

I WOULD NOT—I WOULD.

I would not make a charnel house of the earth, that I might be called a hero.

I would not march armies over countries rich in all the elements of life and happiness, and leave black desolation and want behind, that I might be flattered because feared, that I might be great because I had made many miserable.

I would not make mausoleums of cities, that monuments might be raised to commemorate my deeds while living, only to be destroyed in hate, and my memory cursed for my crimes after death.

I would not be an Alexander, wishing for more worlds to conquer, that my fame might be measured by the amount of misery I had caused my fellow mortals.

I would not be a Julius Caesar, with the self constituted right to slay thousands already conquered, for bravely defending what God and nature had given them—the right to defend themselves against a public robber.

I would not be a Napoleon—a Christian warrior, deliberately writing my own selfish, self-constituted creed of right and wrong in the blood of my fellow Christians, dazzling the world by the brilliancy of my genius, but like the serpent only dazzling to destroy. Great talents used to increase the miseries of mankind, great power used to rob and plunder them, I fancy will be a poor recommend for admittance into heaven. If the record of my fame must be engraven with the sword, let it be done in succoring the weak, in overthrowing the wrong, in defending the right.

I would not hoard up wealth to feed greedy eyes on glittering gold to make it the god of worship, to narrow down my soul to the limits of a dollar, to make me blind to all that is noble in humanity, to smother the light from the Eternal that would lead me to higher intelligence.

For the wealth of the Indies, for the gold of the Western Hemisphere, I would not go into my grave condemned by the noble, hated by the poor, and cursed by the widow and the orphan, leaving neither honor nor the love of my memory behind—nothing but gold for my heirs to quarrel over.

Providence never designed that man should live on the toil of his fellow man, but supply his wants from the elements, and, if blessed with superior abilities, assist the less fortunate. No ambition but that to do good should stimulate us to action. A love of fame is commendable if it is subordinate to our love of virtue and mankind.

I would use power and wealth to make men better and therefore happier, to increase the elements of life, to open the way that the labors of the poor might raise them above the pinchings of want. Instead of making science a means to destroy, to desolate, I would make it subserve the purposes of life. I would clothe the desert with the waving harvest, with villages and cottages, with happy homes, and fill the air with the hum of industry, with the song of content.

I would not have the costly monument the only attraction to my grave, the cold and stately marble my only representative. When I am gone I would have my name the theme of pleasant memories around the hearthstone of the cottage. I would have every human heart a living tablet, impressed with the record of my fame, by deeds of love to my fellow man.

I would have sturdy manhood drop the silent tear because I had crossed the dark river before I had, and look forward with pleasure to the time when we may greet each other in a better world. I would have my deeds worthy the emulation of youth, and innocent childhood strew my humble grave with flowers, and hush my name with the reverence that love inspires.

JAMES A. LITTLE.

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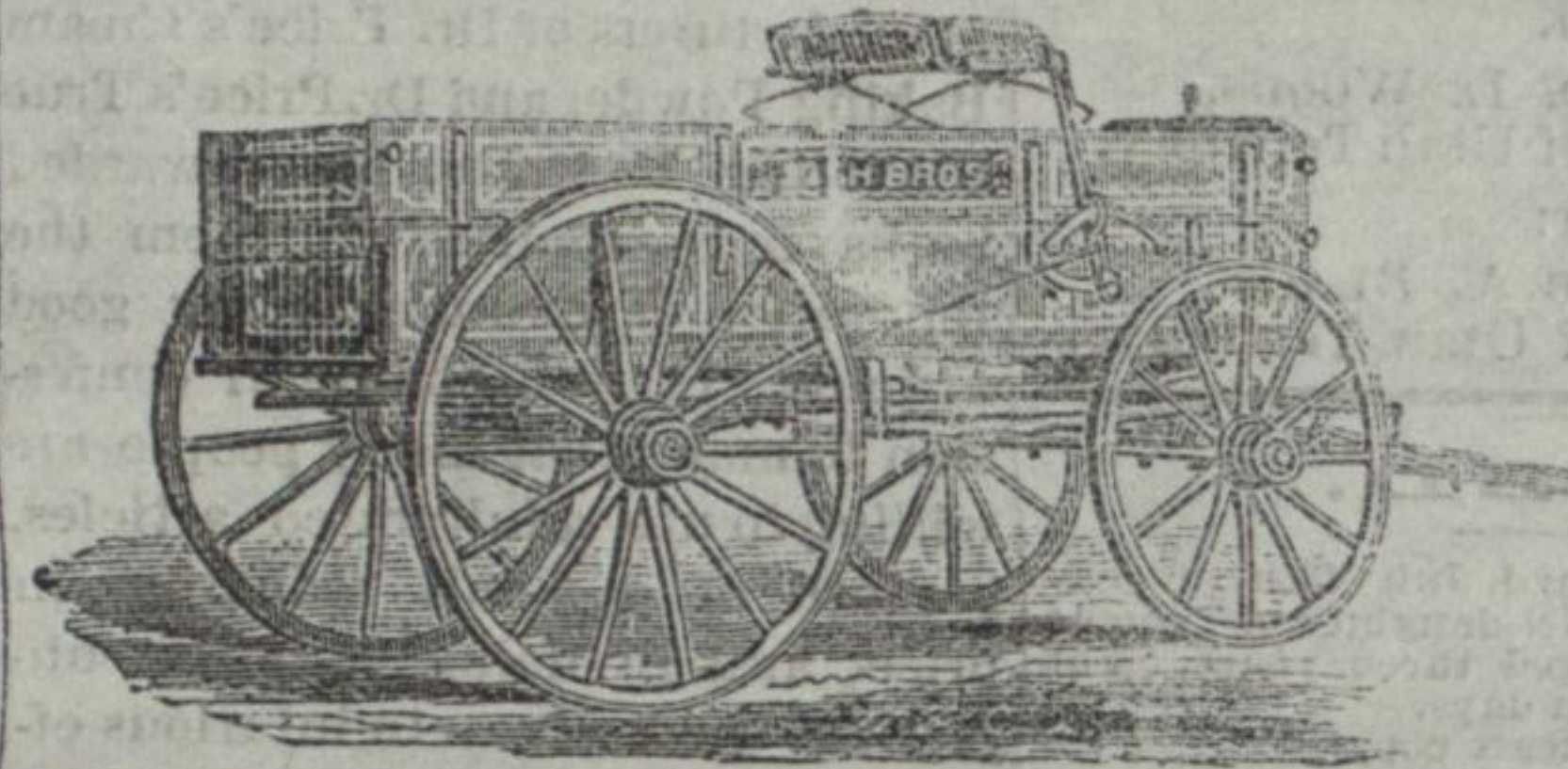
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