

HER DEATH EASY.

The Execution of Mrs. Place at Sing Sing Prison.

WAS NO SCENE AT THE CHAIR,

And Death was Said to Have Been Almost Instantaneous—The Condemned Woman was Calm Beyond Expectation—Nothing was Ever Done so Rapidly Before—History of the Shocking Crime for Which She Suffered.

SING SING, N. Y., March 20.—Mrs. Place was executed this morning.

She died at 11:01. She made no scene. The first shock lasted four seconds. The voltage was 1,760. It was then reduced to 200 for 56 seconds. A second shock was then given.

Mrs. Place went calmly to the chair. She leaned on Warden Sage's arm. Her eyes were closed and she seemed to neither see nor hear. She murmured a prayer.

Two women attended her, one a prison attendant; the other a physician.

Mrs. Place was calm beyond expectation. No one was walked into the death chamber as serenely as her. Death came with less struggle than was ever witnessed here before. Death was instantaneous.

Just as she sat down in the chair she said: "God help me."

The female attendants stood before her. The physician adjusted the electrode to her bare leg, while the prison attendant stood with skirts outspread. Dr. Irvine merely superintended.

Not an instant was lost in throwing down the lever.

Hardly a witness saw the convulsive movement that follows an electrical

shock. The body merely stiffened. The face remained calm.

Mrs. Place's thin lips closed tightly together. It was almost a smile as she died.

Twelve witnesses entered the death chamber at exactly 10:45. At 10:50 Warden Sage left the house for Mrs. Place's room. He remained away eight minutes, during which time a keeper outside in the corridor came into the death chamber and called out another keeper.

It was feared then that Mrs. Place had broken down and would have to be carried to the chair.

Nothing of that kind, however, had occurred.

A moment or two before eleven there was the shuffling of feet down the hall and the death march was ended.

Mrs. Place leaned on the warden's

arm. Her face was pallid. She breathed in gasps. Her eyes were closed, but she bore herself steadily and seemed to almost pick her way across the short space that separated her from death.

The warden, too, was pale, and the woman with Mrs. Place following behind her to assist her to the chair.

She sat down and said a word of prayer.

It was all over in a moment. Nothing was done at Sing Sing so rapidly before.

She was dressed in black, the suit that she had made herself—a plain gown, which was fitted quickly to the knee. She wore black stockings and low tan shoes.

The electrode was fastened in a moment; another was placed over her thick light hair, turning gray, a small piece of which had been clipped away. The straps were adjusted over her face and a pad over the forehead. Only her mouth was visible.

In her hand Mrs. Place carried a prayerbook and when the shock came she gripped it tightly. The other held fast to the chair handle. The woman's mouth merely closed; the face a trifle livid. Her heart ceased to beat within a minute.

Dr. Irvine felt for the pulse at once on the carotid artery in the neck, and then the woman physician examined the heart.

After her all the physicians present examined the heart.

PECULIAR TO OUR SOIL.



Catarrh is an American disease. Mrs. Greger, Esqby, Tex., says: "Pe-ru-na has done so much good for me that I am able to do my own work."



Mr. Jacob Griffin, Elmer, Mich., writes: "I was very nervous and unable to work. I have taken several bottles of Pe-ru-na and am entirely well."



Esther Luther, Franklinsville, N. C., says: "I took your Pe-ru-na for deafness can hear now as well as I ever could."



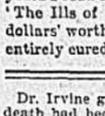
Aug. Tryloff, Mt. Clemens, Mich., writes: "I had la grippe and it left me with a terrible cough. I took Pe-ru-na and was cured."



Mrs. E. Guest, Kearney, Buffalo Co., Neb., writes: "I took your Pe-ru-na for catarrh, and can say that I am now entirely cured of it."



Walter Brady, Cascade, Ark., says: "I had running ears. It was so offensive I excluded myself from all society. After I had borne it fourteen years I read Dr. Hartman's book called 'The Ills of Life.' I took seventeen dollars' worth of his remedies and am entirely cured."



Dr. Irvine gave it as his opinion that death had been instantaneous. Her Last Moments on Earth.

Yesterday at noon Warden Sage decided to again notify Mrs. Place of the day of her execution, and to tell her that she would be spared until until Governor Roosevelt announced his decision not to interfere with the course of justice, that the warden felt it would be simple mercy to warn her of what she must undergo.

Mrs. Place met him in her quiet way, and she said: "I have come, Mrs. Place, so that there will be no mistake; so that there may be no misunderstanding, and to explain to you that you are to be ready on Monday morning at 11 o'clock."

The woman looked at him and said simply: "I will be ready; I will put my trust in God."

After he left her Mrs. Place cried a little, but bore up wonderfully well. She had understood, she said, that she must die.

Yesterday Mrs. Place still occupied the room she had tenanted since the day she was brought here. It is the room in which Marie Barberie, the Italian girl, spent her prison days, on the top floor of the old building that served in years past as a hospital.

All that might could suggest to give Mrs. Place comfort and courage, the warden and his wife and his daughters have done. Mrs. Sage has been with her several times each day. Sunday afternoon the warden's wife spent an hour reading to the condemned woman from the scriptures, and Mrs. Place herself occupied an hour or two in reading tracts that had been sent to her.

In the evening Rev. Dr. Cole, of Yonkers, came to her. After his departure Mrs. Place had no consolation but her Bible. She promised that she would bear up well, and indeed though suffering keenly she maintained her calmness.

With her, in her room all night, was Mrs. Kathryn Coultry, one of the matrons. All last night she sat beside her in a chair, and never for a moment did she trust the condemned woman to herself. Mrs. Place got up several times and looked from window at the storm that was howling across the Hudson. Her attendant went with her; and so the cheerless, dreadful night passed.

Mrs. Place, the matron, Mrs. Coultry, reported this morning, had changed but little. She had prayed a number of times during the long hours; slept now and then, had watched out from her window, and early this morning she rose seemingly without regret.

Mrs. Place left letters for several persons, and made requests of Rev. Dr. Cole and Mrs. Sage. The latter is asked to attend to some personal and private affairs.

The former received a letter from

the face with the axe, and inflicted a serious wound. He managed to get outside the front door, and alarm the neighbors before he became unconscious. When the police and neighbors entered the house they found Mrs. Place in a bedroom, in which gas was escaping, and she was shamming unconsciousness. Mr. Place recovered consciousness, and said his wife had tried to murder him, and the woman was arrested, after they had both been taken to a hospital.

The motive for the woman's crime was jealousy of her step-daughter. Place's first wife died six or seven years ago, and about eighteen months afterward he engaged the woman who became his second wife to act as his house-keeper. Her maiden name was Garretson, but she had been married to a man named Savacoll, now dead. As long as she was house-keeper it is said she was extremely kind to Place's daughter, Ida, but she became quite a different person when Place married her. She was possessed of an un governable temper, which led to frequent quarrels with Ida, and Mrs. Place was very much embittered because her husband took the young woman's part. Another cause of family bickering was Place's refusal to have his wife's adopted son live with them. This woman was much inferior to her husband and step-daughter in social and educational qualities, and many friends of Mr. Place had cut his acquaintance on account of his marriage to the woman. Miss Place was popular with the families in the neighborhood, and this also made the step-mother jealous. Mrs. Place's story of the crime was that she had thrown carbolic acid in her step-daughter's face during one of their quarrels, and then got the axe to defend herself from an attack by her daughter, but it came out during the trial that she had made preparations for flight, and had written to her brother that she would go to him.

Mrs. Place was tried before Judge Hurd, in Brooklyn, last summer, and was found guilty of murder in the first degree. The case was carried to the court of appeals, but the conviction was confirmed, and she was sentenced to death. Governor Roosevelt was then petitioned to exercise clemency, it being alleged that Mrs. Place was insane at the time the crime was committed, and he appointed Drs. Dana and Polk, of New York, to report to him on this point. They informed the governor that the woman was sane when she killed her step-daughter, and was sane now. This destroyed her last hope of life, and on March 15, Governor Roosevelt announced his refusal to interfere, accompanying it with the following memorandum: "No more painful case can come before a governor than in an appeal to arrest the course of justice in order to save a woman from capital punishment, when that woman's guilt has been clearly established, and when there are no circumstances whatever to mitigate the crime. If there were any reasonable doubt of the guilt, if there were any basis whatsoever for interference with the course of justice in this case, I should so interfere. But there is no ground for interference. The accused was condemned as guilty of murder in the first degree after a full and fair trial, although, as all men know, a jury in such a case is always reluctant to give a verdict against a woman if any justification whatsoever exists for withholding it. The verdict was then reviewed at great length by the court of appeals, and was affirmed without a dissenting voice, though this court always scrutinizes with the most jealous care such a case, desiring that the benefit of every doubt shall be given to the accused. I wrote to the district attorney and to the judge who tried the case to learn whether they thought there was any ground for executive clemency. They both answered that there was none whatever, and that the case was one of peculiar outrage, the letter of the judge running as follows:

"The record before you will show a crime of shocking atrocity, followed by another, the attack on William Place, having murder for its object; that both crimes were premeditated and deliberate there can be no doubt; in my opinion, the verdict was eminently just; I think the application entirely without merit, and I know of no ground for interfering with the sentence. "I went carefully over the evidence, which showed that the accused had first blinded her step-daughter with the acid and then strangled her, and, after waiting in the house all day, when her husband returned at dark, had attacked him, and endeavored to kill him with an axe. "Her attorneys and her pastor appealed to me for clemency. They raised no questions as to her guilt, but claimed that she was insane at the time the deed was committed, and was now insane; the clergyman stated that she was undoubtedly sane at present, but that he believed her to be insane when the deed was committed, although he did not then come personally in contact with her. "I accordingly appointed two doctors of the highest standing, upon whose professional capacity, common sense and deep consciousness I could implicitly rely, and directed them to examine the accused, to decide whether she was or had been insane. They reported to me that she was not insane; that she was sane at the time of the murder and before and since. "There is thus no question of the woman's guilt, and no question of her insanity. All that remains is the question as to whether I should be justified in interfering to save a murderess on the ground of her insanity, when no justification would exist to interfere on behalf of a murderer. The only case of capital punishment which has occurred since the beginning of my term was for wife murder, and I refused to consider the appeals then made to me, on the ground that he had really done the deed, and was sane. In that case a woman was killed by another woman. The law makes no distinction of sex in such a crime."

"This murder was one of peculiar deliberation and atrocity. To interfere with the course of the law in this case could be justified only on the ground that never hereafter, under any circumstances, should capital punishment be inflicted upon any murderess, even though the victim was herself a woman, and even though that victim's torture preceded her death. "There is but one course open to me. I decline to interfere with the course of the law."

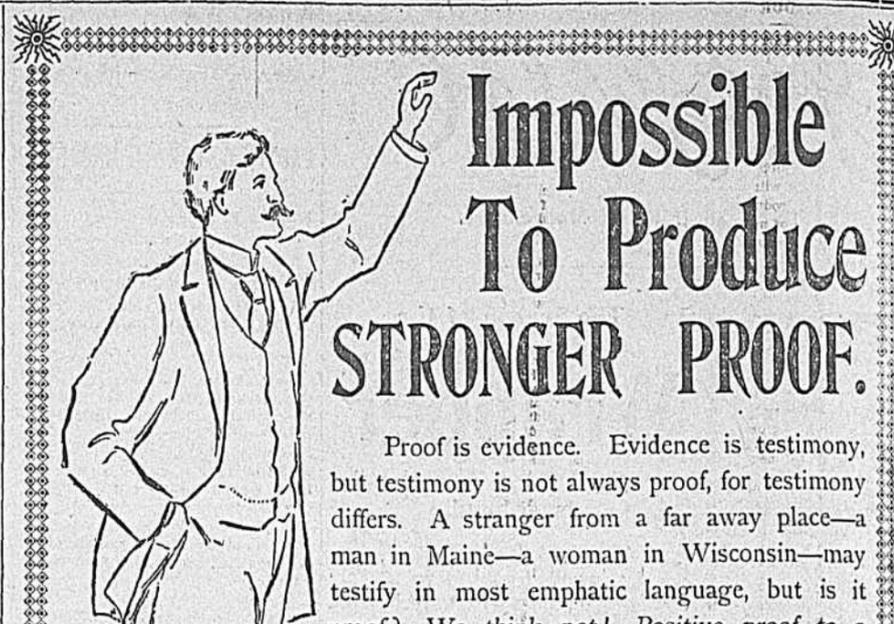
Several weeks before his official decision was given out, Governor Roosevelt was quoted as follows: "My sympathies in criminal cases are for the wronged, and not for the wrongdoer. The fact that the criminal is a woman makes no difference to me. I am always ready to try to see that justice is done. In ordinary cases, if a woman is found guilty as blame-worthy as a man, I would punish the woman exactly as much as the man. I have no sympathy with mawkish sentimentality."

After the murder was committed, Mr. Place showed interest in his wife's fate. He testified at the trial, but has taken no part in the efforts to save her from the electric chair, and has refused at all times to talk of the case.

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Mr. S. J. Florence, of 51 Seventeenth street, says: "My kidneys troubled me for a great many years. They finally became so bad at last as to almost totally incapacitate me for work of any kind. My back was so weak and sore I could not rise without steadying myself with my hands and moving very slowly. I had to exercise the same care in sitting or lying down. Dreadful bearing down pains through the bladder harassed me, and I had much weakness in my kidneys, the secretions being turbid with brick dust sediment, and too frequent inclinations. I would become so dizzy at times that everything seemed to be flying away from me, and I would turn sick at the stomach. I used many medicines, but one box of Doan's Kidney Pills that I got at the Logan Drug Co. did me more good than all the rest put together. I recommend them heartily."

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Mrs. Place the Murderess.

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The Electrical Chair.

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Mrs. Place, in which she told simply that she believed she had been forgiven for her sins, and would die with full faith in the hereafter. Yesterday she made the statement to her spiritual adviser that she wanted forgiveness for everyone, and freely forgive others.

One of the friends who is here to give comfort to Mrs. Place is Mrs. Meury, a mission worker in Brooklyn. She was with her yesterday and for some hours during the night. She brought tracts for the disconsolate woman and helped her to keep her mind off the coming morning.

HISTORY OF THE CRIME. A Most Revolving Deed—Mrs. Place Planned a Double Crime.

Mrs. Martha Place killed her step-daughter Ida Place, at her home, No. 558 Hancock street, Brooklyn, on February 7, 1898. The girl was but twenty-two years old. A double murder had been planned by the woman. She killed her step-daughter when the girl was taking an afternoon nap, splitting her skull open with an axe, and pouring vitriol on her face and into her mouth. The same evening the woman lay in wait for her husband, William Place, in the darkened hallway of the house, and when he entered she struck him in