

Cloudy. South Winds. Becoming Easterly.

LEADS LOCAL PAPERS IN AMOUNT OF READING MATTER

STARTED IT FOR ROBBERY

Startling Evidence in the Theater Panic Investigation.

WAS A FIXED UP PLAN

Coroner's Jury, However, Would Not Believe the Witness and Brought in a Verdict of No One to Blame.

Baltimore, Dec. 29.—There were sixteen funerals today of persons who lost their lives in the frightful panic last Friday night at the old Front Street Theater.

All of those who were killed in the stampede have now been interred. The death list has not been increased beyond the original figures sent out by the United Press—25—and it is not probable that there will be any immediate additions to the number.

Those of the injured who are at the hospitals are improving and so far as can be learned those who were removed to their homes immediately after the disaster are in a fair way to recover from their injuries.

BLAMED THE AUDIENCE

A coroner's jury was in session for several hours today in an attempt to learn just how the terrible accident happened. After sifting the testimony of a large number of witnesses, the jury returned a verdict stating that "there was no ground for the stampede; that the cry of fire which was raised was entirely without foundation; that if the audience had remained in their seats no one would have been injured."

"We can attach blame to no one except the audience itself, which became panic-stricken and raised the cry of fire simply because some one had ignited a leakage in a gas pipe, which leakage was so trivial that witnesses testified that it could have remained burning for hours without damage."

SOME STARTLING TESTIMONY

Jacob Schneiderman's testimony created a sensation in the court. He testified that a gang of fifty persons—his own people—were responsible for the horror. It was their intention to cause a stampede for the purpose of robbery—jewelry, money, clothing, anything which they could take from the excited people.

The fact was added, however, that the old death trap was rented, whenever a tenant could be found for \$15 per night, and that the owners were somewhat indifferent to its structural or other defects and that illuminating gas had been escaping in the theater for days. Three persons were made ill at the theater last Tuesday night by inhaling the gas-filled atmosphere.

SNOWSTORMS IN THE WEST

Tragic on Several Railroads Practically at Standstill.

St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 29.—Dispatches from the West indicate that a big snow storm has seriously interfered with traffic. The storm began Friday and so completely blocked the switchback on the Great Northern on the west slope of the Cascade Range that the schedule was sadly interrupted.

SHOT THROUGH THE WINDOW

West Virginian Killed His Neighbor for a Burglar.

Huntington, W. Va., Dec. 29.—At 10 o'clock this morning, Howard Newsom, a farmer living at the north of Salt Creek, on the Sandy, heard some one on his front porch. He took his rifle and fired through the window, almost instantly killing a neighbor, named Fletcher Wallace. Newsom claims that the man was trying to burglarize his house, but Wallace's family claims he went to see Newsom to borrow a horse. Both were favorably known, and Newsom will be arrested.

SUICIDE OF POLITICIAN

He Cut an Artery and Then Shot Himself.

Hillsboro, Ill., Dec. 29.—Brewer A. Hendricks, a saloonkeeper and prominent Democratic politician, committed suicide yesterday afternoon by cutting an artery in his arm and then shooting himself. He was county clerk of Montgomery county eight years and was nominated for the third time by the Democratic party last year, but was defeated. He had been drinking heavily and brooding over financial troubles for several days. He leaves a wife and two children.

SENSATIONAL SUICIDE

Victim Wanted His Heart Punctured Before He Was Buried.

Salt Lake, Utah, Dec. 29.—A sensational suicide occurred at Beaver, Utah, yesterday. Fred White, discoverer of the Rob Roy mine, and at one time very wealthy, took morphine. In a letter he called down curses on those who had robbed him. He also declared that his heart should be punctured two or three times after his body was found in order that death might be certain. He had a horror of being buried alive.

Too Much Carbolic Acid

Columbus, O., Dec. 29.—John C. Kelly, of Mount Sterling, Ky., aged twenty-six, committed suicide at the Town Street House today by taking carbolic acid. He left a note stating that he killed himself because his aunt, who lives here, did not invite him to dinner on Christmas Day.

Canon Warr Dead

London, Dec. 29.—Canon Warr died at Chidwell, near Liverpool, today, aged eighty-one years. He was formerly a pioneer at Oakville, Toronto, on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

JUSTICE BREWER DENIES IT

Says He Was Not Offered a Place on the Commission.

He Recommends Chief Justice Fuller, and Says a Harrison Cannot Afford to Serve Upon It.

St. Louis, Dec. 29.—Justice David J. Brewer, of the United States Supreme Court, is in this city on route from San Antonio, Texas, where he has been at the bedside of a sick daughter, to Washington. He left tonight.

Judge Brewer said the report that he had been asked to accept a place on the Venezuelan commission was untrue. He said: "I would not be surprised if Chief Justice Fuller were tendered a place on the commission. He and the President are warm friends. The chief justice would make an excellent man for the place, but although he is wise and is capable of doing an immense amount of work, I do not think he would accept the position. Had he then there be too great for any man."

"As to General Harrison, I do not think that he would accept a position on the commission. He can probably make more money out of his law practice and not do such hard work. And then, although I do not know, he may be a candidate."

"Would the fact that he held a place on this commission seriously interfere with his candidacy, in your opinion?" was asked.

"It would not help him any," replied Justice Brewer. "If he were a candidate, he would most probably want to be where the politicians gather, and he would not have the time to do this if he sat on the commission."

Continuing, Judge Brewer said: "Speaker Reed is now on trial, as it were. He has a position that is a difficult one to fill, and the next few months will make or break him. McKinley will enter the convention with the most votes, but I do not think that he will be able to control it. In that case they will compromise upon some man acceptable to both, and it would not surprise me if that man were Allison."

KILLED BY A POSTMASTER

Princeton Citizen Shot in an Illinois Town.

Weldon, Ill., Dec. 29.—Dr. William H. Taylor, a member of the lower house of the general assembly from the Thirtieth district, was shot and instantly killed at 8 o'clock last night by John H. Pace, the postmaster of this town. Pace pleads self-defense, while the friends of his victim assert that the shooting was premeditated and the result of jealousy.

Dr. Taylor had practiced medicine here for twenty-eight years, and was popular with all classes. Pace had been separated from his wife for over a year, and having been charged with the cause of his family troubles. To these charges little attention was paid at the time, Dr. Taylor's reputation being such as to cast general discredit upon them.

Bent on securing his mail, the doctor entered the postoffice shortly before 8 o'clock last night. While standing at the window, it is said, he demanded of Postmaster Pace an explanation of a letter which he had heard the latter had written regarding a suit he (Pace) was prosecuting against the representative.

LABOR JOINS HANDS

American Federation and the Chicago Trades Assembly Annulment.

Chicago, Dec. 29.—Peace is restored among the labor associations of this city. The terms of settlement of existing difficulties suggested by the American Federation of Labor at its recent meeting held in New York, were accepted tonight by the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly's committee, which had previously accepted by the Chicago Labor Congress, the trouble is all ended.

MOONSHINE KILLS AN OFFICER

Huntington, W. Va., Dec. 29.—Deputy United States marshals have been running down men engaged in the manufacture of moonshine in the interior for some time. This evening at the mouth of Horse Creek, fifty miles south, Deputy Filmore Dameron, with the assistance of George Porter, was trying to secure John Owens, wanted on a warrant, when the latter fired at them, shooting Porter through the heart. He escaped, but a posse was immediately organized and pursued the murderer into the Eastern Kentucky hills.

PERISHED IN THE FLAMES

St. Petersburg, Dec. 29.—A fire occurred in a disorderly house in this city today and five girls and a man perished in the flames. It is believed that the victims were intoxicated and that their stupor prevented them from realizing that the house was burning or that they were in any danger.

LUMBER MILL BURNED

Cairo, Ill., Dec. 29.—The plant of the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company, formerly known as the Wolverine Mill, was destroyed by fire yesterday. The loss is estimated at \$100,000. It was insured for \$70,000. Seven refrigerators and three freight cars belonging to the Big Four Railroad, standing near by were also destroyed.

BARN BURNED BY TRAMPS

Norristown, Pa., Dec. 29.—The barn on William Rittenhouse's farm at Jeffersonville, near here, was burned this evening. Besides the loss of the season's crops, twenty-seven cows and four horses perished. The fire is supposed to have been started by tramps. The loss is \$17,000; insurance \$10,500.

MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE

Omaha, Neb., Dec. 29.—The jury in the murder case of Claude H. Hoover this morning brought in a verdict of murder in the first degree and fixed the penalty at death. Hoover killed Sam Thibault, his brother-in-law and a councilman, Dec. 18.

FIRE FORCE INADEQUATE

Department Hampered by Lack of Men and Apparatus.

ONE ENGINE TO A MILE

Millions of Property Constantly Menaced by the Inadequacy of the System—Some Startling Facts Developed by Chief Parris' Report. No Other City So Poorly Equipped.

The fire department, notwithstanding its high degree of efficiency, is seriously hampered by its lack of an adequate force and the necessary apparatus to protect the property of the large area for which it is responsible.

The necessity of more fire plugs cannot be overestimated. It is an undoubted fact that should a fire occur in Brightwood, Mt. Pleasant, Soldiers Home, Pleasant, Takoma Park and other suburban villages it would be impossible for the city apparatus to reach the ground in time to be of any great service. The amount estimated for horses is to

FIRE MAP OF THE DISTRICT

The map shows the location of the fire engines of the city, the most numerous being Chemical Engine No. 2 in Mount Pleasant. As No. 8 is a mile and a quarter from the Eastern Branch and nearly two miles from the outskirts of Anacostia, it is seen at what impractical distance the northern and western suburbs are from No. 9, No. 7, and No. 5. The whole force is confined within an area of about twenty-five square miles. The Engine Force of the Fire Department, it is of opinion that the city would be well guarded with one engine to every half mile square, and that six more engines, at least, would be necessary to constitute a first-class equipment.

REPLACE ANIMALS WHICH HAVE BECOME PHYSICAL WEAKS

They were close on a clam when he came intimating why he had visited this country.

It is likely that Senator Usar has come to Washington to stay for some time, because if he had but a special message from his government to the Venezuelan legation, he probably would not have been accompanied by his family. It is also learned that he has already been making inquiries for permanent headquarters.

In the absence of positive information it has been conjectured that he has come to get at the true relation of this government to the disputed territory. It is understood that the English government has indicated that it will make the titles to these lands accessible to the proposed commission when ready to investigate.

Senator Usar is said to be interested in some of the lands covered by the proposed English grants to these colonies.

If he can acquire information as rapidly as he can now hotels he will be a jewel to any interest he may be serving. He dined at one hotel, supped at another, and slept at a third, within the space of four hours, and made all these lightning changes with a family and baggage in proportion.

It is also stated that he had come here with a view of getting access to the documents relating to the lands which the English propose to lease to certain companies in the disputed territory. It is understood that the English government has indicated that it will make the titles to these lands accessible to the proposed commission when ready to investigate.

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HIS MISSION A MYSTERY

Senior Jorge Usar of Venezuela Arrives in Washington.

GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT HIS PRESENCE IS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PENDING TERRITORIAL DISPUTE.

Senior Jorge Usar of Venezuela arrived in the city yesterday from New York and registered at the Arlington. He is accompanied by his wife and two daughters. Later in the day he moved to Willard's Hotel and at night he went over to the Hotel Regent.

Senior Usar was very much in demand, although he does not speak English at all. At the Arlington he registered as Mr. Usar. Later in the day he moved to Willard's Hotel and at night he went over to the Hotel Regent.

Last night he and family drove up to the Venezuelan Legation on Iowa circle, where they had an hour's interview with the Venezuelan minister, and on Senior Usar's return he retired without having revealed much of the object of his mission to this country.

STUDIO WALLS CAVED IN

Artist Kuhn Had a Close Call for His Life.

VALUABLE PICTURES RUINED

He Was at Work When the Floor Sank and Made a Dash for Safety.

Building Was Weakened by Improvements on the Adjoining Structure—Particulars of the Incident.

Mr. Julius Kuhn, the artist of Ninth street, had a most dramatic race against death on Saturday night. He was at work in his studio in the second floor, second room back, at 419 Ninth street, about 10 o'clock, when the south wall of the building vanished, carrying with it piles of pictures and with a roar that was heard for squares around.

Mr. Kuhn was sitting near the east end of the room, the only exit being at the west end, where there was a door leading into the east room facing the street. He was at work at the extreme east end of the studio when he heard the first creak of the timbers as they began to part.

He jumped up and in the next instant the floor began to sink and at the same time the wall shook and shivered. He made a dash for the front room door and just as he was rising over the incline made by the sunken floor the whole south wall went down with a crash and a cloud of dust and splinters, carrying with it in the wreck all the pictures on the wall and piles of those which were resting against the wall.

MR. KUHN'S CLOSE CALL.

The wreck as viewed yesterday by scores of people might literally be described as a "pile-rupee."

Mr. Kuhn describes it as a close call. Had he been working, as he sometimes does, on the pictures on the wall he would have been a part of the indistinguishable ruins which he is an unobtainable heap next door. By a miracle the stove was not overturned, which, had it occurred, would soon have made a blaze out of the dry mass of splinters and canvas and papers.

The accident occurred in this way: The house south of 419 has been torn down to rebuild, the workmen now being engaged in the restoration under Mr. Smith as contractor. The south wall of No. 419 had been half taken down and the half enclosing the room in which Mr. Kuhn was seated was supported by a piece of scantling.

HAD NOTIFIED THE CONTRACTOR.

Mr. Kuhn claims that he had notified Mr. Smith of the possible danger, but was assured by Mr. Smith that it was safe to remain. The fact is, however, that the wall came down in the manner described.

Mr. Kuhn at once notified the police and they responded with some officials of the fire department. They looked at the ruins and have promised to give the case their attention. Mr. Smith also went there yesterday and viewed the wreck.

One of the fortunate circumstances of the case is that the crash did not come during the day when the men were at work. Had it occurred then there is no telling what would have been the consequences, but it could scarcely have failed to have resulted in some fatal accidents.

ASSAULTED BY NEGROES

Grocery Merchant Beaten and Cut, and His Wife Choked.

Jackson, Miss., Dec. 29.—J. F. Smith, a prosperous grocery merchant, was murdered last night by three negroes who were in the habit of frequenting his store about 10 o'clock for some tobacco on credit.

Smith declined to sell that way and they knocked him in the head with a coupling pin, cut his throat and threw him off the gallery. Re-entering the store, they ransacked the cash drawer for something, and then went in his back room where Mrs. Smith was sleeping, choked her into insensibility, stole a pistol and left.

Smith regained consciousness, gave the alarm and told the names of his assailants. The police had two negro toughs by morning, but one scaled the jail wall and escaped in five minutes after commitment.

The excitement in the neighborhood is intense and hundreds have visited the scene. Physicians say that Smith's skull is cracked and that the gash in the throat is serious, so that recovery is doubtful.

RUBBING IT IN

Chronic Sore Duvrains Has Caused More Trouble Than Oney.