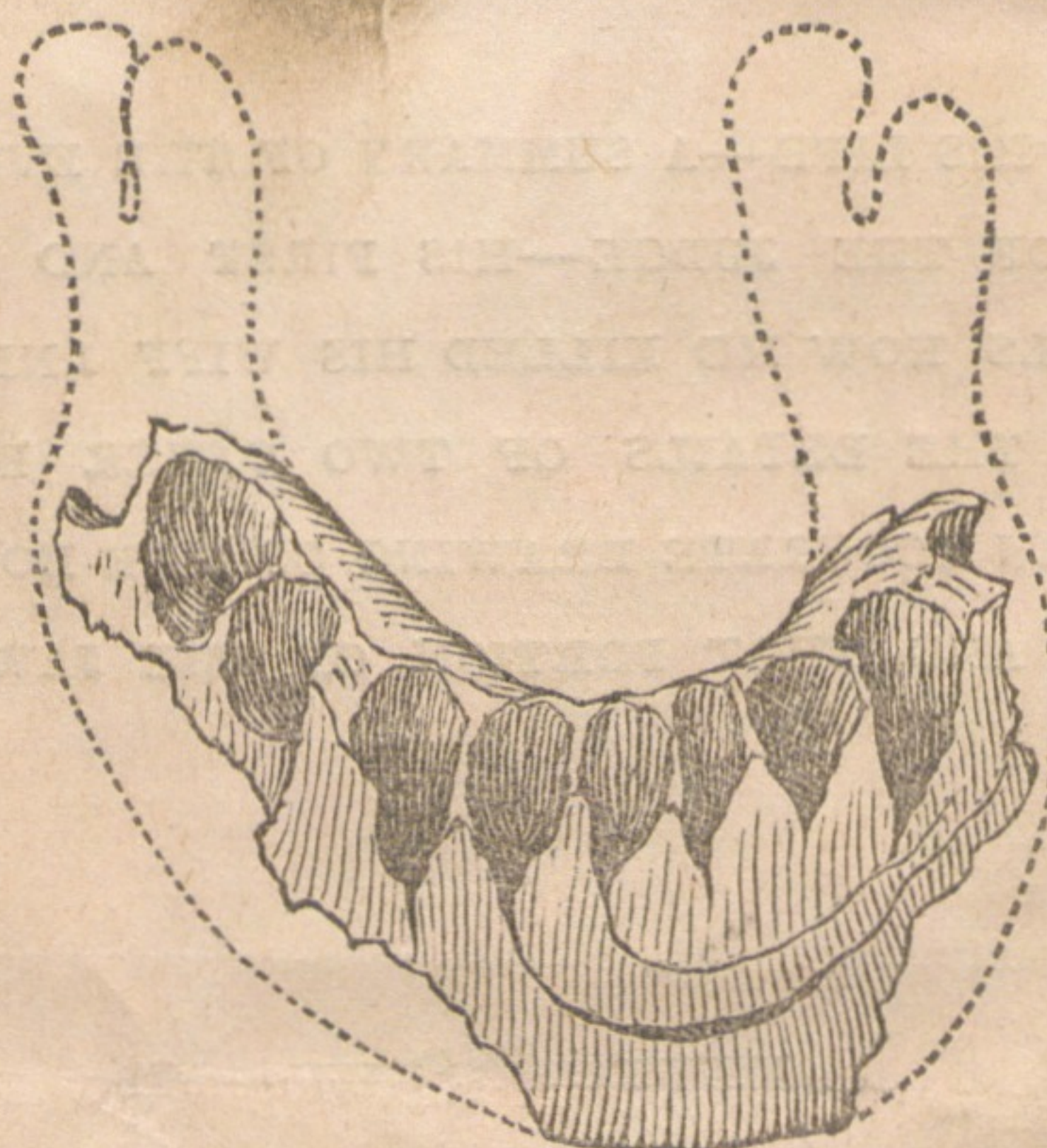




*Allen's House.*

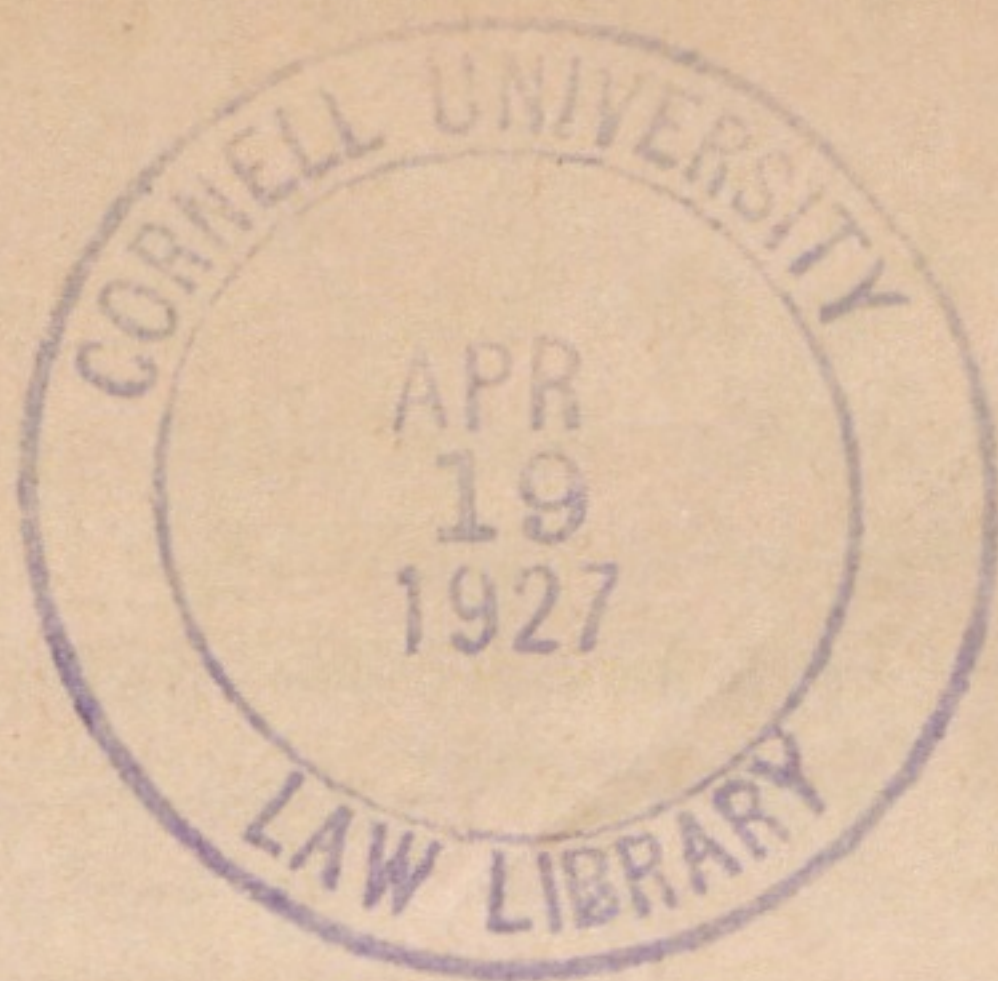
*Ward's House.*

*Dewey's House.*



*Portion of jaw bone identified on the trial.*





# THE TRIAL AND BIOGRAPHY

OF

**RETURN J. M. WARD.**

WITHOUT a parallel in all that is recorded of crime, stands the murder of MRS. OLIVE WARD by her husband, *Return J. M. Ward*, of whose trial and life we purpose presenting a brief sketch.

This extraordinary homicide was committed in Sylvania, a village of not more than three or four hundred inhabitants, but of far more than ordinary quiet and beauty. An academy of learning casts an air of refinement and grace over its society, and numerous churches, lifting their spires heavenward, speak well for the piety and consequent morality of the place. Lying ten miles west of Toledo, on the Michigan Southern Rail Road, its beautiful lawns and tasteful residences daily attract and delight the eyes of a thousand passing travelers. Inspired by the genius of the place, it requires no vivid imagination in the visitor to fancy that the wood nymphs from the adjoining groves are its presiding spirits; and the scholar, looking beyond to where the husbandman from beneath some spreading tree, surveys his herds feeding on his green pastures, and his harvests ripening in distant fields, dreams with rapture of Italian skies, or Cremonian plains, and turns with new delight to scan the beautiful measures of the Bucolics—

“Tytire, tu patulæ recubaus sub tegmine fagi.”

In the midst of such society, and surrounded by all this quiet and rural beauty, from which one would suppose every unholy passion banished, the dark episode we sketch takes its rise.

This threefold murderer and wife burner first saw the light on the morning of the 18th day of June, A. D., 1812—that patriotic day on which war was declared against Great Britain. His first breath was of Ohio's air, and drawn among her Puritans in



Medina county. For the brief space of six years he enjoyed a mother's care and love—a period, as he confesses, whose sunshine still glows bright on memory's page, even seen through the gloom of later years. Without stopping here to moralize, we must be permitted to suggest that the great misfortune of his life was, though—

“ A mother's care shielded his infant innocence with prayers,”

Yet later—

“ No mother's guardian hand his youth maintained ;  
Called forth his virtues and from vice restrained.”

His father, upon whose head the frosts of more than ninety winters have descended, still lives in blissful ignorance alike of his son's crimes and of his ignominious fate. Having premised thus much, we pass to the chief incidents of a life which, though startling beyond compare, but, for his recent trial and conviction, had closed “ *unhonored and unsung*.”

As his graceful form passed through the various stages of boyhood, his bent began to mould itself after the peculiar type, and his dark eye to dilate with the luxurious fancies of a Don Juan. It was not until after a rheumatic affection had clubbed both his feet and crippled him for life, that his mind began to pass through a Byronic misanthropy into the cruel malevolence of the murderer. Having learned the tailor's trade, he married at an early age, and removed to Planktown, in Highland county, where he added to his occupation of tailoring, or rather superseded it with that of landlord of a country tavern.

It was here he first tried his hand at crime. There was boarding with him a young man, by name, Norman Hall, who kept a country store. Ward knew of Hall's intention of going to New York to purchase goods, and supposing he must have a large amount of ready money on hand, determined to murder him and possess himself of the treasure. Hall slept in the store, and the night before he was to start to New York, Ward gets out of bed, conceals a lantern under his overcoat, and goes to the store. He had during the afternoon, taken the precaution to go to the store, watching his opportunity, and unperceived, had unbolted the back door. On arriving there in the night, he found it as he had left it, and entered without difficulty. Provided with an iron bar of suitable weight and length, he approached the bed where Hall lay unconscious, and despatched him with a few heavy blows, after which he held a pillow to his mouth to prevent any noise which he feared he might make in the death struggle. He then dragged the body behind the counter and proceeded to look for the treasure. On examining the drawer, he was chagrined to find only a few pieces of change ; but after



some search he found his pocket-book under the bolster of the bed, well filled with money. Bolting the back door, he goes out at the front, locks it and buries the key. He concealed the money, only using it very sparingly, many months afterwards.

The next morning some of the boarders enquired for Hall. Ward replied, "Perhaps he is sick." Soon after some one who had been at the store to trade, finding it closed, came to the tavern to learn the cause. All hands, Ward apparently more eager than the rest, went to the store and breaking open a window, Ward was named as the most proper person to enter. He did so, and after some affected search, found the body, and called out in cunning astonishment, that Hall was murdered.

Two Irishmen were suspected, and Ward had them arrested, but no satisfactory evidence appearing against them, they were discharged. Since his conviction, one of these men visited Ward in his cell, and asked him if he remembered the circumstance; but the proud spirit of the man refused even to recognize him.

At the time, his wife alone suspected the true author of the crime. Ward does not confess, nor is there any evidence that he treated this spouse with any particular personal cruelty, yet that utter absence of all moral perception in him so apparent on an intimate association, with her conviction, which amounted almost to a knowledge, of his guilt threw a shadow over her gentle spirit, and finally banished her reason forever. Often in her ravings she alluded to his connection with the crime, and sent up her aberrant pleas for heaven's mercy. She is still an inmate of one of our insane asylums, of which Ward speaks without emotion.

The next victim was an itinerating pedler, whose name he does not now remember. This pedler came to his tavern, wearied with the weight of his pack, and the travels of the day. Ward foresaw that the pedler would retire early, and perhaps sleep soundly, and knowing that his lodgers would be out during the early part of the night, resolved, if circumstances favored, to despatch him. Preparatory to this end he told his hired girl she would not be wanted for that night, and she had better visit her mother, who lived hard by. Left alone, about ten o'clock, he crept softly to the chamber door where the pedler lay, set it softly ajar, and heard his victim breathing heavily in sound sleep, and fancied security. He returned, took an axe in one hand and a light in the other, and setting the light on the floor without the room, so as to shine on the pedler's face, he rushed upon him, and with one blow passed him forever beyond the ownership of his little pack and wallet. He immediately disarticulated his legs at the hip joint, severed the head from the



body and put all in a box, with most of the pedler's goods, the bloody bed-clothes, &c., and carried them to his own room, after which he mopped the floor and washed some blood spots from the tick. For this venture he got fifty dollars, and such goods as he might keep without suspicion. The girl returning in the morning as Ward was at breakfast, enquired for the pedler.—Ward answered that he had gone before day. She started for the room, but Ward stopped her. Soon after she found her way to the room and finding the floor not yet dry, and the tick damp, she descended, took her bonnet soon after and left him without returning. Ward always supposed she suspected him, and sometimes meditated her destruction, but never found the favorable opportunity. Her departure convinced him of the necessity of an immediate disposition of the body. He therefore gave out that he was going to his father's for some money, and getting up before day took the box in a small spring wagon, and on arriving at the Huron river, drove a little from the road, and tumbled the pedler into the stream. Having taken the precaution to put some pieces of iron in the box, it immediately sank out of sight, and that was the last he heard of the pedler.

Finding the suspicion gaining ground that he had killed Hall, which was greatly strengthened by the key of Hall's door having been found where he had hid it, he thought it most prudent to leave Planktown. Soon after he married again, and this woman he seems to remember with some faint glimmering of affection, and says she always exerted a good influence over him. He feels his unkindness to her, during a pregnant period, and admits it may have been the cause of her death.

We come, now, to the crime without a parallel, and committed on Wednesday morning, Feb. 4, 1857. He had married Mrs. Olive Davis, of Adrian, Michigan, sometime in the previous autumn, and brought her to Sylvania. Their dwelling was a neat cottage, with one commodious basement room, occupied as bedroom and parlor, an attic, and a kind of shed-room outside, used for keeping fuel and other articles of storage. Never having been a very social man, the citizens knew but little of his affairs, and seldom, if ever, visited his house. It was, however, known that Ward and his wife did not live pleasantly together, and about the middle of January she left him, in great fear of her life, to go to her friends at Adrian. Ward followed her thither, and through promises of good treatment, and the persuasion of her friends, was induced to return. This was the last week of January. It appeared in evidence at the trial, that about eight o'clock on the morning of February 4, Ward went into Allen's grocery, next door to his own, to buy some groceries, and said to Mr. Allen, "We are to be gone all day, and if any



one comes to my door, say to them we will be back in a day or two." Soon after a negro boy was seen to go to Ward's door with a vessel of milk, but could not get in. Other persons were seen to try the door, with like success. During the day Allen was at a door opposite Ward's, and casually looking up, saw large volumes of smoke issuing from Ward's chimney. Watching his window he several times saw his head pass and re-pass above the window curtain, which covered but the lower half of the window. This aroused suspicion, and Ward's conduct was watched. The next morning Ward said to one of the citizens, "My wife has left me again." On being further interrogated, he said she had gone to California; that he had given her money and helped her off on the two o'clock train. The officers of the Railroad were consulted, and it was found she had not gone in that way. Ward was openly accused of killing his wife, but without emotion or surprise asserted his innocence and expressed a willingness that his house might be searched. On Saturday, the seventh, an officer entered and looked about the house, up stairs and down, but found nothing. On that evening it was currently reported through the village that Mrs. Ward had been seen in Adrian, and all excitement subsided for a week.

During this time, Ward was seen carrying large quantities of chips from a wagon-shop, in his basket. Unusual gasses were seen to issue from his chimney, ascending rapidly as if from a hot fire, although the weather was not cold. When he entered his house, he locked the door, and did the same when he went into the street, trying it several times to be sure that it was secure. Glimmering lights were seen, and unusual noises as if chopping meat or crushing of bones were heard late at night, by the inmates of adjoining dwellings. Strange odors, as of burning meat, were smelled by several citizens, and found to increase in strength as his house was approached, or inversely as it was distanced. On Saturday, the 14th, several citizens of Adrian came to Sylvania and had Ward arrested, but no satisfactory evidence appearing against him he was discharged. On that day very thorough search was made, and on examining the bed, a part of the tick was found to have been recently washed and rinsed, being still damp, and on ripping it open the feathers were found clotted together with blood, and so with the feathers in the pillow. On Monday the citizens assembled for a general search; some with grapples to search the wells, and some with spades to dig about the foundations of the house. The floor was taken up, but nothing found. Upon all this Ward looked with apparent indifference. It was finally suggested to examine his ash-pile. This examination soon led to the finding of the portion of the jaw-bone identified at the trial.



Soon bones supposed to be portions of the skull, the entire framework of a parasol, the hinges, straps, nails and lock of a trunk, the metallic frame and melted glass plate of an ambrotype, a portion of a cornelian ring, all having been subjected to great heat, were found in the ash-pile. An iron pan filled with ashes was found in the room, in which a gold ring melted into two pieces with some fragments of bones and some trunk nails were found. The stove was taken apart, and in some crevices portions of skull bones as large as a silver dollar were found, with some more trunk nails. The stove bore the appearance of having been subjected to great and continued heat. Some spots of blood on the wall of the stair way were found, and a rush matrass was found in the attic room with some spots of blood, as if bloody meat had been laid on it. In a wood box under the shed was found a large quantity of blood newly coagulated and covered over with sawdust. Ward had been seen to throw a pail of bloody water from his rear door, on Friday the 6th, having the appearance of having been mopped from a bloody floor, or rinsed from bloody garments.

The excitement ran high, and Ward was arrested and forthwith sent to the county jail at Toledo. At the March term of the Common Pleas an indictment was found against him, charging in the first count a killing by blows inflicted with an axe; in the second, by stabbing with a knife; in the third, by strangulation; in the fourth, by some means to the Grand Jurors unknown. On this indictment, Ward being arraigned, plead "NOT GUILTY."

On March 16, a Jury was empanelled without much difficulty. John J. Monor, Prosecuting Attorney, assisted by T. Adams Lane, appeared for the State, and Daniel S. Price and John L. Fuller for the prisoner. Of the counsel it is proper to say they are all young men for so important a case, and yet but few cases in this country have been more thoroughly tried. The evidence was brought out in admirable order, and fully developed. The oldest and ablest counsel could scarce have done better. More than eighty witnesses were examined during a period of ten days. Judge Fitch presided with dignity and eminent impartiality, giving great satisfaction to counsel on both sides. The prisoner affected the utmost indifference generally, sometimes suggested questions to his counsel, and when court adjourned from time to time shook hands with the bystanders, laughed carelessly or cracked a coarse joke. At one time the ambrotype of Mrs. Ward was offered in evidence, and passed to the Jury; as it was returned Ward reached his hand for it, looked at it a moment without emotion, and passed it on.

Mr. Lane opened the argument to the Jury, and spoke a lit-



tle rising three hours. He stated the law with great fairness, showed the evidence clearly within it, and closed with an eloquence so stirring that many of the Jurors were moved to tears. The prisoner, who had remained indifferent during the trial, having been led to think the evidence insufficient for his conviction, began to show evident concern for his fate, and wept freely. The prisoner's counsel occupied about ten hours in presenting their defence, doing all that could be done by their zeal and ability for their client. They insisted with great force that the proof did not identify the remains found as those of Mrs. Ward; by far the strongest point in the defence. Mr. Manor closed the argument in behalf of the prosecution, on Wednesday afternoon at half past five o'clock. The courthouse was crowded to its utmost capacity with spectators, many of whom were ladies, all listening with breathless interest from the commencement to the close of his able and masterly argument. The charge of the Judge was able and clear. He instructed the Jury that *any* fact necessary to support a criminal charge, might be proved by *circumstantial* evidence. The Jury retired at 6 o'clock, balloted four times, and being unanimous for conviction each time, rapped for the Sheriff and were led back to the courtroom, having been out but half an hour. The prisoner in the bar saw them return without visible emotion, and heard the foreman pronounce the fatal word "GUILTY" without change of countenance. He dropped his head on his hands, and in a few moments walked with the Sheriff to his cell with a firm step.

A vigorous effort was made by his counsel for a new trial, on the ground that one of the Jurors had expressed an opinion before the trial. The counsel for the prosecution produced abundant counter affidavits showing that when the Juror was examined on his *voir dire* he answered that he "had both formed and expressed an opinion from newspaper reports, but that he would give a verdict alone on the evidence;" also that defendant's counsel did not object to his serving. On this ground the motion was denied. Exceptions were taken to rulings of the Court during the trial, but the Supreme Court sustained the ruling and refused a writ of error.

On the 6th of April, at half past ten o'clock, Ward was brought in, dressed as usual, in a full suit of black, appearing much downcast, and as the Court commanded him to stand up, he arose, breathing heavily, his eyes fixed upon the floor, and only momentarily seeking the face of the Judge. With one hand he leaned heavily on the chair, while the other hung tremblingly at his side. There was a sudden and almost painful silence in the court room, as His Honor, Judge Fitch, addressed the prisoner as follows :



“Return J. M. Ward, you have been indicted by the Grand Jury of this county, for the crime of murder in the first degree; charging that on the 4th day of February last, you made an assault upon Olive Ward, and, with deliberate and premeditated malice, did kill and murder her.

This is alleged to have been done in a quiet village, in your own dwelling, and within a few feet of other inhabited houses. The act was done in secret, and created no alarm; but the sudden disappearance of Mrs. Ward required some explanation; this, you readily gave. But your appearance, and the improbability of your statements, with other circumstances, excited the suspicion of your neighbors, and led to the examination of your premises, which resulted in the discovery of portions of human bones in your stove, and also in some ashes, which had been deposited in the rear of your house. These circumstances coming to light, naturally created no small degree of excitement in the neighborhood. It seemed almost beyond belief, that you could have destroyed your wife, and then deliberately consumed her remains, until, but little else than dust and ashes were to be found. Still, conviction seems to have been forced upon the mind that it must be true. Your arrest followed, and with it, an increasing anxiety to learn by the result of a trial and judicial investigation, whether this charge was true or false. The trial came; a jury was selected of your own choosing, impanelled and sworn.

Your counsel have been zealous in your defence. They have done all for you that their learning, skill and eloquence could accomplish. A protracted and thorough examination of the witnesses was permitted, and a patient investigation of all the circumstances and facts, tending to throw any light upon the subject, was pursued from day to day, until the case was finally submitted to the jury.

That jury have passed upon the evidence, and pronounced you guilty; and with that verdict, after a careful revision of the testimony, I am constrained to say, I find no just cause of complaint.

A further trial has been solicited by your counsel, on the ground, that one of the jurors who tried the cause had rendered himself incompetent to serve, as a juror, by having pre-judged the case before taking his seat. But the evidence submitted for the purpose of establishing this fact, has failed to satisfy me that he has formed or expressed any other opinion of your guilt or innocence, than such as he stated on his examination, prior to his being sworn as a juror, and which was not considered by your counsel as forming any objection to his being placed upon the pannel.



I have therefore denied the motion.

It now becomes my painful duty to declare to you that sentence which the law affixes to the crime of which you stand convicted.

It is, emphatically, the sentence of the law. We, as a court, have no discretion which we can exercise in your behalf. Our compassion and sympathy may be enlisted, but they can afford you no aid; the stern demands of the law must be regarded, and its awful penalty pronounced. We can hold out to you no consolation or hope from any earthly source.

The crime for which you are called upon to atone is one of great magnitude; the highest known to our laws, and is punished by the greatest penalty that man can inflict. God himself marked the first offender with strong and abiding evidences of his displeasure, and in all civilized ages it has ever been regarded with horror, and punished with signal and marked severity. It cannot be contemplated without exciting strong and painful emotions. Who can calmly think of such a scene where man tears from his helpless bleeding victim that life which God alone can give? [Here the prisoner wept bitterly.] Think not that the law has dealt with you unmercifully; or, should you think that your punishment was hard to be borne, look back and think of her whose spirit has been, by your hand, forced unwarned and unprepared, into the presence of a holy and just God, there to be judged of the deeds done here below.

Think of the agony of that scene, when the spirit fled, with no pitying eye to weep, no fond heart to sympathize, and no friendly hand to close the dying eye, or to respond to her last dying grasp? You and she alone; she, whom you had sworn to love, honor and protect, now before you, powerless, gasping in the last agonies of death. What is your fate compared to hers?

It is not my wish, on this occasion, to harrow up your feelings by an allusion to these scenes, which must be ever vivid to your mind. They are painful, but cannot be driven from your memory while life remains. I would rather impress upon you the stern necessity of preparing for death. It is the common lot of all men, but God in his mercy has not revealed the time at which this great change awaits us. We are all prone to regard it as distant, and to lay our plans from day to day, and from year to year, regardless of its silent but sure approach. We cling to life, and do not sufficiently contemplate the hour of death. But with you, the charms, the cares, and the busy scenes of life should now be forgotten. They are no longer worthy of your attention. Your days are numbered—a few more revolving suns, and, with you, the scene must be changed—you must pass



to the spirit land—there to dwell throughout the endless ages of eternity—there to receive the reward or punishment, which God, in his infinite wisdom and mercy may bestow.

Let me conjure you, then, to prepare for that event. Think not that your case is beyond the hope of pardoning mercy. Cast yourself upon the Savior, who alone can cleanse you from all your iniquities. He is able and mighty to save, and will have mercy upon all who are truly penitent, and believe in Him. Read God's Holy Word daily. Make it the man of your counsel. It is the only record that contains the sure Word of Promise.

I know nothing of your previous history, nor of your present views and feelings in relation to your eternal welfare, but if you have no well-grounded hope of pardon and acceptance with the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, let me conjure you to awake to a sense of your danger. Repent of your sins, and in deep humility call upon Him for pardon and acceptance through the merits and atonement of our blessed Savior. Do not flatter yourself with any hope of escaping the punishment of your crime. It is hazarding your eternal interests upon chances which may fatally delude you. Cast them from your mind, and earnestly prepare for the realities of that great change which must, in a few days, await you.

There is now nothing further for the Court to do but to pronounce the sentence of the law, which is:

That you, Return J. M. Ward, be remanded from this place to the jail of this county, and that you there be detained in close custody until the 12th day of June next, and that on said 12th day of June next, between the hours of 10 o'clock, A. M., and 4 o'clock, P. M., you be taken from thence to such place as may be provided by the Sheriff of the county for your execution, and there and then be hung by the neck until you are dead.

And may God have mercy on your soul."

As the Judge resumed his seat after pronouncing the prisoner's doom, Ward knelt down, and, leaning on the chair, buried his face in his hands, weeping and groaning bitterly. He was suffered to remain thus for a few moments, as the forms of adjourning court till afternoon were gone through with, when Sheriff Springer touched him on the shoulder, and he arose, apparently much more composed, and was taken to the jail.

On Sunday evening March 29th, Ward made the following confession to the reporter of the Toledo Commercial, which appeared in that paper the next morning.

### CONFESSION.

On Tuesday evening, February 3d, Mrs. Ward and myself had some words, during which Mrs. Ward struck me on the



head with a fluid lamp, also on the right side of the nose, causing the same to bleed freely. I begged her not to strike me, took the lamp away from her and went to bed. We arose between six and seven o'clock on Wednesday morning. I spoke to her about the blow she had given me, showing her where she had struck me on the evening previous, also the blood on the bolster and tick. She said she wished I had bled to death, and picking up a stick of hickory wood, she attempted to strike me. I warded off the blow, which fell upon my right thumb, laming it severely. The stick fell from her hand, and, as she stooped to pick it up, I seized a flat-iron, and in the heat of passion, struck her with it on the right side of the head, upon and under the ear, driving the ear-ring into the flesh. She fell to the floor, exclaiming, "Oh! Ward, you have killed me!" I dropped the flat-iron and went to her; she was lying on her side; I turned her over on her back, and placed a petticoat under her head, supposing she was only stunned. I used all means in my power restore her, but in half an hour she died, having only spoken once, "O, my Nellie," meaning, as I suppose, her little girl.

After she was dead, I wrapped her head in a petticoat and drew the body under the bed, to conceal it in case any one should come in. About half past eight o'clock, Wm. H. Nathan, a mulatto boy, came to the door with some milk; came into the shop, took the milk from him and he left. I then went to Liba Allen's grocery; bought a pound of sugar; told him I was going away. I then returned to the house, and after a short time, commenced cutting up the body. I tore the clothes open from the throat, down. I then took a small pocket knife and opened the body, took out the bowels first, and then put them in the stove, upon the wood; they being filled with air would make a noise in exploding; so I took my knife and pricked holes through them to prevent the noise; then took out the liver and heart, and put them in the stove; found it very difficult to burn them; had to take the poker and frequently stir them before they could be destroyed; found the lungs very much decayed. I then took out the blood remaining in the cavity of the body, by placing a copper kettle close to the same and scooping it out with my hands. I then dipped portions of her clothing in the same, and burnt it together, fearing if I put the blood in the stove alone, that it might be discovered. I then made an incision through the flesh, along down each side, broke off the ribs and took out the breast bone, and throwing it into a large boiler, unjointed the arms at the shoulders, doubled them up and placed them in the boiler; then severed the remaining portions of the body, by placing a stick of wood under the back and breaking the back bone over the same, cutting away the flesh and ligament with a knife.—



Then tried to sever the head from the body ; it proving ineffectual, and I put the whole upper portion of the body into the boiler. Then took a large carving knife and severed the lower portion of the body, unjointed the legs at the knee, and again at the hip joint ; cut the thighs open and took out the bones and burnt them up ; they burned very rapidly.

On Thursday night I commenced burning the body, by placing the upper and back portions of the same, together with the head, in the stove. On Friday morning, finding it had not been consumed, I built a large fire by placing wood around and under it, and in a short time it was wholly consumed, except some small portions of the larger bones and the skull. The remaining portions of the body were kept in the boiler and in tubs, under the bed, covered up with a corded petticoat, and were there at the time the first search was made on Saturday, by constable Curtis. Hearing on Saturday evening that the citizens were not satisfied with the search made by Mr. Curtis, I proceeded on Sunday morning to destroy the remainder of the body, by burning the same in the stove, cutting the fleshy parts of the thighs in small strips, the more readily to dispose of them. On Monday morning I took up the ashes in a small keg, sifting out the larger pieces of bone with my hands, placing the same in my over coat pockets, which I scattered in various places in the fields, at different times. Also took the major portion of the trunk nails, together with the hinges, and scattered them in different places. I then burned her trunk and every vestige of her clothing, disposing of small portions at a time, to prevent their creating too much smoke.

Perhaps human language never gave expression to ideas more revolting than the above. We can think of the torture of the early Christians with some charity for the benighted zeal which thought honestly it did honor to its God. We can think of the burning of Salem witches, with the same extenuating feeling ; but to think of a man coolly cutting up the body of his wife, and burning it in the same stove where a thousand times she had cooked his breakfast, and in the same room where she had come to claim his protection, is certainly without a parallel for cruelty in civilized or barbarous society. And all this, too, is done to conceal the fact that he had killed her ; and yet, in his last moments, he says the above confession is true as to the disposition of the body. The killing he, at last, confesses was done pursuant to a settled design. After Mrs. Ward returned with him from Adrian, he knew she was planning a second flight from him, and it was to avoid this alone that he killed her. His imagination pictured her in the arms of some more favored lover, and the thought stung him to desperation. On the morning of February 4th, he had resolved to kill her. She arose a few minutes be-



fore he did, and whilst sitting on a chair tying her shoe strings, he took a flat-iron in his hand, walked behind her, and struck her dead with a single blow. He then disposed of the body as stated in his first confession. The blood found in the wood box was Mrs. Ward's blood, which he poured there from a vessel, covering it up with saw-dust, thinking it safer than to pour it on the ground. The mattress had been used by him on the floor in first cutting up the body, but not after, and the little blood on it he did not think would be noticed. No part of the body was ever up stairs. The board put in evidence had no connection with the murder whatever. The blood spots on the bed had been there long previous; but after the first search, he was afraid they might be used against him, and, through excessive caution, he made the mistake of trying to wash them out.

And now, gentle reader, that you have the confession of a dying man, let his memory have that protection which honor never denies to the ashes of the dead. Whilst you are reading this, he is suffering an ignominious death, and a dishonored grave is ready to receive him. Let the public teacher warn others by his shameful end; and let the fathers and mothers, who love their sons, train them up in the way they should go, that they may avoid a fate like his.