

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF THE CHILDREN AT CALUMET?

Calumet, Mich., Dec. 26.—If sufficient coffins can be brought here today, the seventy-three victims of the panic Christmas eve in Italian Hall, at Red Jacket, which was caused by some one yelling "Fire," will be buried.

But the ugly question: "Who was responsible for that false alarm?" will not be so easily disposed of.

It was heard in whispers yesterday while the bereaved stood outside of the hall, bick despair in their hearts, and demanded some child, some woman or some man from the row of bodies inside.

By night the whisper was a sullen muttering, as the strikers repeated to each other: "We don't want help from the citizens or from the mine owners; we took care of our own when they were living; we can take care of our dead, now."

Every effort is being made to suppress the question. New stories are being invented to account for the panic. One of them is that a child set his cap on fire with some Christmas fireworks, and the sight of the trifling blaze as his father carried him from the hall caused the excitement that resulted in death.

But Mrs. Caesar, 431 Kearsarge street, positively declares she saw the man who pushed his head in the door of the main hallway and hollered "Fire." She declares she grabbed him by the shoulders and tried to hold him, realizing what would happen, but that he pulled away from her and ran down the stairs again.

On Christmas eve the strikers and their families had gathered in the hall to forget the long and bitter war waged between them and the mine operators.

There were seven hundred persons in the hall. The Christmas exercises for the children were nearly concluded. A bearded Santa Claus, burdened with a huge pack of toys, had made

his appearance on the stage and the distribution of the gifts was about to start.

Then a man thrust his head in the front door and shrieked the word that started the mad rush for the stairway. Mrs. Caesar shouted a denial, but her words were drowned in the cries of the panic stricken foreigners.

The stairway became jammed with a mass of bodies. Little children of five and six years were swept in front of the panicky crowd and sent tumbling down, their lives crushed out at the bottom of the stairs when hundreds of others were piled down on top of them.

A big man, mad with fear, his fists doubled, fought his way over the bodies of women and children to the head of the stairway, but there he, too, was unable to withstand the rush and he was sent tumbling to death.

Mothers seized their children and fought like maniacs in their rush for the doorway. Men and girls tore and pushed at each other.

The more level headed attempted to quell the riot with reassuring words, but there are many languages spoken in the copper country and their efforts were misunderstood.

After the worst of the panic had subsided, passing citizens tried to enter the building and were blocked by the solid mass of bodies at the foot of the stairway. So tightly were they wedged in that it was necessary for firemen to climb into the second-story windows and attack the pile from the top.

In several instances, whole families were wiped out by the disaster. Fifty-four families suffered the loss of one or more members.

A mass meeting of the citizens was held yesterday to devise ways and means to take care of the victims and assist the bereaved families.

President Moyer of the Western