

A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY!

GEORGE PARKER, WHILE INSANE, KILLS HIS MOTHER.

AND ACCUSES HIS FATHER OF THE CRIME.

BUT WHILE UNDER EXAMINATION CON- FESSES HIS DEED.

One of the most revolting crimes ever occurring in Montana was committed in Alder Gulch about three miles from this city last Tuesday morning. Mrs. Etta F. Parker was ruthlessly murdered, shot in her bed twice by her demented son, George, a young man in whom all her hopes were centered and whose slightest wish was law to her. The deed was committed in the presence of the husband and father, Naham Parker, who claims that unless he had wrested the gun (a .38-caliber revolver) from the boy, he would have undoubtedly shot him also.

Immediately after the shooting, according to Naham Parker's version, the boy left for town. One of the first places he entered was Gilbert's saloon. John Carruthers and several others were present. This was about 5:45. John asked him to have a drink and he took a small drink of whiskey. After so doing he remarked:

"A terrible thing happened at home this morning."

"What was it?" asked Mr. Carruthers.

"Father killed mother," said young Parker, "and if I had not prevented him he would have killed me, too," and with that he began to cry. While he seemed greatly troubled over the occurrence, he was apparently sane. He ordered breakfast at Gilbert's and partook of it with relish.

The affair was shrouded in mystery. The son claimed that the father had killed his mother and the father asserted that the son had done the deed.

Young Parker was arrested by Sheriff Haines and Under Sheriff Sommers at Gilbert's place about 6:30. He took his arrest coolly.

Shortly after the arrest of the son, the father was arrested by Sheriff Haines and Special Deputy Thomas McColgan. Father and son, each charging the other with the heinous crime, were placed side by side in separate cells to await the result of the inquest.

AN EARLY VISITANT.

Dr. Ragan was called about 5:30 by Julius Kraemer, who told him of the tragedy and said that George Parker was at Gilbert's and wanted to see him. The doctor hunted young Parker up and he told him that his father had killed his mother. While he was talking to the doctor he wept bitterly. The doctor, thinking that the lady might be alive and that he might be of some assistance, left at once for the Parker home. Mrs. Parker lay dead in her bed, which was soaked in blood. As soon as he saw that she was dead and realizing that it was a case for the coroner, he made no examination of the wounds, and requesting Hugh White to take charge of the house and contents until the coroner could arrive, he returned to town.

The doctor met Naham Parker at the house and he informed him that George had committed the crime. Mr. Parker seemed greatly distressed.

INGORY GHASTLINESS.

A MADISONIAN man accompanied Coroner McNulty, County Attorney Callaway, the coroner's jury and others to the scene of the crime early. The murder was committed in the front room, which was used by Mr. and Mrs. Parker as a bed room. The room was neat and tidy, nothing being deranged. The body had not been disturbed but lay just as it had fallen directly after having received the leaden messengers of death. The upper portion of the

bed had been dyed a dull red by the blood of the unfortunate lady. One hand rested on her bosom and the other on the coverlet. The face of the dead woman was something awful to look upon. Over the right eye was a ragged wound and in the right cheek near the mouth was a bullet hole. While the first wound had the appearance of having been inflicted by a heavy blow, the skin was not abraded, and while it was split in four different directions, when it was united the meeting place was directly over the upper bullet hole, the theory being that the hardness of the skull at this place caused the bullet to penetrate the tight skin. Probing resulted in locating the bullet which caused this wound at the back of the skull almost directly opposite from its entrance point. It could be easily felt at the back of the skull and was extracted without trouble. The other bullet ranged downward and could not be located.

PARKER'S CONDUCT.

While young Parker was cool enough and apparently sane when he told his invented tale of the murder, the madly which has sent him to the asylum was not long in conquering him. About 2 p. m. he was a raving lunatic, and he was so violent that undersheriff Summers was afraid he might do himself harm. His yells could be heard all over town and he would kick and hammer the side of the cell in a frantic manner. His eyes as they glared through the barred door of his cell at those on the out side, were as wild and fear inspiring as those of a jungle beast at bay. "There is a God! There is a God!" he would yell.

Wednesday morning he was less violent. He asked to see attorney W. A. Clark and that gentleman was sent for. "My name is God" said George. He wanted Mr. Clark to enter the cell but the attorney declined. Then he requested Mr. Clark to get him some chewing tobacco, which was done.

His father was present and asked him "George, don't you know your own father?"

"Is that Naham Parker?" asked the insane man. He was told that it was.

"I killed Mrs. Naham Parker," replied George, and nothing more could be gotten out of him.

Later he was visited by County Attorney Callaway and undersheriff Sommers. He knew them and called them both by name. "My name" said he, "is not George F. Parker. My name is now Joy. George F. Parker killed Mrs. Naham Parker. He shot her twice."

GEORGE F. PARKER.

George F. Parker is about 32 years of age. He stands six feet seven inches in his stocking feet and is a veritable Hercules. He has the reputation of being the strongest man in Madison County.

Several times he has been affected by insanity. His first attack was when a student at Ann Arbor, where he was known as the "Montana giant." He was then about 18 years of age. His parents brought him back to Montana and caused him to be placed in the Warm Springs Asylum, where after a short time he appeared to recover entirely and was discharged. In July, 1889 he was again examined, adjudged insane, and taken to the asylum by John Carruthers, then sheriff, and deputy James Vanderbeck. He gave his custodians no little trouble on account of his terrible strength. Subsequently he was released as cured, and was apparently well until this spring when his insanity again began to assert itself. Although repeatedly urged by friends to do so his mother has refused to allow him to be examined for the third time. Now that she who stood between him and his confinement is gone—struck down by his

hand—he will probably go the asylum to remain.

THE INQUEST.

As soon as Coroner McNulty was notified of the killing he proceeded to empanel a jury. He was out before breakfast to perform this duty and he succeeded in securing a representative body of men, consisting of John Reed, Robert Vickers, John Allen, Ed Lyon, H. L. Childs and Solomon Wiles. The inquest was conducted by the Coroner and County attorney Callaway, and began about 8:30.

Previous to the examination of witnesses a thorough search was made of the premises. George Parker slept in a woodshed at the rear of the house, and in his bed, under his pillow was found an empty pistol scabbard. An old fashioned navy revolver was found in a room adjoining that in which the murder was committed, and another, a new one, which apparently had not been used for some time, between the mattresses of the bed on which Mrs. Parker was killed.

The first witness examined was Hugh White, who testifies as follows:

Hugh L. White—This morning a little before five o'clock Parker came over to my house, and made quite a noise. I was in bed. He called to me. He was on his crutches and held a revolver. He hammered on the door. I saw him through the window. I opened the door and caught the revolver quickly. He did not want to let go of the pistol but I wrenched it away from him. I might have used enough force to skin his hand, as I was anxious to get the gun. I was somewhat excited. That is the pistol (pointing to a gun which was on the table.) He said "George has killed his mother." I asked him where George was and he said "there he goes down the road," pointing him out. George was bare-headed. Then I dressed myself and came over to the house, accompanied by the old man. We raised the curtains. Mrs. Parker lay dead upon the bed, her head facing the door. I thought I might be able to do something for her, but she was dead—her hand was as cold as it is now. Parker was half crying, and said George always turned against her when he had one of his spells. I told him we had better go out and I would get some help. Mrs. Parker looked equally as bloody then as she is now, but she had evidently stopped bleeding. We then went out and I went for Julius Kraemer. Parker walked up and down in front of my place, moaning constantly. I sent Kraemer for help. Parker said he was dressing when George came in. He asked George how he felt and George replied that he felt quite well. George then asked his mother to make him a cup of tea for breakfast and she said she would. George then stepped into the front room. Then he (Parker) heard the report of the pistol. He started for the room and heard a second report. He then came up to George and succeeded in taking the pistol away from him. George said "Father don't shoot me," and started to run. That was all the old man had to say to me. He asked me is I was afraid of him and I replied that I was not. Mrs. Parker told me yesterday that she did not think George was all right. George laid off yesterday afternoon and I asked her about him. She said he was "sick" and that was not all. I did not hear the shots, but when I entered the house there was a little smoke in the room, although from her hand, which I felt I would consider that she had been dead some time. Two chambers were empty when I took the revolver from Parker.

Naham Parker—Yesterday George was attending water he put on an unusual head, and came down where I was, I said George you have got on too much water; you had better turn it off into the east channel. This was about 10 o'clock yesterday, 1st of July. The water ran out of the reservoir I said George the water is running out of the reservoir you had better go and shut it off. In course of half an hour I saw the water running out of the wash-gate and I said: George there is water; you had better go and turn it on and he went and put on about half what I generally run. I said "George you haven't got water enough on;" he says I raised the gate same as before, I told him there must be something under the gate and to go up and raise the gate about 2 or 3 inches higher, he went up and raised the gate and I saw about one-fourth more water coming, but there was not near enough. He came down where I was; I did not say anything to him, water run until it was run out. I told him then that it had run out, to go and shut the gate I said: George don't forget to bring the

water from the spring (as he had been accustomed of doing) and he went down to the house before I did—about 10 or 15 minutes before noon, 12 o'clock noon. I washed myself at the house, went into the kitchen and says mother is dinner ready; she said yes. Just as she said George was sick I staid there. George had been complaining for three or four weeks he complained of feeling weak. I think he told his mother—as she told me last night before we went to bed—that he had not slept any for two nights. After dinner he said "Father I believe I will not go out this afternoon, I don't feel well."

I waked up this morning at five o'clock. I heard the clock strike. I laid abed ten or fifteen minutes after I heard clock strike. Mrs. Parker said I would not get up so early. "I says it must be half past five. I went into kitchen and dressed in the kitchen. I got my overalls and vest. Kitchen door was locked, I heard George at the door. I unlocked the door George came right in, I went to pull my boot on; he went past me to where his mother was sleeping, he says "Mother I want some tea this morning—coffee don't agree with me". His mother says "alright I will make you some tea", then I heard the report of the gun. I jumped right up and while going in there was another report."

"He was right side of the bed and I said "My God, George what have you done." He turned right around—I was right close to the bed—and I think he intended to shoot me. He had his pistol out, I grabbed the pistol with my right hand. He kind of throwed me down on the bed or I lost my balance, I got hold of the handle of the pistol with my left hand, and we must have tussled there from one and a half to two minutes, and I gave the pistol a wrench suddenly unawares to him. I got the pistol all right. As I got the pistol he made for the front door and I ran to the door, he ran to the gate saying: "Father don't shoot me. I ran over to Mr. Whites. George ran down the hill in the road. I got Mr. White up and told him what had happened I took the gun along with me and gave the pistol to Mr. White, I think I just handed the pistol to him. I told him that George had shot his mother."

I think White went into the house with me.

I think White went into the room with me after giving the alarm to Kramer.

I have a pistol. It is a self action I think it is a Colts. I could not say whether the pistol I took from George was his or his mother's.

I think probably Hugh White and I went into the house before he went down to Kraemers.

White said he (George) might come back—and he went up to the Chinamen's cabins for help.

I hurt my finger in the scuffle with George. My fingers bled on the crutch some. This occurred between five and six this morning. While I was going into the room the second shot was fired. I did not see anything in his hands but the pistol.

While trying to get the pistol away from George I hollered as loud as I could—though I could not make White hear. Did not see any pistol except one George had. I would recognize my own pistol if I saw it.

Witness shown scabbard. Did not know it.

Witness shown large Colts pistol. I could not say that it was George's pistol, think it is.

Witness shown small Colts pistol. Think it is mine, have got one just like it.

Witness shown Smith and Wesson pistol. Do not know it might have been the one I took from George—I did not take the large pistol or the small colts from George.

Witness shown pistol from attorney L. L. Callaway's desk. Think it might have been the one I took from George.

Do not know whether Mrs. Parker was shot in the body or in the head; think it was in the head as her face was bloody.

George never said a word during the scuffle. He was out side of the gate running when he said, "Father do not shoot me."

I waked up first this morning when the clock struck five.

YOUNG PARKER'S TESTIMONY.

About 3 o'clock, young Parker was brought out from his cell. Contrary to expectations he gave no trouble whatever. He did not answer questions readily and the coroner and county attorney experienced considerable difficulty in eliciting replies.

He said he got up between 5 and 6, and that he would have felt well if let alone. He referred to his parents as "Mr. and Mrs. Parker." He said he went to the door and found it locked; Mr. Parker opened the door for me and I went into the bed room; I heard two shots and Mr. Parker came right behind me and tustled with me over a six-shooter; was afraid he was going to shoot me, but the one that was shot fell back and I ran down the road."

"Who fell back?" queried the coroner.

"Mrs. Parker" answered the young man.

The coroner continued:

"What did you do when you went into the room?"

"I don't know that it is any of your business?"

In reply to a number of questions put by the coroner, Parker continued:

"We tustled for the possession of the pistol. Mr. Parker got the six-shooter; I was afraid he was going to shoot me."

In response to a question asked by the county attorney, he said: "I went there to see if Mrs. Parker was up; Mr. Parker was out in the next room; I heard two shots."

"Was this before you went into the room?"

"Who was in the room when the shots were fired?"

"Mrs. and Mrs. Parker."

"Where were you?"

"I was there, too."

"Then all three of you were in the room?"

"Yes."

"Do you know who fired the shots?"

said the attorney.

"I do not say who fired the two shots."

"I did not ask you who fired the shots; I asked you if you knew who fired them?"

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

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