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KILLED BY FIRE AND FRIGHT

SHOCKING DEATH OF MISS VAN VORST.

HER CLOTHING IGNITED AT AN OPEN GRATE—DYING JUST AFTER THE FLAMES WERE PUT OUT.

The people of Murray Hill were shocked yesterday by the announcement that Miss Elizabeth B. Van Vorst, an elderly lady belonging to one of the oldest and most respected families of the city had met with a terrible death. For several years Miss Van Vorst had occupied the five-story brownstone house No. 58 West Forty-sixth-st. She possessed ample means, inherited from her father, Cornelius Van Vorst, of Jersey City, and she found much enjoyment in entertaining friends at her home. Lately she had been in poor health and had spent most of her time in the house, her constant companion being her niece, Mrs. Cooper. She loved a cheerful fire and kept a pile of pine sticks blazing in an open hearth in her parlor on the second floor.

After a late breakfast yesterday, Miss Van Vorst went to the parlor about 10:30 a. m. and busied herself about the room alone, while Mrs. Cooper went to the upper part of the house. A postman rang the bell shortly before 11 a. m., and was met at the door by a servant. He had not gone many yards from the house when Mrs. Cooper and the servants heard Miss Van Vorst scream for assistance. They hastened to the parlor, the servant arriving there a few seconds in advance of Mrs. Cooper. Miss Van Vorst was enveloped in flames which were burning her skirts. She was frantically trying to free herself from the fiery embrace, but was not strong enough to do much. The fire in the grate had set her dress ablaze, probably as she was arranging some article of bric-a-brac on the mantel, and the flames had already extended to the carpet.

Mrs. Cooper and the servant caught up some rugs and tried to smother the flames. Another servant soon arrived and the effort to subdue the fire was successful, but Miss Van Vorst fell exhausted on the floor, unable to utter another cry. A district messenger who was passing the house saw the glare of the flames and heard the cries of the occupants of the house. He ran into the telegraph office only a few yards away and told what he had seen. J. F. McCallum, who was in charge of the office, went to Miss Van Vorst's house just as a servant hastened to the office of Dr. E. Henschel on the opposite side of the street. Several other men entered the house by the door, which the servant had left open. They helped to pour water on Miss Van Vorst, who was then insensible and evidently dying. Before Dr. Henschel entered the house Miss Van Vorst expired. Her limbs and body had been charred by the flames and most of her clothing had been destroyed, some of the rugs which had been used to smother the fire having been partly burned also.

A messenger was sent to call Robert Sewell, the lawyer, who was a brother-in-law of Miss Van Vorst, from his house in Forty-fifth-st., and he took charge of the body. Word was sent also to W. P. Powers, of No. 22 West Forty-eighth-st., another brother-in-law of the dead woman. Members of the family at first expressed a wish not to have the circumstances of Miss Van Vorst's death made public, and for a time information was withheld, but in the afternoon Mr. Powers related to a TRIBUNE reporter what he had learned. He thought that Miss Van Vorst died of fright before she endured much suffering. Miss Van Vorst was sixty-nine years old. The arrangements for her funeral had not been completed last evening.

Coroner Messemer was informed of the death of Miss Van Vorst as quickly as possible and went at once to the house. After viewing the body he took the testimony of Annie Burns, the servant in the house who extinguished the flames. She testified as follows:

I reside at No. 58 West Forty-sixth-st. I am a domestic in the employ of Miss Van Vorst. I have been employed in that capacity by the deceased for seven and a half years. On January 1, about 10:45 o'clock a. m. I was in the kitchen, when the bell rang from the second floor in the front room. I ran up-stairs and saw flames all around Miss Van Vorst. Her clothing was on fire. I took the blankets off the bed and tried to put out the flames. Mrs. Cooper assisted me and we finally succeeded in extinguishing the fire. Miss Van Vorst was dusting the mantel when her dress caught fire at a grate filled with pine wood logs. She was burned to death in a few minutes. She screamed loudly, when I first ran to her assistance, but was unable to scream more than a few times because the smoke suffocated her. She died a few minutes before 11 o'clock.

Dr. E. K. Henschel testified:

I was called in to No. 58 West Forty-sixth-st. to see Miss Elizabeth B. Van Vorst, deceased. I found the body charred and enveloped in burned clothes still smouldering. She was lying upon the floor, with limbs contracted, body bent and face to the floor.

After making the investigation Coroner Messemer gave a permit for the removal of the body.

The cause of death is given as "shock from superficial burns of the body, face, head and extremities."

Dr. Albert R. Ledoux, of No. 22 West Forty-eighth-st., a relative of the dead woman, gave the following version of the sad affair to a TRIBUNE reporter last evening:

"I was at Miss Van Vorst's home this afternoon shortly after the fire. At a few minutes before 11 o'clock this morning Miss Van Vorst had finished breakfasting with her niece, Mrs. Cooper. The two started to go upstairs together to the second floor, where Miss Van Vorst's room was situated. The latter entered her apartment which is in the front of the house and her companion went to her room on the floor above. Exactly in what manner the unfortunate lady spent the time until her niece found her a few minutes later with her clothing aflame is not known, but much can be assumed from the appearance of the room. A wood fire was burning in the grate and a wicker chair was drawn before it. On entering after breakfast Miss Van Vorst had in all probability gone to the mantel to arrange some ornaments which the servant had displaced from their accustomed position. While thus engaged her clothing must have come in contact with a spark from the grate. Her cries brought Mrs. Cooper from the floor above and the servant from the kitchen to her assistance. Both arrived about the same time and found Miss Van Vorst standing near the door leading into the hall, with the lower portion of her dress on fire. In an instant Mrs. Cooper had a blanket wrapper around her aunt and the flames were extinguished before they had attacked any vital part. Attention was next directed to the chair and carpet before the fireplace, which were by this time aflame.

"In rushing from the mantel to summon help, Miss Van Vorst's burning garments had probably ignited the varnish of the chair. While buckets of water were being brought to put out the fire, without a word of warning of any sort Miss Van Vorst dropped to the floor of the room where they were all still standing. It was thought to be nothing but a fainting spell due to the excitement. The usual restoratives were applied, and Dr. Edward K. Henschel, living at No. 61, opposite, who was standing on his stoop at the time, was called in. An instant's examination showed him that life was extinct, and he gave as his opinion that death had been the result of fright and not of the burns, which had not extended further than her limbs. Word was sent immediately to the home of Robert Sewell, who is Miss Van Vorst's brother-in-law, and lives directly in the rear of her house. He came directly to the house, and after leaving directions that nothing should be disturbed until his return, he went to get a coroner. Coroner Messemer was found and returned with Mr. Sewell. He viewed the body and heard what Mrs. Cooper and the servant had to say. He expressed himself as satisfied that no inquest was necessary, and he issued a certificate of death in accordance with the facts as I have stated them.

"The dead woman had been in delicate health for many years. Her family physician, whom I saw this afternoon, expressed no surprise at her sudden death. He deemed it solely due to fright induced by the excitement about her niece's and her own narrow escape. Miss Van Vorst's father has been dead for many years, and she had lived alone with her niece in the house there she died."

USING KEROSENE TO AID REVENGE.

Theodore A. Ball, the foreman of Burt & Meyers's shoe manufactory in Pearl-st. in this city, lives with his wife and several young children in a neat three-story frame dwelling, No. 37 Kearney-st., Newark. The neighborhood is in the outskirts and the houses are all frame. Five months ago Mrs. Ball engaged as servant a colored woman, who gave the name of Ann Eliza Watson and said that she came from Virginia. The woman had no reference. Lately she got slack in her work, kept late hours, and be[illegible] impudent. On Thursday Mrs Meyers told her that [illegible] she did not mend her ways she would be discharged. This enraged her and she bought a gallon of kerosene oil and filled three lamps. The can was always kept in the kitchen. Ann Eliza was seen in the house at 9:30 p. m. At ten minutes to 10 o'clock Miss L. C. Foster, a friend who was in the parlor with Mr. and Mrs. Ball, said that there was smoke in the house. Going to the kitchen she saw smoke coming up through crevices in the cellar door. She opened the door and saw a volume of smoke and flames mounting up. Mr. Ball hurried to the engine-house a block away and half a dozen firemen with extinguishers ran to the house and quickly put out the flames. They found a large box filled with waste paper and completely saturated with kerosene. The box had been placed under a large, swinging wooden closet, and this, too, was soaked with oil. The can which had contained the oil was lying beside the box. Ann Eliza Watson was not to be seen. She did not return during the night and failed to appear yesterday. The police wish to find her.

LOSSES IN VARIOUS PLACES.

AKRON, Ohio, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—C. R. Maurer's flouring mill with its contents was entirely consumed this morning by fire. The origin is unknown. It was the only mill in Ohio that used eight reductions in making wheat flour. The loss is $36,000; insurance $19,250.

CORRY, Penn., Jan. 1 (*Special*).—The Corry City Flouring Mills, owned by Starbird, Hammond & Allen, were burned to-day. The building was equipped with improved machinery for manufacturing flour by the roller process, and had a capacity of 150 barrels a day. Loss $30,000; insurance $23,000.

TAUNTON, Mass., Jan. 1.—Fire damaged the button manufactory of H. L. Cushman & Co. and the tack manufactory of Anthony Cushman & Co. from $15,000 to $18,000; fully insured. The fire caught in the japanning room of the button manufacturing company in an alleged fire-proof building, and rapidly spread to the tack building adjoining.

NEW-ORLEANS, Jan. 1.—A dispatch to *The Times-Democrat* reports the destruction by fire of C. M. Sitman & Co.'s store and stock at Greensburg, La. Loss, $7,000, covered by insurance in the Lancashire, North British, Mercantile and Phœnix—Brooklyn—insurance companies.

LIMA, Ohio, Jan. 1.—The house of William Cheney was destroyed by fire last night. Loss, $4,000; no insurance.

HUNTINGTON, Ind., Jan. 1.—Haffner's bakery was burned yesterday. Loss, $3,000; insurance ample.

MONTROSE, Mo., Jan. 1.—The large warehouse of Johnson & Buck, and another building occupied as storerooms, were destroyed by fire yesterday, and five dwelling houses were torn down to prevent the destruction of the entire business part of the village. Loss on buildings and stock, $60,000; insurance, $25,000, in Chicago and New-York companies.

A BLIND BEGGAR BURNED TO DEATH.

FATAL ENDING OF A NEW YEAR'S PARTY IN A SQUALID ATTIC.

Doubtless many charitably disposed people will remember giving occasional coppers and nickels to a blind beggar whose footsteps were guided by a lame woman. The woman hobbled along on one leg and a crutch, and the blind man, when they "worked" the upper part of the city, called attention to his presence by singing ballads which were intended to be pathetic, though the beggar's voice, crude and harsh, was ill-suited to that sort of of melody. The beggar didn't sing in the business part of the city, because that would bring a policeman down on him. The man and the woman were known among their associates as "Blind Mike" and "Lame Annie." They also shared the name of Mulligan between them. Whether this had ever been sanctioned by a marriage ceremony their friends neither knew nor cared. Certain it was that their united afflictions won for them more money than either could have made alone.

Blind Mike has coarse features, which but for the sightless eyes would awaken only feelings of aversion, and Lame Annie's face shows all too plainly the marks of dissipation. Her hair is gray and straggling and does not often come in contact with a comb. But they prospered amazingly for beggars and were able to find warmth and shelter at night. A week ago they hired an attic room in a "rookery" at No. 47 James-st. They paid the first week's rent, $2 50, in advance. The room is small, and one can stand upright in it only near the door, but it was furnished with a stove, a bedstead, a piece of carpet and a chest of drawers. Otherwise, they could have had it for a trifle over a dollar a week. Their neighbors in the house were all wretchedly poor people. They concerned themselves little with Mike and Annie, except occasionally to envy them their easy method of earning a livelihood.

This season of the year is the beggars' harvest time, and Mike and Annie made so much money that yesterday they felt justified in inviting another blind beggar, Michael Parsons, to share their hospitality. He had no afflicted companion to enforce his appeals to charitable people, and therefore was not so well off. The three took to the rooms several pails of beer, and arrived at that condition which many people of better social standing are not strangers to on New Year's Day. But Annie was not so far intoxicated as to be entirely unmindful of business, and late in the afternoon hurried her partner out into the street for a begging expedition in the neighborhood, leaving their guest lying on the bed with a pipe in his mouth.

Peter Finn was passing through James-st. about 5:30 o'clock and saw smoke pouring out of the attic window. He told Officer Condon, who hastened to the nearest fire-alarm box, while Finn hurried up stairs. John Brown, who with his wife and several small children occupied a room adjoining that of the beggars, had already scented the smoke, and had just opened the door of the attic room. It was filled with flames and smoke. Poor Michael Parsons, with his clothes all charred and his flesh blackened, was stretched out on the floor. With great difficulty, and not before Brown had his hair singed, they managed to haul the unfortunate beggar out of the room. He was still breathing, but died before an ambulance arrived. His body was taken to the Oak Street Police Station. As he was in a drunken stupor, it is probable that the smoke rendered him entirely unconscious before the flames reached him. The people in the house heard no cries. The firemen put out the flames before they extended to any of the other rooms in the house. The damage to the room and furniture was trivial.

A couple of hours after the fire occurred Annie was found in a beer-shop near by seated on a barrel and still showing the effects of her recent potations. She told a story which neither Brown nor Finn corroborated. She said that she and Mike had returned to the room soon after leaving it. On opening the door she found the bed burning. With Mike's aid she tried to awaken Parsons and haul him out of the room, but couldn't succeed before they were driven out by the flames. Then they made their way to the street. Unfortunately Annie's character for veracity is not good even when sober. She said that she was thirty-three years old, a statement which her gray locks and wrinkles flatly contradicted. She hadn't finished the story when Blind Mike reeled into the room.

"Whash massher?" he asked.

"Shut yer mouth," said Annie, "yer'll git arristed."

"Don' care 'f I do," he replied, adding with an oath, "Gimme a drink."

SCORCHED BY A FLAMING CHRISTMAS TREE.

Herrman Krause, age forty-three, of No. 109 East Fourth-st., finished the holiday week last night by having a Christmas tree for his children and their friends. A little after 7 o'clock the tree caught fire from one of the tapers. Krause and the other grown-up guests succeeded in putting out the flames before any great amount of damage was caused, but in doing so he was severely burned about the hands. An ambulance was called and the burns dressed. There was great excitement among the children and the festivities were brought to an abrupt close.

MYSTERIOUS SHOOTING.

DES MOINES, Iowa, Jan. 1.—Mrs. Frank Milroy told the police last night that her husband had committed suicide. Upon their entering the house Milroy was found on the bed with a bullet hole in his breast, just over the heart. The wife said that they went to bed at 8 o'clock and at 9:30 her husband awakened her with the words, "Fannie, goodbye," and immediately fired the fatal shot. She did not appear at all distressed, and according to her statement, must have waited an hour and a half before telling any one of the shooting. The three children of the Milroys were at a theatre at the time, and she did not send for them. Another mysterious thing is that there is no powder mark on Milroy's skin, though Mrs. Milroy says he fired the pistol close to his breast. She also stated that they had been quarrelling all day and that Milroy had threatened to kill her. The circumstances are thought to warrant Mrs. Milroy's arrest.

SUSPECTING THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO.

CHICAGO, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—The enormous quantity of grain received by the Baltimore and Ohio roap at Chicago during the week for shipment to the seaboard amounting to more than 5,000 tons, has raised suspicions that it is employing surreptitious means and that the transactions involve rate cutting. The tonnage it is asserted is out of all proportion to the percentage that it usually carries, and some reason not visible on the surface is influencing the diversion of traffic. This feeling not only obtains here, but also in the territory south and west, where the Baltimore and Ohio is experiencing the same "boom." The matter has been referred to the trunk line presidents.

ORDERED TO GIVE UP HIS STAR AND CLUB.

CHICAGO, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—Two young women, employed in a downtown store, were confronted by Policeman Michael McMahon, in Evergreen-ave., while on their way home last evening. McMahon seized one of them and asked her to meet him at a skating rink in the neighborhood. The girl was much frightened, but succeeded in struggling away from the officer and joining her sister. Their father, John Gordon, visited the West North Avenue Police Station with them and entered a complaint. McMahon was called in by telephone. He was under the influence of liquor and Lieutenant Bischoff ordered him to give up his star and club. He has not been on duty since.

HIGHWAYMEN IN CHICAGO.

CHICAGO, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—John Kerwin was knocked down and robbed at Union and Washington sts. early this morning. Cornelius Shannon and George Smith, colored, were arrested. Frank Nickerson, a coal dealer, was knocked down and robbed of a watch at Wando-place and North Halsted-st., about 9 o'clock last night. Alexander Height and Henry Reuhl were identified by Nickerson as two of his assailants. Joseph Mullen was attacked by three men while walking near his home in Canalport-ave. last night. His assailants searched his pockets but found nothing. Mullen was struck across the head and seriously injured. He could give no description of the men.

OUTGROWTHS OF THE PLYMOUTH PLAGUE.

WILKESBARRE, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—The preliminary papers in fourteen remarkable suits for damages were filed here yesterday. The suits are against the Plymouth Water Company and the plaintiffs are all residents of Plymouth and near relatives of some of those who died from the fever during last summer's epidemic. They allege that the fever originated through the impure water supply, and claim that the contamination of the water was caused by the carelessness and neglizence of the Water Company. Each suit is for $10,000 damages. The names of the plaintiffs are J. M. Shaw, William Buckingham, Terence O'Hara, Samuel Hawkins, Clare J. Gilroy, James Hicks, Joseph R. Thomas, Charlotte Reese, Margaret Richards, John Flannigan, William J. Evans, Catharine Berry, John M. Reeves and Enoch Q. Jones. Other suits of the same nature will be entered soon, or about fifty in all.

MILITIA QUIETING THE DISTURBED POLES.

DETROIT, Jan. 1.—All is quiet among the Polish church people. It is thought that the presence of the police and the knowledge that the militia are under orders has had a quieting effect.

DESTRUCTIVE FLAMES IN DETROIT.

THE LOSS ESTIMATED AT $1,500,000.

D. M. FERRY'S SEED HOUSE BURNED—FIREMEN KILLED—INSURANCES.

DETROIT, Jan. 1.—Smoke was observed at 9 o'clock this morning coming from D. M. Ferry & Co.'s mammoth building on Brush-st., between Croghan and Lafayette sts. An alarm was quickly turned in, second and third alarms following in quick succession, there being fears of a big conflagration in the heart of the business part of of the city. The fire department turned out in force and soon surrounded the burning building with the hose. The flames had started in the packing department on Lafayette and Brush sts. and soon enveloped the whole building, which was a mere shell, having but one solid wall inside of the outer walls. The firemen kept at their work, but all efforts seemed futile, the flames spreading rapidly until at one time there seemed a probability that the whole district in which the burning building is situated was doomed. Buildings on opposite side of Brush and Croghan sts. caught a number of times but the department managed to keep the flames from totally destroying them. Across the alley from Ferry & Co.'s building in the same square, and facing on Randolph-st., are White's Grand Theatre and the Wesson Block, and a small building used as a restaurant. The flames leaped across the alley and began to eat into the theatre. First the roof caught and soon fell in with a crash, firing the whole interior of the building, after driving away the men who had been working on the Ferry Block through the windows of the theatre.

An immense crowd blocked the streets in every direction, and at times were in the way of the firemen. By 10 o'clock the Ferry Block was a mass of flames and the walls had begun to fall, creating something of a panic among the throng of idle spectators. Numerous narrow escapes occurred among the firemen who worked close to the flames, wrapped in repeatedly soaked, but rapidly drying clothes. By 11 o'clock the firemen were compelled to turn their attention more to saving the buildings on the opposite side of Randolph-st., although still keeping numerous streams of water playing on the burning building. The men of No. 3 Fire Company raised a ladder in front of the theatre to get a better chance at the flames. Finding the rapidly advancing fire would prevent any effective work at that point, they were descending the ladder and had about reached the ground when several feet of the cornice fell on the ladder wagon. Captain Richard Fibbin was struck on the head by the bricks and instantly killed and Fireman White was badly but not fatally injured.

Soon after the flames spread to the Wesson block, at Randolph and Croghan sts., and that building was soon enveloped in flames. Although the buildings across Croghan-st. were threatened and caught once or twice, the firemen managed to keep it within the square named, and by 12 o'clock it was fully under control. To-night the flames are still raging fiercely, but have been confined within the walls of the buildings already mentioned. During the worst of the fire the wind had been from the south, and the single building at Lafayette and Randolph sts. was not seriously injured, but all the rest of the square was a total loss.

The burned district belonged to the Brush estate. D. M. Ferry and Co. built their mammoth establishment six years ago. White's Theatre was originally built to accommodate the Peninsular Saengerbund, the Michigan offshoot of the North American Saengerbund. The company was organized in 1880, and this music hall was built at that time, being opened with an annual "fest" on August 30, 1880. D. M. Ferry & Co.'s building occupied half of the square, being one of the largest in the city. Their feed business was probably the largest in the United States. In the building burned to-day 400 people are usually employed, besides 400 more employed on their immense farms outside the city. It was providentially that the fire occurred on a holiday, as otherwise the loss of life would have probably been very great. Definite figures of losses cannot be given, but the total will reach not less than $1,500,000. The stock alone in D. M. Ferry & Co.'s is estimated to have been worth $1,000,000 to $1,200,000, and their building was valued at $250,000. As to the origin of the fire there are no well devised theories. Some of the employes hint at incendiarism, saying that there were no fires in the part of the building first attacked by the flames and that some outside agency must have been responsible for the fire. Officers of the company are completely at a loss to account for the origin of the fire. The insurance on D. M. Ferry & Co.'s is distributed as follows:

Lion of England $30,000. The following companies have policies for $10,000 each: Michigan Fire and Marine, Phœnix of London, Orient, of Hartford, Commercial Union of England, Home of New-York, American of Boston, Firearms of Newark, Mercantile of Boston, Prescott of Boston and the London Liverpool and Globe. The following have $7,500 policies: North British and Mercantile, Phœnix of Brooklyn and the Merchants of New-York. There are $5,000 policies in the Imperial of England, Buffalo German, Firemans of Dayton, Sun of California, Pennsylvania of Pittsburg, Connecticut of Hartford, Long Island of New-York, Detroit Fire and Marine, City of London, Providence of Washington, St. Paul Fire and Marine, London and Lancashire, Norwich Union of England, Phœnix of Hartford, New-York Alliance, Niagara of New-York, Guardians of England, German American of New-York, Washington Fire and Marine, Royal of England, Queen of England, British American of Toronto, Western of Toronto, Rutgers of New-York, Lancashire, Central of New-York, New-Hampshire, Sun of England, Rochester German, Fire Association of Philadelphia, Northern of England, American of New-York, American of Philadelphia, Insurance Association of North America, Hartford, California, United Firemen of Philadelphia, Cooper of Dayton, German of Pittsburg, Citizens of Pittsburg, Fire Insurance Association of England, Springfield, Kings County and the Ætna. There are $3,000 policies in the Peoples' of Pittsburg and the Grand Rapids. There are $2,500 policies in the Westchester of New-York, Clinton of New-York, Rhode Island Underwriters, Peoples of New-York, Mercantile of Cleveland, United States, of New-York, and the German, of Cincinnati. The two following policies are for $2,000 each: London Assurance Company and County of Philadelphia. The Firemen's Fund of California has a policy of $1,000. Total, $460,000.

The rest of the buildings were in one batch, and were insured as follows: Niagara, $1,500; National, $2,500; American Central, $2,500; Trans-Atlantic, 1,500; Boylston, $1,500; Union, $1,500; Phœnix, $3,000; Security, $1,000; Washington, $2,000; Queen, $2,000; Royal, $2,500; Royal Fire Association of England, $1,000; Fire Association of Philadelphia, $2,000; Mercantile, $1,000, and Springfield, $1,500. Total, $27,000.

Charles O. White was insured as follows: Irish America, $1,000, and Franklin, $2,000. Total, $3,000.

Neighboring buildings were damaged, but figures and insurances could not be obtained.

BIG FELLOW RAFFLED AND MISSING.

THE HORSE SPIRITED AWAY AFTER BEING DRAWN BY AN OLD MAN WHO DOES CHORES.

ELMIRA, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—L. D. Moore, who has been well known in sporting circles, has been arrested and held in bail for examination. The trotting horse Big Fellow, with a record of 2:25, has been in the hands of Moore as owner or agent, and some time ago Moore issued tickets to the number of 800 at $1 each for the sale of the horse by lottery. All the tickets but four were sold on the condition that the drawing would take place as soon as all of the tickets were disposed of. Finally the lottery took place, and Eben McCall, an old man who did chores for a living and who it seems could get no other pay for services rendered Moore than three lottery tickets, drew the lucky number. Efforts were made to cheat the old man, but the better element of the people who held tickets denounced the attempted swindle and Moore's arrest followed. Last night the horse was spirited away, it is thought, over the Pennsylvania line, and detectives are now working up the case. In addition to the horse fraud interested persons will prosecute Moore for a violation of the lottery law of the State.

THE STRIKE OF THE COAL MINERS.

NEARLY TWO THOUSAND MEN AT WORK AND THE LONG FIGHT DRAWING TO A CLOSE.

PITTSBURG, Jan. The long strike of the river coal miners is virtually over. The miners of Walton, Hays, Risher and Munhall, have returned to work at the 2½ cent rate, and there are now almost two thousand men at work at that price. The call issued for to-morrow's convention does not meet the approval of a large number of miners, as they seem to consider it an acknowledgement of defeat. Others, however, assert that it is the most commendable course to be pursued, alleging that with such a large number at work it would be impolitic to continue the strike much longer. The reason for the taking of the step by the officers of the Knights of Labor is that all attempts to get those miners who are working to throw down their picks have proved futile.

THREE FISHERMEN LOST ON THE BANKS.

GLASGOW, Mass., Jan. 1.—The schooner Lizzie Griffin, which arrived this morning from the Grand Banks, reports that on December 17 Louis Banes, George Cummings and William Arnold, three of her crew, were lost by the capsizing of their dory. They were all unmarried and natives of Nova Scotia.

LEPROSY IN A COLONY OF SCANDINAVIANS.

ST. PAUL, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—A dispatch from Lansing, Iowa, on the Mississippi River, states that the existence of numerous cases of leprosy have been discovered in Houston County, Minn. All the victims are Scandinavians.

A BANK PRESIDENT MISSING.

WILLIAM H. McNEIL AN EMBEZZLER.

GONE TO CANADA WITH $100,000—THE LANCASTER NATIONAL BANK SUSPENDS.

BOSTON, Jan. 1 (*Special*).—The Lancaster National Bank, of Clinton, Mass., closed its doors yesterday and refused to transact any business whatever, pending an investigation. The president, William H. McNeil, it is reported, fled to Canada. The institution has been placed in the hands of Bank Examiner Gatchell. His investigation is not finished, but the indications are that McNeil is an embezzler to the amount of about $100,000. As matters now stand it seems probable that the entire sum will be a dead loss to depositors, as McNeil gave no bonds, nor did he oblige his cashier to give any, and he does not leave a large amount of available property. He made his home in Lancaster and had a house in Hyannis and a farm in New-Hampshire. But they are more or less mortgaged. The Lancaster Savings Bank, which failed ten years ago to-day, had $72,000 deposited in the National Bank, and it is believed that at least one-half of this amount was stolen by McNeil. The disappearing president took with him also about $10,000 of securities on which he had placed his name and put in the bank.

Suspicion has recently strongly attached to McNeil's course, and if he had remained at home a day longer he would have been arrested. He left Lowell on Tuesday and went to Clinton and called at the bank and replenished his pocket with all the available assets that could be transferred from the safe, not neglecting to take a large amount of the securities which lay there, and on many of which his name figured, obtaining in this way, it is surmised, nearly one-half the total deficit. Then entering a carriage he drove rapidly to Fitchburg. He had a companion with him, a stranger to people in Clinton, and whose connection with the affair remains an enigma. The two took the evening train for the North, where all trace of them was lost.

Chief Wade, of the State detective force, is at work on the case. McNeil is not known to have lived fast and is believed to have lost money in speculations. His wife owns valuable real estate in Boston, but that is in her name and cannot be touched by her husband's creditors. One of McNeil's ventures was in the Low Cattle Company of Cheyenne. He was also interested in marble works at Rutland, Vt., and in the Hyannis Land Company. He is about forty-eight years old, and has a wife and four children. The cashier of the bank says there are about $227,000 in deposits, $20,000 surplus and $14,000 undivided profits. The bank holds promissory notes of the Low Cattle Company to the amount of $10,000, and notes indorsed by that concern for $20,000. These are supposed to be good.

The Lancaster Bank was organized in 1836, with $200,000 capital, and became a National Bank in 1864. It was formerly at Lancaster, but was moved to Clinton in June, 1863, when it became the Lancaster National Bank. Last January when the directors held their meeting, marked exceptions were taken to the business methods of the institution, and H. C. Greely, a member of the Governor's Council, in plain and unmeasured terms spoke for those differing from the management relative to the course pursued. Cashier W. H. McNeil listened to the scathing denunciation of his methods, but made no reply other than to say, with a peculiar smile, "Gentlemen, we will now proceed to vote for directors," the result being that W. H. McNeil, of Lancaster; Ira A. Lowe, of Wyoming; General W. R. Bachelder, of Lowell; C. L. Hosmer, of Newton; F. C. McNeil and William Russell, of Lancaster; Jerome Gardner, of Shirley, and Alfred Page, of Ayer, were elected on the board, together with Elisha Brimhall and J. E. Howe, of Lancaster. Neither of the last two mentioned has ever qualified. Mr. Greely and D. B. Ingalls, recalcitrants, were dropped. W. H. McNeil was subsequently chosen president. The charter of the bank was extended in October, 1884, just before which Bank Examiner Needham made a special examination and pronounced it in first-class condition. On November 17 Bank Examiner Gatchell made an examination but was dissatisfied with some of the loans, and in his report to the Treasury Department at Washington he sent a more extended account of affairs than usual. It was ten years ago that the Lancaster Savings Bank suspended. W. H. McNeil being at that time its treasurer, although the causes leading to its suspension arose prior to his assuming that position. Mr. McNeil, Elisha Brimhall, of Lancaster, and Benjamin Snow, of Fitchburg, were appointed receivers. The affairs of that bank have never been settled.

FITCHBURG, Mass., Jan. 1.—W. H. McNeil, the missing president of the Lancaster Bank, of Clinton, was at the depot here about 7:45 p. m. on Tuesday, and probably took the Cheshire train to the North. One of his acquaintances here twice tried to speak to him, but McNeil took no notice of him.

LOWELL, Mass., Jan. 1.—The City Institution for Savings has $20,000 deposited in the Lancaster Bank, which has been regarded with distrust for some months. McNeil's name was refused by one bank here more than a year ago. The city institution has 11,000 depositors and a surplus of $400,000. Charles J. Glidden, Treasurer of the Erie Telephone Company, is one of the small depositors in the Clinton Bank. There are but few others here.

FALLING INTO A PIT SET WITH KNIVES.

THE DANGER OF ATTEMPTING TO ENFORCE PROHIBITION IN THE WEST.

DES MOINES, Jan. 1.—The path of the officers who attempt to enforce the prohibition law in Iowa is not always strewn with roses. On Wednesday night Deputy-Sheriff Pierce went to the liquor store of Lorenzo Ill, in the Des Moines House, with a search warrant. Not finding any contraband goods in the barroom he tried a door leading to the cellar, but found it locked. When the barkeeper refused to open the door Pierce broke it open. Descending the staircase by a dim light he saw a beer-keg in the cellar and started for it, but walked into a pit about nine feet deep, the bottom of which was set with sharpened stakes. Pierce threw out his arms and caught on the sides of the hole, and by the aid of Constable Hansen, who accompanied him, he was rescued before falling on the stakes. The officers say that the pit had been freshly dug and had every appearance of having been especially constructed for a trap. When released Pierce seized the beer and carried it upstairs and placed it in the hands of Constable Hansen.

Meanwhile the barkeeper had sent for the police. Two officers came up and arrested Pierce on a charge of injuring the building. Lorenzo Ill also filed a complaint against him for malicious injury to a building.

SAVED BY A FOREMAN'S COOLNESS.

NARROW ESCAPE OF TEN WORKMEN FROM DROWNING IN A PIT.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Jan. 1.—The coolness and heroism of John Beckley, foreman of a gang of street workmen, probably saved several lives yesterday. Ten men under his direction were repairing a leak in a forty-inch main at Eighth-st. and Eggleston-ave. They had dug a hole about twenty feet square and ten feet deep in the middle of the street, and were quietly at work, when suddenly a sound like an underground explosion was heard from the east bank of the cavity. Then the earth on one side began to slip away rapidly and was followed by an overwhelming flood of water.

"Jump for your lives, boys"; the foreman shouted "Climb out, climb out, or drown."

The men began to scramble up, but it was almost impossible to get out. The water poured in like a mill-race and the heavy banks of earth began crumbling in. It looked as though the men would be caught and drowned like rats in a pit before help could be given, when Beckley called to them to climb up on his shoulders, and in that manner every man was saved. Beckley was the last to be pulled out of the ditch, and when he left it the water was up to his armpits. Just as he was pulled out two sides of the hole caved in, carrying several tons of earth into the place where the men had been struggling but a moment before.

PERIL OF A CABOOSE FULL OF PASSENGERS.

GALVESTON, Jan. 1.—A dispatch to *The News* from Dallas says: A collision occurred yesterday morning on the Houston and Texas Central Railway at Garrett Station, by which a passenger engine and caboose and three freight cars were damaged and set on fire. The caboose was full of passengers, most of whom sustained injuries. W. H. McGraw and the five-year-old son of Mr. Darby, both of Dallas, were seriously injured. The passengers were brought back to Dallas this evening, where the injured were cared for.

QUICK STEAMSHIP PASSAGE.

BOSTON, Jan. 1.—The quickest steamer passage ever made between Liverpool and Boston was recorded when the Cunard steamer Pavonia, Captain Woolfenden, arrived in Boston harbor at 7:30 a. m. today. She left Liverpool on December 23 at 4 p. m., passed Fastnet on December 24 about 3 p. m., and made her anchorage at East Boston about 9 a. m. to-day, thus making the passage to this port in 8 days 15½ hours, and to the wharf in 8 days 17 hours.

THE CUSTOM HOUSE INVESTIGATION.

BOSTON, Jan. 1.—A meeting of prominent merchants of this city was held this afternoon to discuss the question of alleged undervaluation of foreign imports by customs officials of the Port of New-York, and to devise means for aiding the special committee appointed by the United States Senate to investigate the subject. Remarks were made by John W. Candler, J. C. Howe, ex-Collector Worthington, John D. Long and others, the tenor of their remarks being that by this undervaluation New-York importers were given a vast advantage over New-England merchants, who were unable to compete with them. A committee was appointed to take such action as it may deem necessary to protect and advance the interests of the New-England importers and manufacturers, and to see that they are properly represented before the Senate Committee in the investigation.

CONSPIRATORS AT WORK IN SPAIN.

RIOTOUS ACTS OF INSURGENT BANDS.

ARRESTING ALLEGED PLOTTERS—REPUBLICAN LEADERS DISCUSSING REVOLUTION.

MADRID, Jan. 1.—A band of Republican revolutionists made an attempt to-day to destroy a railway bridge in the Sierra Morena Mountains. Five members of the band were arrested. It is reported that several persons have been arrested and imprisoned at Ciudad Real on suspicion of being implicated in a revolutionary conspiracy.

At a banquet given by the Republicans in honor of Señor Zorilla, the speakers representing a majority of those present urged a revolution against the Government. The minority, headed by Señor Salmeron, an eminent Republican leader, protested against violence, which, they declared, would be harmful of the party's interests. They strongly urged that help be sought from the Moderates.

A RECEPTION GIVEN BY MR. WALLER.

LONDON, Jan. 1.—Thomas M. Waller, the United States Consul-General, gave a brilliant New-Year reception at the rooms of the St. George's Club in Hanover Square to-day. The rooms were decorated with flags. Nearly 1,000 Americans and many leading persons in society were present. Mr. Phelps, the United States Minister, stood by the side of Mr. Waller and assisted in receiving the guests, who were introduced by Mr. Penfield. Mr. Waller said that the diplomatic relations between England and the United States were of the happiest kind and that as far as any man could foresee such relations would be maintained. Among the guests were Thomas O'Connor, Justin McCarthy, Pulestion, Temple, Jennings, Bagnalay, Hallet, Labouchere, Ellis, Kimber and Vincent, members of Parliament; the consuls, Messrs. Rassell and Hale; Sir John Macdonald and Sir Charles Tupper, of Canada; Whistler and Boughton, the artists; President Stephen, and Messrs. Stanley, Irving, Bigelow, Whitely, Yates, Harte, Nordenfelt, Maxim, Mapleson, Foli, Wyndham, Wellcome, Maclean, Leland, Moore, Bulling and Bussy.

TO PUT DOWN THE MEXICAN REBELLION.

MATAMORAS, Mex., Jan. 1.—General Miguel Gomez arrived here yesterday direct from the City of Mexico and immediately issued an order assuming command of the Federal troops in this State (Tamaulipas). General Sebastian Villa Real has been appointed to the immediate command of the forces in this city. General Francisco Estrado supersedes General Lauro Cavasos as commander of the frontier troops between Camargo and Nuevo Leon. Pronunciamentos are being issued in the interior. The State will surely be placed under martial law in the interest of Rubio, the present chief of the Federal Cabinet, father-in-law of President Diaz and an aspirant for the Presidency of the republic.

MIER, State of Tamaulipas, Mex., Jan. 1.—The fighting on Wednesday proves to have been a battle between a large band of smugglers and the customs guards, in which one smuggler was killed and several wounded. The customs officials captured a valuable lot of silks, laces and velvets.

ENGLAND CEDING UPPER BURMAH TO CHINA.

RANGOON, Jan. 1.—The proclamation announcing the annexation of Burmah to the British Empire was read here to-day. There was a grand parade and a large concourse of natives gathered to hear the reading of the proclamation. England cedes to China part of Upper Burmah in order to make the Chinese and Indian frontiers contigu