

MERCHANT KILLED IN NOON HOLDUP FOR \$16

Believe Young Mother, Held for Poisoning Babies, Is Insane

Weather-Fair To-night; Sunday unsettled; warmer.

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NIGHT EDITION.

The Evening World.

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"Circulation Books Open to All."

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GIRL HELD AS BABY SLAYER; REPUDIATES CONFESSION THAT SHE POISONED DOZEN

"I Did Not Kill Them," Young Mother Cries, Declaring Admission Was Forced. CAN'T HAVE OWN CHILD. Nursery Doctor Says She Is Paranoiac and She May Never Face Trial.

Winifred Ankers, the young mother who confessed last night that she poisoned to death eight infants in the Brooklyn Nursery and Infants' Hospital, repudiated her confession to-day. She said she had signed it within an hour after she signed it last night, and Assistant District Attorney Warbasse confirmed her statement.

"The detectives," said the girl, "hounded me for hours. They wouldn't let me sleep. They woke me up to question me. Finally, they threatened to take my baby from me, and I made a false confession and signed it."

"As soon as Detective MacKibby left me I ran to the room of Dr. Allen. The head nurse, Miss Howard, was there. I told them I had just confessed a crime I had not committed. Dr. Allen sent for Mr. Warbasse and I made another statement which I signed.

"In this I denied that I had given poison to the children and told how the confession had been forced from me. I am going to plead not guilty and demand a trial. I did not kill those babies."

She also said that the woman who alleged she had been extorted into signing the confession, a woman named Mrs. M. W. W. who is now in court for poisoning eight children.

"You are a paranoiac," said Magistrate Hyman to the prisoner, "with homicidal tendencies. You are a woman who is causing the deaths of eight little children. Do you ever consider that I don't know what you mean," said the Ankers girl.

"Do you want a lawyer?"

"I have no money for a lawyer."

"Do you wish a hearing now or do you wish to waive examination?"

"I want it all to come out here. I am not guilty of this thing. I have had something on my mind that worried me. I kept it to myself until I told Miss Howard and Dr. Allen the other day."

"Do you think you would be ready for a hearing Monday?" asked the court.

"I'd like to have time to talk it over with you," was the answer. "I came

STRIKE BABIES SEIZED BY POLICE; WOMEN CLUBBED

LAWRENCE, Mass., Feb. 23.—Fifty policemen under direct command of Marshal Sullivan and two companies of militia interfered today with the activities of the strike committee and sent fifty children from this city to outside towns where they would be cared for. Eight women, five men and twenty children were arrested.

A riot followed the arrests and a number of heads were broken by the police, who freely used their clubs on the protesting strikers.

The interference by the police and militia has added to the gravity of the situation. It follows the action of the military authorities last week, when they announced the strikers would be kept wherever possible, from sending their children out of town. The strike leaders have openly charged that the militia was used to the injury of the mill owners, who know that if the children are kept here and forced to suffer their parents will give up the struggle. The strike leaders contend that if the children had plenty and were safely housed, the parents would get along somehow on the small strike fund available.

Twenty-seven men who had been served with summonses in the Grand Central and subway stations were arrested before Magistrate Appleton in Yorkville Court on charges of either smoking or spitting. They were fined \$2 each.

Joseph Middlebrook, a lawyer, of Dobbs Ferry, alone protested. He admitted that he had carried a lighted cigar from the smoking car of the train which he came to town. He was fined just the same.

In West Side Court Magistrate Barlow fined sixty-one of sixty-two smokers \$2 each.

Fifty-two offenders faced Chief Magistrate McAdoo in the Centre Street Court. All pleaded guilty and were fined \$1.

MADDOO WILL MAKE FINES HEAVIER IN FUTURE.

Concerning the crusade of the Health Department in the past two days in arresting persons who smoke and spit in subway stations, Magistrate McAdoo said:

"Personally and officially, I approve of the action of the police and the Board of Health. It is a very important matter, spitting endangers the public health to an alarming degree.

"It was my suggestion that summonses be used instead of arresting the offenders. There is no necessity of making an arrest in these cases; the summons works admirably. The summons is entirely self-enforcing. I am in favor of its extension.

"I have made the fines up to this time \$1, but if the season that these arrests ought to have upon some of those who patronize the subway has been lost, then so far as I am concerned I will double the fines. I am sure I have the support of the majority of the people of this city. My brother Magistrate, men who attend to their business and do what they are paid for doing, even tempered, and balanced men, who do not lose their heads every time they see big headlines in the newspapers."

SUBWAY SMOKERS CLAMOR FOR MAYOR TO STOP ARRESTS

Abolish Board of Health, Police, or Something, Three Demand at City Hall.

FINES TO BE HEAVIER. Chief Magistrate McAdoo Says Outrage on Decency Must Be Stamped Out.

Within fifteen minutes, three excited men rushed into the City Hall to-day and dashed down the corridor to the Mayor's office, demanding to "see the Mayor."

Each had been summoned to Magistrate's court by policemen for carrying lighted cigars in the subway.

"Am I, a respectable business man, to be haled to court like a criminal because I unwittingly break an ordinance of which I know nothing?" demanded one citizen of Lieutenant Kennel.

"Why are the police not out on the streets catching highway robbers who steal \$25,000, and let men like me alone?" another asked.

"You say the Board of Health insists on this anti-smoking ordinance? Then I say the Board of Health should be wiped out of existence," shouted the third man.

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ONE CARRIED OBLIQUELY BUT, AT THAT, HE CLAIMS.

The grievances of the trio was that they were merely carrying cigars—one of the cigars being unlighted. The holder of the unlighted butt claimed that he was really a sanitary agent, as the fumes from a recently extinguished cigar are known to kill disease germs.

Lieut. Kennel explained, but could not subdue the anger of the visitors. He said the police were acting under instructions and had no alternative. The indignation slowly subsided.

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BEIRUT SHELLED BY ITALIANS; SIXTY KILLED

Warships Open Fire on Turkish Seaport in Syria After Command to Surrender.

GUNBOATS ARE SUNK. Americans Escape Deadly Rain of Shot That Spreads Wild Panic in City Streets.

BEIRUT, Syria, Feb. 24.—A flotilla of Italian warships early to-day bombarded this city, killed sixty peaceful inhabitants and wounded a large number of others. They also sank a number of small Turkish gunboats anchored in the port.

Appearing suddenly off the port the commanders of the Italian gunboats Voltorno and the armored cruiser Giuseppe Garibaldi sent to the authorities a peremptory demand for the surrender of the Turkish gunboats in the harbor.

Before the Provincial Governor could deliver his reply to the Italian command the gunners opened a devastating fire.

In a short time the Turkish gunboats in the harbor were disabled and in a sinking condition. The Custom House was greatly damaged and other buildings also suffered severely.

A great number of persons who came within the zone of the fire while passing along the streets were struck by the shells.

A panic set-in and the people fled in droves toward the Lebanon hills.

The American Protestant College, whose founder and President Emeritus is the Rev. Dr. Daniel Bliss, is safe. The extent of the damage to the city is not yet known.

None of the American institutions in the city suffered any injury from the explosion of the shells.

The professors, missionaries, students and employees are all safe.

There was a panic as the guns from the warships rained shells into streets of the city.

Rev. Howard S. Bliss, son of the founder of the Syrian Protestant College, is president in actual charge of all the work of the institution where considerable consternation was felt when the Italian vessels opened fire. There was a panic among the inmates, but their fears subsided when it was discovered that the gunners were not aiming at the building.

LONDON, Feb. 24.—Three Italian warships to-day bombarded Beirut, the principal seaport of the Turkish province of Syria, on the Mediterranean, according to a special despatch received here to-day.

It was feared here that the lives of foreigners might be in danger. Tourists on their way to Jerusalem often stop off at Beirut, which has a population of 120,000 and is one of the most interesting cities in Asiatic Turkey.

ONLY SMALL TURKISH FORCE TO DEFEND CITY.

The bombardment of Beirut by the Italians is the first sign of Italian naval activity in the Mediterranean for a long period and appears to be part of the new plan of campaign announced recently by the Italian Government. The city has only a small Turkish garrison consisting of 250 infantry, 250 cavalry and detachments of artillery and engineers. It is not strongly fortified.

The American Presbyterian Mission has been active in Beirut for nearly a century. It possesses a church, a Sunday school, a girls' school, and a printing office in the city itself, where it publishes a weekly newspaper and a monthly magazine. Spread over the province are about 150 other schools connected with American missions with many thousands of pupils. Three married missionaries and five women missionaries are engaged in the work of the society in Beirut.

The Seventh Day Adventist Mission Board has four missionaries in the country, while belonging to the Syrian Protestant College in the City of Beirut, an institution generally known as the American College, there are 200 students under the instruction of fifty professors, thirty of whom are American citizens.

There are thirty-eight churches of various Christian denominations in the town.

Girl Who Poisoned Dozen Babies, As She Appeared To-Day in Court



WINIFRED ANKERS

FIVE FACE DEATH AS BARGE BURNS AT MIDNIGHT

Woman and Four Men Menaced by Flames on Sinking Craft near Block Island.

(Special to The Evening World.)

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Feb. 23.—The barge Neponset, coal laden, from Port Reading to New Bedford, took fire an hour after last midnight in Block Island Sound and was totally destroyed, sinking after burning to the water's edge. Capt. William Tinker, his wife and the three members of the barge's crew faced death for an hour but were rescued by the crew of the tug Pejaboot, which had the barge in tow, and were brought to this port.

The barge caught fire from the engine and the flames spread rapidly. The craft was then about six miles northeast of Sandy Point Light, Block Island, and an exceptionally heavy sea was running. It was some time before the tug noticed the signals of distress coming from the barge. The sea was so wild that it was impossible to bring boats close alongside the barge, and those aboard had to take big chances and leap into the boats, the captain's wife being first. All escaped by their sleeping clothes and nearly everything on board was lost.

The steamer Puritan of the Fall River line stood by to aid, being reached at 2:45 A. M. by wireless from the mainland, but the tug had all on board by that time.

SHOPKEEPER SHOT DEAD IN DAYLIGHT HOLDUP NEAR CROWD ON STREET

Haberdasher Meseritz Slain Behind His Counter on Flatbush Avenue While Temporarily Alone in Place of Business.

\$16 FROM CASH DRAWER ONLY PLUNDER SECURED.

Scores Passing and Neighboring Merchants Fail to Hear Shot or See Murder.

With trolley cars passing the door at the rate of about two a minute and with throngs of passersby flocking to lunch on both sides of the thoroughfare, a robber or robbers entered the store of Walter Meseritz, a haberdasher, at No. 779 Flatbush avenue, Brooklyn, to-day, shot the merchant to death and robbed his cash till of \$16.

There was no witness to the crime and there is not the barest sort of clue for the police to work on. Meseritz, who was thirty-six years old and unmarried, was waiting for his young nephew, Jesse Schmitzer, to bring him his luncheon when he was murdered. His clerk, Walter Smythe, had left the store at noon for luncheon. Neighboring storekeepers had seen the haberdasher in front of his store at 12.20.

At 12.40 a young woman entered to make a purchase. The door was shut but unfastened, and she looked about for somebody to wait on her. She stamped her feet and called out. Then she went to a counter in front of the safe and desk, in which the petty cash was kept. She noticed that an empty drawer stood on top of this desk. Bending over the counter, she saw Meseritz's body stretched out back of the counter.

YOUNG WOMAN GIVES ALARM; ANSWERED TOO LATE.

The young woman screamed and fled from the store. She ran to a saloon at Clarkson street and Flatbush avenue and told of what she had seen. Half a dozen men rushed to the shop and met at the door the murdered man's nephew. He had just come from No. 84 Flatbush avenue, where he and his uncle lived, with Meseritz's luncheon.

The crowd looked at the body behind the counter and sent the boy for a doctor. Police headquarters was telephoned to and several detectives were rushed to the shop. The boy summoned Dr. Zimmer of Woodruff avenue, who arrived before the police. He found that the shopkeeper had been shot behind the right ear and killed instantly. He had evidently been dropped by the assassin as he stood behind his counter, which overhung the desk.

MURDERER GOT ONLY \$16 AND OVERLOOKED SAFE CONTENTS.

When the detectives arrived they made a minute examination of the shop. They found that the cash drawer in the desk had been emptied. The clerk, Smythe, said there was \$16 in bills and change in the drawer when he went out. There were also three safety razors in silver plated cases in the drawer, which had been taken. The door of the safe was open, but the drawers had not been pulled out. There was about \$25 in the safe.

The detectives searched every inch of the shop for a weapon, on the theory that Meseritz might have shot himself. They found nothing to aid them in this assumption.

The most remarkable feature of the crime is that of scores of persons who were in the immediate vicinity of the store at the time of the murder no one noticed any one enter or leave the store.

Samuel Cobb, who conducts a cleaning and dyeing establishment next door to the scene of the killing, was eating his luncheon behind his counter during the noon hour. There is only a thin wall between the two shops. Cobb sat in a chair he tilted back against the wall, not ten feet from where Meseritz was shot down. He declared to the detectives that he did not hear a sound. He had no inkling of the murder until the crowd began to surge into Meseritz's shop.

THREE WOMEN HURT IN RUNAWAY; ONE LIKELY TO DIE

Aged Mrs. McCann and Her Two Companions Hurlled From a Coach.

Two horses attached to a coach became frightened to-day at Sixth avenue and Fifty-ninth street by the breaking of a whiffletree and ran wildly down the avenue, the vehicle swerving from side to side behind them. The driver was unable to stop the team. A short distance down the avenue they dashed the coach into an elevated railroad pillar which overturned it.

One of the occupants of the carriage—Mrs. Mary McCann, seventy-six years old, of No. 366 Seventh avenue—was perhaps fatally injured. She was taken to Flower Hospital, with her back badly wrenched and suffering with internal injuries. Her extreme age makes her recovery doubtful. There were two other persons in the carriage—Mrs. Kate Drummond and her daughter, Mary, of No. 219 West Eighty-third street. They were badly bruised and shaken up. It was not necessary for them to go to the hospital. William Carpenter of No. 175 West Eighty-seventh street, the driver of the carriage, was thrown from his seat and slightly injured.

The three women were on their way from a funeral in Calvary cemetery. Mrs. McCann, whose husband, Bernard, is a merchant tailor in Broadway, was much opposed to his wife's attendance at the funeral, as she came out of St. Vincent's Hospital only a week ago and was so feeble that it was necessary to day to carry her from her home to the carriage when she set out.

The horses, which tore themselves from the harness when it struck, ran down Sixth avenue on the sidewalk, but were stopped by Policeman Wise at Fifty-ninth street.

MAYOR AT HIS HOME.

Mayor Gaynor returned from Atlantic City to-day and proceeded to St. James, where he probably will remain until Tuesday next. He will not be at the Amen Corner dinner to-night.

TAFT DENIES HE SAID PEOPLE NOT FITTED TO GOVERN SELVES

President Stamps as Falsehood Quotation From His Lincoln Day Speech.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24.—President Taft to-day denied emphatically that in a speech in New York on Lincoln's Birthday he said, "That the people are not fitted for self-government."

In the first official statement of this kind that the White House has ever issued during the Taft administration the President calls the circulation of this story a "falsehood."

The President's statement is as follows:

"Among the falsehoods that are now being additionally circulated by persons and papers opposed to the President is one that in his Lincoln day speech the President said that the people are not fitted for self-government." President Taft said nothing upon that occasion which could possibly be tortured into any such construction.

"The speech in which the President made reference to popular government was delivered at the banquet of the State Bar Association in New York on the night of Jan. 20. What he then said on this subject—and it was correctly quoted in the newspapers on the following day—was this:

"Popular government we all believe in. There are those of us who do not believe that all peoples are fitted for popular government. The fact is, we know they are not. Some of us do not dare to say so, but I do, and the question whether a people is fitted for self-government so as to make that government best for that people is determined by the ability of the majority of that people to place upon itself the restraints by which the minority shall receive justice from the majority. It is the question of self-imposed restraint that determines whether a people is fit to govern itself."

While it is not admitted by any one at the White House who has authority to speak for the President that his correction of the interpretation placed by

DE LANCEY NICOLL GOES TO JOIN SICK DAUGHTER.

De Lancey Nicoll received word to-day from Philadelphia that his daughter, Josephine, who became ill last Thursday night, has had a relapse. He at once boarded a train to join Mrs. Nicoll at his daughter's bedside. Miss Nicoll went to Philadelphia to attend a ball masque. It was at first supposed her sudden illness was an attack of grip, but from the message sent to her father to-day it is thought to be pneumonia.

Mr. Nicoll has engaged the entire twelfth floor of the St. James Hotel, in Philadelphia, and his suite is practically a hospital ward, with all modern appliances to assist the physicians, who are in constant attendance.

MRS. ROOSEVELT SAILS FOR PANAMA WITH ETHEL.

Hats Go, Too, but the Colonel's Is Still in the Ring—At Least, It's Not With Them.

Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt and her daughter, Ethel, sailed to-day on the United States fruit steamer, Turahua, for Panama. They were accompanied by G. P. Snow, a New York lawyer, and R. B. West, a Wall street broker.

They will disembark at Colon and see the Canal.

Part of the Roosevelt luggage was a bundle of hats. Asked by the reporters if any of them was the Colonel's hat, which he had thrown into the ring, they replied:

"No, they're ladies' hats."

(Continued on Second Page.)

A Veritable Gale

The Publicity Wind is blowing strongly nowadays. By far its highest velocity is reached, as it whistles with hurricane force, about The World buildings.

During the first three weeks of this month there were printed:

79,187 World Ads.
27,449 More Than The Herald.

And another big "blow" is on its way, as there will be printed nearly 8,000 SUNDAY WORLD ADS. TO-MORROW.

A trade-wind of opportunity that will carry many a ship into the harbor of success.

SPARENS AND GRAY.

A new Comic Series, by George McManus, author of the Newlyweds, now appearing in the Sunday World's Funny Side. If you want some one to make you laugh, "Let George Do It."

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