Prayer

James Wickliff*
get infected.” The boy jerked each time the man prodded the sliver. After a few tries the man stopped and studied the toe. “Well, boy, it looks like we’ll have to cut the toenail back a ways.”

“I don’t want you to!” The boy began sobbing and tried to pull loose.

“Now, it’ll only hurt a little while, and the sliver’ll be out.” He reached in his back pocket and took out a pocket knife. The boy watched in horror as the man opened the blade.

He gripped the boy’s foot firmly and began trimming. Each time the knife point nicked out a chunk of toenail the boy’s body stiffened and his sobs rose to a scream.

“Boy, stop that confounded yelling! I’ll be through in a minute.”

The man pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and sponged the toe with it. He wiped the knife off and nicked at the toe again. The boy straightened, trembling violently and screaming each time the knife touched the wound.

“I told you to stop yelling — I’m almost done.”

The man took a final nick and held up the last of the sliver. “See. There now, that wasn’t so bad, was it? I’ll get the iodine and gauze and we’ll have you all bandaged in no time.”

The boy held the soggy handkerchief to his toe and cried uncontrollably.

Andrew Tidemann, Engr. Sr.

PRAYER

May I never need use
That lobbying Muse
Perched like a vulture
At the top of our culture.

James Wickliff, Sc. & H. Grad.