

DEATH HOUSE HAS NO XMAS CHEER

Becker and His Accomplices Will Pass Yuletide Without Their Families

Only Hope Now Lies in Appeal For New Trial Which Is Being Attempted

New York, Dec. 22.—Suspense, watching, waiting, an indefinable air of foreboding, mingled with an attempt to concentrate the gaze on the ray of hope—this is the atmosphere which now permeates the death house at Sing Sing.

The one gleam of hope lies in the appeal for a new trial which is being heard in New York at the present time. It is a forlorn hope at best for the result of a new trial might still mean death.

The jokes and the curses are fewer, the shouted checker games are not so eagerly debated, the voices raised in hymns at evensong are stronger and more soulful, the callous featured guards are affected and pace their way about the hateful corner of the prison with an even greater taciturnity than usual.

Four men have Becker and his accomplices seen pass through "the lit-tobacco and many other little things for all prisoners. A frequent pastime of Becker and the four gun-

obstructed view of this dread portal. Becker is unable to see it, but his cell is in as fearful a position. The head of his cot is against the wall on the other side of which stands "the chair" with its straps, bars and electrodes. The four men who have "gone away" have been put to death within a few feet of his head.

But from this it is not to be concluded that the life of the death cell inmates is all sorrow, all despair. They have a little democracy of their own. They have their own language and customs. Their privileges are many of those barred to other Sing Sing convicts. They have their recognized captain, or president, who is now Becker.

Before Becker came the men in the condemned cells had decided to snub him because he had been a "cop." Becker, like most newcomers, was silent in his cell for several days after he arrived. Spohr, who went free recently, had been a military musician. He was entertaining the death house with a selection on the harmonica, when he heard a voice from next door:

"That's very nice, old man. 'Very nice.'"

Spohr made a hesitating reply, addressing him as "Mr. Becker." The ice was broken and soon everyone was calling him "Charley."

One evening Becker asked Spohr if he knew "The Church Across the Way." They got up a quartet of murderers to sing this old-fashioned melody. Becker was baritone, Spohr tenor, Muhlfeldt bass, and Lingley second tenor. They sang it over and over again, Mulroney, a Gopher band leader, would usually follow each rendition by howling out "Casey Jones," or some other lively air as a protest. Becker would laugh at this.

Becker would read a few chapters from the Bible every night, while the rest listened in silence. One diversion was the singing of their own parodies on songs, putting in their guards and fellow prisoners as characters. Becker, also, according to Spohr, started an anti-swearing crusade, but gave it up after the prison guards proved more frequent offenders than the condemned men.

men is to "curse out" together Jack Rose and the other informers who put them where they are.

Becker was in the death house for some time before the four gunmen arrived. Spohr gave this account of the breaking of the ice between Becker and the quartet:

"You know, we all have checker boards and checker pieces in our cells. We play by calling the numbers from one to the other. Every spot is numbered. The gunmen had been there a couple of days when Whitey Lewis accepted a challenge from a man on our side of the death house to play a game. Whitey called out in his curious accent: 'From fo' to salven.'"

"Lefty Louis and Gyp the Blood began to imitate him, and Whitey cursed them. Then Mulroney began to call 'na-aa,' referring to their getting Whitey's 'gout,' and everybody in the place, including Becker, took up the joke. Becker and the gunmen all laughed together.

"Later a prison official came in wearing a rose. One of the gunmen asked another what kind of a rose it was.

"A Jack rose," cried Becker. After that there was no more formality."

FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEPRESS TRADE

Heavy Balkan Loans Cause Alarm Throughout French Banking Circles

By Henry Clews.

New York, Dec. 22.—Chief among the unsettling influences have been the unsatisfactory financial conditions abroad and further evidences of depressing political activities at home.

At Paris the situation appeared somewhat alarming owing to troubles in French banking circles which have their origin in too heavy loans on account of the Balkan war. It was hoped that these would be satisfactorily adjusted, but failure to place the big \$200,000,000 French loan and the so-called complex of the French cabinet appear to have brought on a fresh crisis, so the monetary situation at Paris is described as being in a state of chaos.

The effect of this condition will be felt in London, and may have an indirect influence upon New York. Fortunately, the bank of France is in a strong position, its stock of gold being much larger than a year ago. The bank of England is also exceedingly strong, the proportion of reserve reaching the exceptionally high figure of 55.1 per cent, the highest since 1909, when it was 54.3 per cent.

British consols sold down to 71 1/2, said to be the lowest price in thirty years. This is simply another illustration of strained conditions in the international capital markets. The demand for new capital continues so insistent and conditions so unsatisfactory that new issues can only be placed at exorbitant rates. An undesirable feature in the London market was the weakness in Canadian issues, of which London has recently had a heavy overdone. For some time past the opinion has prevailed that Canada has been borrowing too freely; and the proposed issue of \$2,000,000 Canadian Pacific notes was not favorably received, as reflected in the recent decline in the shares of that company.

is time for security holders to make an effective protest against this trifling with business and credit, and their protest should embrace the millions of indirect holders of securities who are frequently unconscious that their interests are being attacked. There are millions of savings bank depositors and holders of life insurance policies whose interests are being vitally injured by the present disturbing political activities.

The great steel industry continues much depressed and production has been cut down to almost half capacity, while prices have dropped to nearly the costs of production. Such extreme contraction is, of course, impossible to last, for it means starvation among steel consumers. An increase in orders must soon follow, but the steel situation is nevertheless very unsatisfactory. General business, however, dull as it may be, is not unreasonably bare of merchandise. If confidence could only be restored the coming year would witness a wide revival of activity; and there is nothing to prevent this except, as just said, political agitation.

Home Money Market Comfortable.
The home money market is in a fairly comfortable condition, although there are problems to be faced which will require skillful piloting during the forthcoming year. In all probability the new currency bill will become a law within a few days. Most of the objectionable features have been eliminated and the bill promises to be fully satisfactory, although not all that could be desired. When it comes upon the character and ability of the men appointed to represent the government on the regional reserve boards, for it will be of paramount importance to keep these institutions entirely free of political influences.

The tariff question is now practically out of the way, although occasionally some doubt is in evidence pending readjustment to new conditions. At present there is little or no chance for any serious foreign competition for either our steel or woolen mills, which were more vitally affected by the new rates than any other important industries.

Financial Conditions Abroad the Influence.
The year is closing with a feeling



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of more encouragement on the stock exchange. It is now a time for calm self-restraint and more hopefulness. Recovery may develop when least expected. It should be remembered that many adverse conditions have been amply discounted by present low prices. With the tariff and current problems taken out of politics there is so much gained. There is also increased hope that the railroads will eventually secure partial concessions. Government ownership of railroads and telegraphs may be coming issues, but they are far from accomplishment. A considerable short interest exists, and a buying power of considerable importance has grown through the withholding of investment purchases for months back. These are elements of strength. January dividend payments will approach \$250,000,000, and any favorable news under such conditions would be apt to precipitate a sharp rise. The immediate future will be a good deal influenced by financial conditions abroad, which may soon begin to right themselves. Towards the close of the market was strong upon the favorable prospects of the currency bill.

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A. W. EPPINGER

SING "ADESTE FIDELES" ON CHRISTMAS MORNING

On Christmas morning in every Catholic church in the United States where Mass is being celebrated, one of the most beautiful of the church's hymns will be sung. In our grand cathedrals, in convents and in seminaries, and in humble country missions the "Adeste Fideles" will stir the soul of Christmas morning worshippers. A word about this grand old hymn, and its origin and authorship will doubtless be of interest to our readers. Individual authorship of the "Adeste Fideles" may not have had. The atmosphere of the monastic scriptorium breathes, however, through its melodious strophes. It is in many respects unique in Christian hymnology. More than any other church song it blends prophecy, history, prayer, exultation and praise. If it were printed side by side with the Nicene Creed it would be found an astonishing verification of that august prose.

Every line of the "Adeste" is aasket of faith and love. Upon its cadences many hearts must have been spent for the crystallization of sublime truth into crisp and dazzling syllables. Adeste, approach; fideles ye faithful; laeti, joyful; triumphantes, victorious; venite, come; adoremus, let us adore; Dominum, the Lord. The hymn, in the Latin form, is so musical that it is memorized almost without effort. It is found continuously from the middle of the seventeenth century. It is believed that in many centers of devotion it was made also a recitation as if in oratorio. Plays drawn from Holy Writ were in vogue during the same period, and the "Adeste Fideles" would have been a congruous incident in either a passion play, a miracle play or a Madonna play.

It was usual in those plays to introduce the folk melodies which in every country have become the basis of national music. As these plays were gradually prohibited by the church on account of violations of strict decorum which insensibly crept in, oratorio succeeded to the vacated place and many of the melodies disappeared or were framed into new settings.

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"I tried several remedies, but the trouble seemed to grow worse instead of better, and I tried several treatments which cured me for a month, but it always broke out again. One day a friend saw the advertisement of Cuticura Soap and Ointment in the paper and I purchased two more boxes of Cuticura Ointment and some Cuticura Soap and they completely cured me. It took three months for Cuticura Soap and Ointment to complete my cure." (Signed) Walter Mahony, Oct. 22, 1912.

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