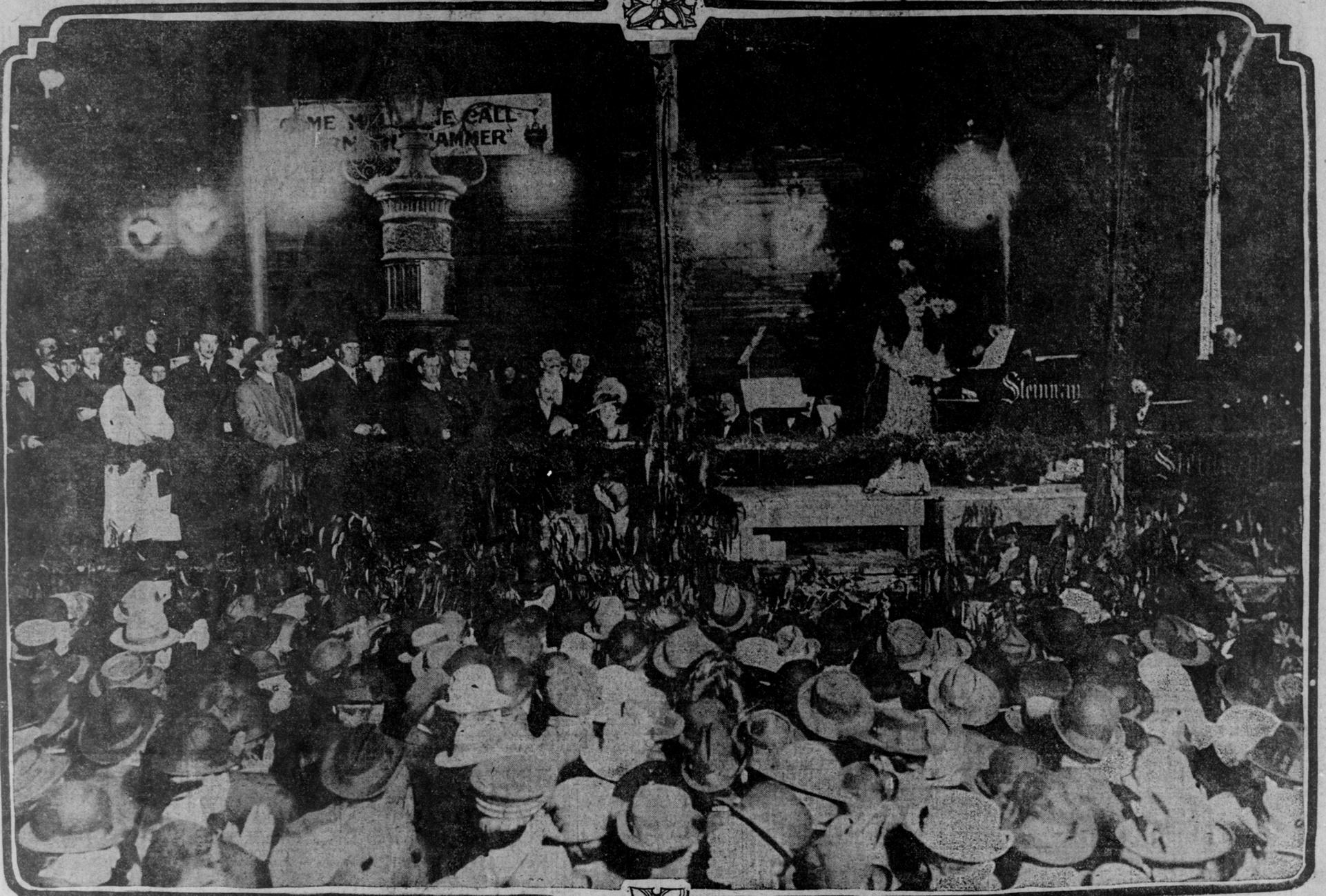


Santa's Bells Are Drowned by the Carols

Christmas Crowd at Lotta's Fountain Cheers the Conflagration

MME. BERNICE DE PASQUALI SINGING THE ANVIL CHORUS FROM "IL TROVATORE," TO THE GREAT CHRISTMAS THROG IN LOTTA FOUNTAIN PLAZA.



Hammer Goes to His Fate on Pyre Unwept

Nationals Escort Funeral Car In Double Quick Time

By LINDSAY CAMPBELL

Unwept, unhonored and with music that began with "Yankee Doodle" and ended with "Everybody's Doin' It," the body of the late Buncombe K. Hammer was cremated last night in the presence of a crowd that looked big enough to include every man, woman and child in San Francisco. Hammer, deceased, went to his final rest on the double quick, escorted by a company of crimson-trousered Nationals.

The hammer, Mayor Rolph said, died a year ago and he, as one of the chief conspirators in the plot for the elimination of knocking, ought to know. Hammers, he explained, were like cats in their tenacious hold on life and the cremation was for the double purpose of celebrating the death of a public pest and of making sure that there would be no resurrection.

It was rather nice for the hammer for a few minutes. After that un-funeral rush from Van Ness avenue the swing in the air as it hoisted, like Haman, as high as the scaffold would permit, must have been refreshing and restful. Then the look of interest with which the prettiest girl regarded the victim of the fire she was going to start was more than even a dead hammer deserved.

SPECTACLE IS IMPRESSIVE

As a spectacle the burning of the hammer was impressive. As the outward and visible sign of a general desire to combine for the common good it was the most important ceremony in which San Francisco has participated. And San Francisco was there in full force. Curiosity and the desire to be entertained might have been responsible for the gathering of that multitude, but before they departed most of them were talking the parable seriously.

The time for the burial was well chosen. If people ever feel like members of one big family it is the night before Christmas. The spirit of good will possessed that crowd to such an extent that when an enthusiastic photographer showed them with the pieces of plate glass window that a misplaced flashlight blew into smithereens they only grinned and hoped that nobody had been hurt. And the hammer hadn't been burned then, either.

WOMAN BURIES HAMMER

The police handled the crowd with a consideration that was rare even in a city famous for its courteous cops. When Police Captain Shea accidentally

trod on a woman's toes she took a long breath and was about to say something not Christmassy. She looked up at the burning hammer. She grinned and said:

"He's handsome if he does weigh a ton. That's all right, I'm not hurt."

That is what burning the hammer did in just one case. The hammer's approach to the funeral pyre was impressive if hurried. The Nationals moved quickly and so did the hearse, but the dead march was played with the right funeral drag. There was green fire to impart a touch of the mysterious and red fire as an indication that the cremation was to be in grim and fiery earnest and to an ashy end.

Two gray horses backed the hearse and its execrated burden under the scaffold. Mayor Rolph, with the eye of a sailor, watched willing hands overhaul the tackle and hoist the hammer from its funeral car.

The hearse was out a bit beyond the scaffold, and when the hammer was hoisted from the car it swung in toward the platform.

MAYOR INTRODUCES EXECUTIONER
"Get out your fenders," said the mayor, and strong arms prevented the hammer from landing one final punch before the flames consumed it.

After the hammer had been hoisted the mayor introduced Miss Mae Josephine Bennett, the winner of the Call's beauty contest, to whom had been delegated the pleasant task of firing the funeral blaze.

"You were a graceful speech, enthusiastically received. The mayor congratulated Miss Bennett on the outcome of the beauty contest, expressed the hope that she would enjoy her trip to Honolulu and wished her a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

THOUSANDS CHEER WHEN "KNOCKER" IS CREMATED

Ashes of Old Man Buncombe, Analyzed, Show Cross-Eyedness, Selfishness and Carelessness Are Destroyed

By RUFUS STEELE

When the Hammer of Knockery was burned last night they gave me the ashes. That was more of a gift than it seems. It carried with it the privilege of analysis. Only a chemical examination of the residue could show just what it was the city got rid of when the flames did their thorough work.

I'm going to name the elements I found—the elements that took terrified refuge inside the shell of a gigantic hammer that reposed in a catafalque while Paul Steindorff's band galloped through patriotic airs, while a vested choir sang "Noel" and "God Rest You, Merry Gentlemen" of old England, while the virtuoso Galston used a piano to make every heart in a multitude pulsate in Strauss time, while a truly mammoth group of singers hammered out the "Anvil Chorus," under John W. McKenzie's baton, while the mayor set the multitude cheering by a ringing statement of what they had come forth to do, and while De Pasquali, the gracious, clothed the very atmosphere with mellifluous glory.

THREE ELEMENTS FOUND IN HAMMER ASH

I'm going to specify the elements that clustered around that hammer, "as dreadful as the Manichean god, adored through fear, strong only to destroy," up to the moment Mae Josephine Bennett, herself sweeter than any confection she handles in a day's work, applied the fire that devoured the hammer in the presence of the thousands—the ululant thousands who finally came back to their sober senses triumphantly singing the "Adeste."

Lippus, Cupiritas, Imprudentia—those were the three elements of Knockery that went up in smoke and down in ashes.

A trace of other stuff was found, but the three elements named constituted 98 per cent of the whole. Do you recognize them under their laboratory names? Translated out of the technical Latin they are Cross-Eyedness, Selfishness, Carelessness.

COULDN'T SEE RIGHTLY, SO WE KNOCKED

We knocked because we didn't see rightly what it was the other fellow was trying to do. We knocked because we were selfish and didn't want the other fellow to make a little hay while we were snuggling the pillows. We knocked by carelessly using words that hadn't been weighed to see how much hurt was in them.

There you have the chemical content of the massive hammer we destroyed for keeps. But if its ingredients were simple, its effectiveness was compound. Some hammer, ours. A regular hammer

of Thor—that's what it was. Thor's classic smasher, Mjolnir, could put nearly anything in his universe out of business, and it had the unfortunate trick—unfortunate for everybody except Thor—of returning to the hand that hurled it, so that it might with equal force be hurled again.

Yes, ours was something like that, and the hand already vesicated by its use would sometimes risk another blister just to hear it spit the air once

more. But its hard handle, remember, will never, never, never blister our palms again.

Some blamed the climate and the amazing fruitfulness of the soil. Long ago eloquent General Barnes thundered:
"You have heard of the California orange tree, the oak and Sequoia gigantea, but have you ever heard of the California knocker tree that grows the

Mme. Pasquali's Trills Vied With the Flutist

Perfume of Flowers on Balmy Air Of Winterless California

By MARY ASHE MILLER

Serious dislocation of the dinner hour was endured with cheers last night by some thousands of San Franciscans who responded to the Call's invitation to come and burn the hammer at Lotta's fountain.

The hammer was there, long and black of handle, hoary and solid of head, arriving on a most impressive lifted hearse, drawn by four white horses with trappings of sable hue. It represented the spirit of knocking which has been abroad in San Francisco for—well, there is no use saying just how many years.

It had been here for too long anyway and the management of The Call thought the season of peace on earth was a good time to destroy the image in the hope that San Francisco people would all go home and have little private conflagrations of their own—if necessary.

It was not altogether a matter of burning the hammer though. Important as that may be in the future life of the city, there was another feature which it is hoped will never be eliminated.

San Francisco again demonstrated the ease and comfort with which open air musicales can be held here on Christmas eve. For the third consecutive year a great singer appeared in gauzy, filmy sort of attire, carried an armful of flowers and proved her faith that our boasted climate is perfectly harmless for freely exposed vocal chords of the most delicate and expensive variety.

Lotta's fountain is becoming the perennial summer spot of the musical world, and the only fear is that the snowbound elsewhere may think that San Francisco is located in the southern hemisphere. Mme. Bernice de Pasquali, in a white and gold fluff gown, with a vivid green feather standing saucily above her forehead, was introduced by Mayor Rolph. He made an enthusiastic speech of some minutes' duration and without his overcoat, it may be noted, as a continuation of the climatic comment.

She sang first "Cantique de Noel," then a delightful bird song in which she and the flutist vied with each other as to the production of birdlike notes, and finally "Dixie" and the Star Spangled Banner, which aroused the listening throngs below her to applause and cheers. "The Last Rose of Summer" came later, clear and bell-like—and all

of this without a shiver. It is declared by those nearest her.

Early in the evening, promptly at 6:45 o'clock, the orchestra began to play patriotic airs. Crowds had been acquiring the best positions near the stand for some time and the first notes of music acted as a magnet for the many.

The "Anvil Chorus" chosen as fitting preliminary music of the cremation of "knockery" was played with the lights out and anvils giving off flashes of light at the appropriate and critical moments in a most effective fashion. Then a great sightseeing automobile came down Geary street bearing an unusual burden. Not the ordinary tourist of commerce, harking to the words of the speaker, but a score or

Continued on Page 4, Column 7

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