



THE WEATHER.

Forecast made at San Francisco for thirty hours ending midnight, April 10: San Francisco and vicinity—Cloudy Monday; fresh northwest winds. G. H. WILLSON, Local Forecaster.



THE CALL



The paper to be taken to the Library.

THE THEATERS. ALCAZAR—"Tom Moore." CALIFORNIA—"The Lady Paramount." COLUMBIA—"The Other Girl." CENTRAL—"Paul Revere." CHUTES—Vaudeville. GRAND—Grand Opera. MECHANICS' PAVILION—Nature Show. GRIFFITHUM—Vaudeville. TIVOLI—Comic Opera.

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SAN FRANCISCO, MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1905.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

FIENDISH PLOT OF MAFIA IS LAID BARE AND EIGHT OF GANG ARE IN JAIL

A Mafia society plotted Biaggio Vilardo's death and rented the Green-street house for the purpose. Pietro Torturici wielded the cleaver and his pretty wife was an accomplice. The police are certain of this. The toils are tightening around Torturici, and seven suspects, besides the woman, are already under arrest. The rendezvous of the murderers was in a house near Fisherman's Cove.

CRIME PLANNED IN A LITTLE HUT AT NORTH BEACH

Conspirators Hire House on Green Street for the Sole Purpose of Killing Biaggio Vilardo.

Toils Are Tightening Around Plotting Band and the Police Are Ready to Make More Arrests To-Day.

A so-called Mafia organization planned the death of Biaggio Vilardo. It held two secret meetings in a rendezvous near the Fisherman's wharf at North Beach and there plotted the horrible murder of the unfortunate Sicilian. The house at 736 1/2 A Green street was rented for the sole purpose of carrying out the dastardly crime.

The Italian residents of the city are loud in voicing protestations against the theory that a Mafia or secret organization exists among the people who have migrated to America from Italy. Yet a Mafia, a "Black Hand," or whatever name may be applied, does exist in this city.

When Torturici has been captured and is tried for the murder of his fellow-countryman, he will not be the only prisoner sitting in the dock waiting for his judgment for the part he played in one of the most fiendish crimes ever perpetrated in the city of San Francisco.

Pietro Torturici committed the murder. He was aided by his wife and possibly by Sam Possommi, who was arrested by Detective Charles Taylor as he was trying to force his way into the shambles at 736 1/2 Green street the day after the murder. The police have in jail besides Possommi, Salvatore Maranda, Rosario Domina and three other Italians, who steadfastly refuse to give their names. These were arrested yesterday by Policemen Smith Carr and Pyle as they attempted to enter the house at 1611 Powell street, where Torturici slept on the night of the murder and the succeeding night.

Pyle and Carr were doing plain clothes duty yesterday afternoon watching the house at 1611 Powell street with the hope of apprehending some of Torturici's partners in the crime. About 2 o'clock three Italians or Sicilians came up the street and started to go into the house. When stopped by the policemen and asked their names the swarthy men refused to divulge. They were quickly hurried to the City Prison and lodged in the tanks. They still refused to give their names or affix their signatures to the book. These men are believed by the police to be members of the gang that planned and executed the bloody murder of Biaggio Vilardo.

Murderous Gang Plans the Death of Vilardo.

The Italian people, the better class who voice their opinions through the Italian medium, the newspaper, "La Italia," oppose the theory of the existence of secret organizations among their race. But the Sicilians are only kin to the Italians. The fact remains that there is a Mafia.

Brigands and cut-throats of the middle ages never planned with more cruel deliberation the killing of a man who had incurred their wrath than did these blood-thirsty Sicilians who met secretly in a little room in the North Beach section four weeks ago and formulated and plotted the death of the Sicilian cannaker. Two meetings were held, one four and another three weeks before the killing. The meetings were well attended.

The murderer had to be decided upon at once. "The devil," Biaggio Vilardo, who dared to be a friend of the murdered Giuseppe Brogardo, must meet the fate meted out. Vilardo had been a friend of Brogardo, who was murdered last January. He had been a constant companion of the dead man. He aided in the burial, taking money from his own pocket to give the remains of his life-long friend decent interment. Vilardo paid a last tribute to the memory of a friend, and then paid with his own life.

Rosa Torturici, as Decoy, Used to Lead Sicilian.

Selection of the best man to execute the murder was considered and reconsidered. Finally Torturici's name was mentioned. Some one remarked on the beauty of his wife. Torturici was promptly agreed upon. He was loyal to the cause of his organization. His friends who appointed him to do the crime planned to use his wife as a decoy. She was a beautiful woman. How well she played her part she has not so far told, but the evidence is in the possession of the police.

Mrs. Torturici was in the house at the time of the murder. The little child which she has constantly said she took for an airing in Washington Square was an unconscious auditor to Vilardo's death cries, perhaps a witness.

Torturici chosen to do the foul deed, the next point to decide was a favorable place. The house at 710 Montgomery avenue was not safe as might be. Too many people were within earshot. The family must move, said the plotting band. Lured to his ultimate destruction, the poor Sicilian asked if he might move with the family. Torturici knew he would. Rosa Torturici knew Vilardo would want to accompany them. She played her part well. She used all of her womanly charms to hold the admiration of Vilardo.

The house at 736 1/2 A Green street was selected for the crime. Down in a dark basement the three persons went to live, the murdered man, his slayer and Rosa Torturici, the accomplice. The room was left bare for the murder, for fabrics absorb blood.

That the house was not picked out for permanent residence is shown by the fact that the rooms were but scantily furnished. The kitchen had but a small stove and a rude table. Torturici had a tumble-down bed and a few boxes in his bedroom. Between his bedroom and Vilardo's sleeping-room was the vacant room, devoid of a single furnishing, well fit for slaughter. In Vilardo's room was a small cot and table. Not a rug or piece of carpet was found on the floors in the whole house.

Room Left Bare for the Place of Slaughter.

The three people lived in the house for three weeks. All this while Torturici sought in vain for a chance to perform his bloody task. He tried quarreling with Vilardo; sometimes he was successful, but the right moment did not come. Wednesday night relations were strained. Vilardo took his supper in his little room, pleading sickness. A few hours later his body had been cut in six pieces.

The details of the crime have not yet been learned and may never be. If Rosa Torturici and the men in the City Prison keep their silence. Enough evidence, however, is in the hands of the police to convict the murderer and all of his accomplices.

After the murder Torturici did not alone carry the burden of the dismembered body. He had assistance from his fellow-conspirators. Just who carried the trunk and left it on the doorstep at Powell and Vallejo streets, when he was seen by George Olivia staggering under his peculiar load, and who deposited the mutilated head and extremities in the waters of the bay at Fisherman's Cove are questions that only the conspirators can answer.

Continued on Page 3, Columns 4 and 5.



PHOTOGRAPH OF PIETRO TORTURICI, TAKEN TWO YEARS AGO AT NEW ORLEANS. HE HAS NOT WORN A MUSTACHE FOR SOME TIME PAST. THE ABOVE IS THE BEST LIKENESS THE POLICE HAVE FOUND AND IS THE ONE THEY ARE SENDING BROADCAST.

TARS QUIT THE FLEET ABRUPTLY

Hundreds of Desertions From Evans' Warships.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

PENSACOLA, Fla., April 9.—Vessels of the North Atlantic fleet here report an unprecedented series of desertions of bluejackets. It was to-day estimated that at least 600 sailors are missing from the vessels.

Sailors who have been seen on shore give varying excuses for leaving the ships. Some of them have an idea that the vessels will for the most part be made station ships at some out-of-the-way place, where disturbances are not infrequent, and others say their treatment is not what it should be. Still others contend that they deserted only because they wanted to get on American soil and stay there just as long as they could.

This morning Chief Schad of the police department went out to the flagship Maine and had a conference with Rear Admiral Evans regarding the methods of apprehending deserters. Admiral Evans placed at the disposal of the Pensacola officer a detachment of marines to aid in taking in all deserters found. The determination to have them returned to the ships is strong, and the regulation reward of \$10 per man is being paid out frequently.

Marines patrol the city and are authorized to pick up any man in navy uniform who cannot show proper credentials.

HOLDS FORT IN PULLMAN CAR BERTH

Mrs. Yerkes "Bluffs" Officials of a Railroad.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

NEW YORK, April 9.—How Mrs. Charles T. Yerkes forced the Atlantic coast line to carry her and her secretary and maid to New York on a Pullman car despite the company's protest has just become known here.

Mrs. Yerkes was on her way from Havana to New York, accompanied by her secretary, William Lauer, and her maid, and had obtained Pullman accommodations at Tampa, Fla. When the train reached Jacksonville she was informed that the Pullman sleeper from Tampa would go no farther and she must change to another Pullman to be attached to a train which was about to pull out for New York. All the accommodations she could have were an upper berth for herself and a seat each for her secretary and maid.

Mrs. Yerkes insisted that she had purchased through accommodations according to Mrs. Yerkes she was delayed several hours. Finally the railroad officials yielded and the car was attached later to a train on the Atlantic coast line.

Dr. Harper Ends Treatment. NEW YORK, April 9.—Dr. William R. Harper, who has been taking the X-ray treatment for cancer in New York City, left Chicago, late to-day. The improvement in Dr. Harper's health was so marked that it was felt unnecessary for him to stay here any longer.

OBSOLETE VESSELS IN OUR NAVY

In Class With Those England Sold as Junk.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

CALL BUREAU, POST BUILDING, WASHINGTON, April 9.—In the recent sale of \$15,000,000 worth of British war ships as junk, some naval officers have again been reminded of the problem as to the ultimate disposition of United States naval vessels which have become obsolete.

The British vessels sold are not as old as the American cruiser Chicago (1883) and are but little older than the Philadelphia, the San Francisco and the Baltimore, which are of about the same displacement (1888). The Chicago is now the flagship of the Pacific squadron. Having recently been thoroughly repaired, while the Baltimore is in commission and the San Francisco is now undergoing extensive repairs.

The Navy Department, whatever it may have had in mind, has not yet announced its determination to put entirely out of service these active contemporaries of the ships which the British admiralty had consigned to the junk pile.

The same may be said of the gunboat Topoka (1881) and the dispatch boat Dolphin (1883).

Submarine Boats for Harbor Defense. NEWPORT, R. I., April 9.—The third committee of the fortification board, of which Admiral Charles N. Thomas, U. S. N., is chairman, is devoting special attention to the dangers incident to the use of submarine mines, and it is learned that emphasis will be placed on the advantage of substituting submarine boats for mines in harbor defense.

WANTS TAFT TO BE NEXT PRESIDENT

Mr. Roosevelt Eager for Secretary's Promotion.

Sets His Heart Upon Assuring Continuation of President Policies.

Ohioan Is Jocularly Referred to in Washington as the Trinity of the Administration.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

CALL BUREAU, POST BUILDING, WASHINGTON, April 9.—William H. Taft, now Secretary of War, will be the next President of the United States, if he lives.

This was the positive statement made to-day by a man who is prominent in the councils of the administration and who is known to enjoy the confidence of the President. "President Roosevelt," he continued, "is just as firm to-day in his intention not to accept a renomination as he was when he made the announcement on the night of the election. Even if there were to be a general demand, regardless of party, that he succeed himself, the President, like Washington, would adhere to his resolution and give the country some good advice about not keeping one man in office for too long a period."

Having decided to lay down the burdens of office at the end of his term, President Roosevelt is deeply concerned over the question of the successorship. He wants the next President to be a man who will carry out his policies, especially as they affect the trusts and the railroads; a man who will be President for the whole people, who will punish dishonest office holders and eliminate the principle of "graft" from the administration of the affairs of the Government. The President feels that, while he can and will accomplish much toward this end, his efforts will have been partially wasted if his successor fails to carry out the work and permit a lapse to conditions such as have prevailed in the past.

Secretary Taft is a man after the President's own heart and thoroughly in accord with the chief executive in his efforts to effect reforms for the benefit of the masses. For this reason Mr. Roosevelt would like to see Taft succeed to the Presidency, and in a quiet way he will do what he can to bring about such a desirable result. The President's faith in Taft is illustrated at the present moment by the fact that the Secretary of War is acting President and Secretary of State as well; in fact, when there is any work for which the President wants a man whom he can trust implicitly, Taft is chosen. By the time Mr. Roosevelt's term draws to a close, Taft will be well fitted to step into the Presidency and to carry out the policies to which the present chief executive is committed heart and soul.

Secretary Taft is now jocularly referred to as the "trinity" of the administration. He is acting as President of the United States, is Secretary of State during the absence of Hay and is Secretary of War in his own right. Some of his friends are "poking fun" at the Secretary and broadly intimate that he is the whole Government.

Wayne MacVeagh, Attorney General of the Cleveland administration, called up Taft over the telephone and inquired when the Secretary of War would begin to discharge the duties of Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of the Interior, as he had some business with these officials, and as Taft was so good natured, he liked to transact business with him. Of course this was not a reflection on the other two Cabinet officers.

Secretary Taft replied that he had his hands full now, "sitting on the lid," and would not undertake to perform the work of any other Cabinet officers.

BRITISH ROYAL COUPLE WELCOMED AT MINORCA

Arrive on the Yacht Victoria and Albert and Continue Their Cruise.

PORT MAHON, Island of Minorca, April 9.—King Edward and Queen Alexandra, who sailed from Marseilles on Saturday on board the British royal yacht Victoria and Albert, arrived here to-day. When they landed they were given a demonstrative welcome. The British sovereigns continued on their cruise this evening.

BIG FLEETS WILL FIGHT TO A FINISH

Russia's One Hope Is to Cripple Foe's Navy.

If This Be Done, Czar Will Send Fresh Squadron to the Far East.

St. Petersburg Naval Board Counts on Crushing Japan's Sea Forces by Piecemeal.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

LONDON, April 10.—The newspapers continue to speculate on the forthcoming naval engagement, which is not expected to occur until the end of the week.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the Telegraph says that sober, calculating minds among the naval officers do not expect a decisive victory for the Russian fleet. All they expect is that Admiral Rojdestvensky will withstand the Japanese onslaught stubbornly and successfully, destroying or disabling a sufficient of the enemy's ships to enable Vice Admiral Nebogatoff's contingent, in conjunction with the last Russian squadron, which will be dispatched in June, to turn the scales in the struggle for naval supremacy.

The same correspondent says that the military committee has at last reported its conclusion that it would be a grave mistake to abandon the struggle before Russia's resources are manifestly exhausted and that Russia still has effective means of continuing the war with the hope of such success as will influence the character of the peace conditions.

The officials in St. Petersburg declare that Rojdestvensky has gained a strategic advantage by not waiting for the third squadron, as he will take the Japanese by surprise.

The main Japanese naval forces are believed to be in Northern Chinese waters.

FLEET IS NOT INTACT.

Most Powerful of the Russian Warships Cannot Be Located.

SINGAPORE, April 9.—Fifty-one ships of Vice Admiral Rojdestvensky's second Pacific squadron passed here yesterday. The most important fighting vessels of the squadron, including the battleships Kniaz Suvoroff, Alexander II, Borodino and Orel, with their complement of cruisers, torpedo-boat destroyers, etc., did not arrive and their whereabouts is unknown.

The vessels in Singapore were the following: The battleships Sissoi Veliky and Oleg; cruisers Admiral Nakhimoff, Dmitri, Donskoi, Aurora, Izumrud, Jemchug, Almaz, Russ, Anadyr, Fuesat Bismarck, Kaiserin Maria Theresa, Kaiserin Augusta Victoria, Kaiser Friedrich, Rion and seven torpedo-boat destroyers, all sailing under the naval flag. Under the commercial flag were the volunteer steamships Yorenz, Kief, Yaroslav, Tamboff, Vladimir and Orel; the Russian Navigation Company's steamships Meteor, Jupiter and Mercury; the East Asiatic Company's steamships Korea and Kaitai, the North Baltic Company's steamship Kniaz Gorchakov, one salvage ship and sixteen colliers.

A French steamship arrived here to-day with a sailor belonging to the Admiral Nakhimoff, who fell overboard and was picked up in the Straits of Malacca after having been twelve hours in the water.

NIPPONESE ARE CONFIDENT.

Have Faith in the Progress of Admiral Togo's Gunners.

TOKIO, April 10.—Vice Admiral Rojdestvensky's second Pacific squadron has not been reported here since it passed Singapore. Its whereabouts and the plans of Vice Admiral Rojdestvensky are subjects of the keenest general speculation.

It is quite generally assumed that Vice Admiral Rojdestvensky does not desire an immediate battle and that he will attempt to reach Vladivostok, where there are decks and shops, or to seize a base. The latter course is deemed unsatisfactory, on account of the poor facilities and the danger of political complications. Many believe that the Russian naval commander has a second rendezvous in the Pacific Ocean and that he will speedily quit the water.

Continued on Page 2, Column 3.