

# THE LONGUE POINTE HOLOCAUST.

## The Loss of Life Estimated at From 100 to 150.

### SIX SISTERS PERISHED.

What Caused the Fire?—Woefully Inefficient Protection—Temporary Shelter—Seeking for Friends—An Investigation Ordered.

A Montreal despatch says: Sister Therese de Jesus, the Superior of the Asylum, although at the time of the disaster she was confined on a sick bed in the infirmary, has so far recovered that she has taken the direction of affairs into her own hands, with headquarters at St. Isidore Convent, near the banks of the St. Lawrence, just below where the asylum stood. She places the loss of life at certainly twenty, and possibly fifty. She expressed the determination of at once rebuilding the institution on the most approved scientific plans, both as regards the treatment of patients and with a view to preventing the least possibility of a recurrence of yesterday's horror.

SCENES OF DESOLATION. It has been a task of the most extreme difficulty to obtain accurate information regarding the origin of the fire, the number of inmates burned to death, and the important particulars. When the terrible nature of the catastrophe is considered, this is not at all strange. The poor sisters in charge of the institution are naturally overwhelmed by the terrible event, and the conduct of the public has had the effect of adding to their pitiable condition. From the moment the fire started Longue Pointe has been literally overrun by thousands of people from Montreal, some making anxious enquiries about missing relatives, others moved by idle curiosity. The nuns have been pried with questions until they have been almost driven to despair. The grounds surrounding the outbuildings today presented a most desolate appearance. Scattered around promiscuously were bureaus, beds, benches, pictures and other effects.

TEMPORARY QUARTERS. In the rear of the asylum are the stables where about 100 men patients were quartered last night under the supervision of the Sisters and four Montreal policemen. The scene is not one to be easily described, and surely not to be easily forgotten. Lying on heaps of straw, the sickly and feeble were to be seen moaning, gibbering, shrieking, while twisting and jumping were the more sturdy ones on the floor around them. It made one shudder to witness the fierce expression on some countenances.

Dr. Duquette, the Government Medical Inspector, places the loss of life at certainly 60. On being asked his opinion as to the present system of placing the lunatics under the care of the Sisters, he replied that he was strongly opposed to such a plan, and should ask the Government to place the curables and furious lunatics in a small institution, where they could have skilled treatment from a staff of specialists. The harmless insane could, he said, be placed to greater advantage under the care of the Sisters.

Among the ruins of the asylum no vestige of the dead can be traced.

SISTERS WHO PERISHED.

Many of the inmates are still unaccounted for, but the asylum authorities are making up a list of those rescued, and it is expected in this way to arrive at an exact knowledge of those who have perished. The rescued inmates are now scattered throughout the various institutions belonging to the Providence Nuns in the city. A large number of the female inmates are confined in the St. Isidore Convent at Longue Pointe; others are at the Fallum Street Convent and the Deaf and Dumb Institute in this city. Many of the male inmates have been placed in the St. Benoit Asylum and at the Jesuit Institute at Longue Pointe. The Government's offer of the large exhibition buildings in this city has been accepted by the nuns, as a temporary shelter for the unfortunate patients. The work of putting the building into a proper condition was commenced this morning, and a large number of patients were removed there to-day. As far as can be ascertained six Sisters perished in the flames, namely, Sisters Marie Grovel, Louis Grovel, Demerise Gilbert, Luminia Bouthillier, Victoria McNichols, and Mother Labia, of the Sacred Heart Order, who was an inmate of the furions ward. The first mentioned nun, Sister Marie Grovel, was laid up in the infirmary so sick that she was unable to move. The other three sisters rushed to her assistance, but before they could make their escape they were caught by the flames and perished. Mother Labia, who was an inmate of the furions ward, was first rescued from her perilous position with great difficulty, but hardly had she been rescued when she rushed back into the burning building, and was seen no more. All the lost sisters were very young women, and were connected with prominent families. The two Grovel sisters belonged to Chicoutimi; Sister Bouthillier was the daughter of a wealthy merchant of St. Ours; Sister Gilbert was the descendant of one of Wolfe's Highland officers, who settled on the St. Lawrence after the conquest, and married a French wife. All the sisters were tertiary nuns, that is, lay-sisters, who take vows of chastity and celibacy, but have no voice in the management of the community.

THE ESTIMATED LOSS OF LIFE. As to the exact number of inmates who have perished it is impossible to give any accurate idea, as the asylum authorities themselves are at sea in the question, and it will likely be days, if not weeks, before the exact number is known. In many instances the inmates escaped the vigilance of their keepers, and many are doubtless now wandering around the city or the surrounding country. Several were arrested to-day, and brought to places of safety. It may take weeks before all the stragglers are gathered in and an exact count can be taken. Sister Therese, the Superior of the institution, estimates the number of the lost at twenty-five, but this is the lowest possible estimate, and Dr. Duquette, the Government Inspector, places the number of the burned at over fifty. It is known by the

last report to the Quebec Government that there were 1,780 inmates instead of 1,300, and this much is certain, that no one will ever know the number of victims. From collateral information it must be that there are 150 dead. The coroner, with the Hon. Premier Mercier, Judge Dugas, Senator Thibaudan and two Crown Ministers, arrived at the scene this afternoon, and if enough material can be found an inquest will be held. The firemen have left the ground, and the heat is dying out of the ruins.

WHAT CAUSED THE FIRE? The cause of the fire is still shrouded in mystery, but it is believed to have been started by one of the inmates.

Dr. Duquette, the Government physician, who was present at the time, gives a graphic account of the outbreak of the fire. It was just a quarter to 12 o'clock, and the sisters in charge of the various wards in the female department were preparing for the customary noon-day meal. Little did they believe that that meal would not be partaken of by anyone, and soon after the stroke of twelve many would have died a horrible death. To the left of the centre of the building, as one enters the grounds, is situated the female department. To the right is the male department. On the third flat of the second wing to the right are the private wards for pay patients, and near by was the beautiful chapel of St. Jean. In the rear part of the private wards, which in some cases contained comfortable and even luxurious rooms, according to the standing of the unfortunate occupants, is a bathroom. It was in this bathroom that the fire originated. How was it started? There was no fire for anything, nor was there any necessity for it. The place was heated by hot water or steam and lighted by electricity. The statement was freely made on the grounds that the fire was to be attributed to the electrical current. The mechanical superintendent, however, knocks this theory on the head by saying that there was no electric light in the bathroom. Then but one conjecture remains, and that is that the fire was the work of an incendiary. The fire could not have been set by a sane person; all these are devoted to the institution. Then the spark which raged St. Jean de Dieu to the ground was set by an insane person. This is the version accepted by Sister Therese. When the fire had been burning for some time smoke began issuing through the openings surrounding the closed doors.

INEFFICIENT FIRE PROTECTION. Once started, the fire was simply a repetition of the Toronto University conflagration. The flames spread like a tornado through the long corridors until in a comparatively short space of time the extreme wings of the large pile were burning as fiercely as the centre. Confusion and panic of the wildest kind ensued, and probably over 100 poor creatures were consumed in the fearful blaze. No words could be too strong in condemning the lack of precautions against fire in such a crowded building. There was only one iron door in the entire pile to prevent the flames from spreading, and no adequate water supply to combat the destroying element. All the water necessary for the wants of the establishment was pumped up from the river by a small Worthington engine into eleven reservoirs placed in the most elevated portions of the building, their capacity being six thousand gallons each. A quantity of hose had been placed on brackets in the passages, but there was no systematic drill in their use, and it could hardly be expected that the nuns, encumbered as they were with the care of frenzied patients, would be equal to such an emergency. Then, again, the great height of the building increased the danger and made it utterly impossible to get the violent patients out of the death trap.

SEEKING FOR RELATIVES. The destruction of the asylum continues to be the absorbing topic of conversation, and the more the facts are inquired into the more horrible does the disaster appear. All day Notre Dame street, which leads out to Longue Pointe along the bank of the St. Lawrence, was thronged with vehicles and pedestrians making their way to the fearful scene. From the surrounding country also the habitants kept arriving in such numbers that it was found necessary to place a couple of policemen at the gate leading into the asylum grounds, in order to keep back those not having special business. It was not mere curiosity, however, that brought the crowds to the asylum gates, for there were many in the throng who came with distracted hearts to learn if relatives, warmly loved notwithstanding their mental infirmities, had been sacrificed in the flames. They were compelled to go away unsatisfied, for it will be several days before anything definite can be ascertained as to who perished and who survived.

A Montreal despatch says: The excitement attending the great fire at the Longue Pointe Insane Asylum having subsided to a considerable extent, the authorities have been enabled to take a calmer view of the situation. The chief object of the authorities is now to provide suitable accommodation for the unfortunate inmates who have been rendered homeless, if such an expression may be used, by the fire. This is by no means an easy task, and the services of the Sisters are being taxed to their fullest capacity. The inmates continue to have temporary shelter at the various institutions under the control of the Providence Nuns. At the mother house of the nuns in this city there are 300 lodged, while 100 have found shelter at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, which is also controlled by the order. In addition to these, 300 are lodged in the asylum barns, 142 at the St. Broit Asylum at Longue Pointe, 52 in the Jesuits' country house, 60 in the Longue Pointe school house, 17 in Senator Thibaudan's summer residence at Longue Pointe. At the St. Isidore Convent, Longue Pointe, the private patients and the infirm to the number 150 have found a shelter. In addition to these there are a few of the more harmless patients lodged in private houses. The sisters are still busy in preparing lists of the patients now under their charge. Their task is a very difficult one, as, in addition to the large number lodged in the various institutions mentioned, many of the private houses in the village of Longue Pointe and surrounding country have taken in one or two of the more harmless unfortunates. When the lists are completed a comparison with the list of the original inmates will show exactly who are missing. The original list is believed to be safe in the vault, which is buried beneath the ruins, and which will be removed as soon as

possible. So far as can be estimated 1,182 patients are so accounted for up to the time of writing. The total number of inmates at Government charge on the first of May, according to advices from Quebec, was 1,297. This would leave over one hundred inmates unaccounted for.

ESCAPED LUNATICS RECAPTURED.

The authorities of the asylum have been occupied all day with anxious relatives and friends inquiring for the missing, and in many cases have been able to allay the fears of the anxious ones. The sisters expect that there are still many of the escaped inmates wandering about the country who will be secured in time. No fewer than twenty have been captured so far. Some of them when captured were in a terrible condition owing to exposure to cold. The relatives of a number of the unfortunates who formerly resided in the city were considerably startled to have them walk into the house, without the slightest intimation of their visit. In all these instances the unfortunates were secured without trouble and returned to the asylum authorities.

THE SEARCH FOR REMAINS.

The ruins of the destroyed buildings are still smouldering and are very dangerous. As soon as it can be done with safety, the ruins will be searched for remains. It is, however, regarded as very improbable that any trace of the bodies will be found, as owing to the intense heat they were probably reduced to ashes.

KNOWN TO HAVE PERISHED.

The following is a corrected list of those so far as known to have perished in the flames:

- DOLPHINE ARCHAMBAULT. VICTORINE BEAUDRY. CHRISTINE DEMERS. MRS. HUST. CAMILLE LACHAPELLE. AUGUSTINE LACROIX. MISS LETOURNEUX. MISS LEBLANC. EUSEBE MARCHANT. BIRDET MALONE. ELIZA RICHARD. MRS. SCULLEN. MARIE ST. DENIS. ELIE ST. LOUIS. MISS THERIAULT. MRS. WILLIAMS.

All these were inmates of the women's ward, and the majority were from Montreal. In addition there were the six nuns: Sister BOUTHILLIER. Sister MARIE GROVEL. Sister LOUISE GROVEL. Sister GILBERT. Sister VICTORIA McNICHOLS. Sister LEBLANC.

This gives a total of twenty-two so far absolutely accounted for. In addition there are many still missing. Amongst these is Mrs. Mary A. Shaban, of Millbury, Vermont, who was an inmate of the furions ward, and who it is feared also perished in the flames. This lady, who was a private patient, belonged to one of the best known families in Vermont. A former wealthy resident of St. Polycarp, named Lanthier, was conducted from his place of confinement, but disappeared before he could be removed to safe keeping. He was stopped once while trying to go back to the burning building, but it is feared that he may have reached it another time, as no trace of him can be found.

PREMIER MERCIER'S VIEWS.

Premier Mercier stated to-day that the Government would do all in its power to secure to the sisters as favorable a contract as possible after the lapse of the present contract, which has still to run for five years. "But," he added, "I cannot yet say exactly what we can do, or will do. At any rate, we shall try to serve the good nuns, and at the same time see that the interests of the Province are properly secured. We shall hold a meeting to decide upon something definite, as the sisters will not rebuild unless they are sure of a continuation of the contract, so as to make it worth their while to incur so heavy an expense."

Sister Therese, the lady superioress of the institution, who was ill, has had a serious relapse owing to the severe shock, and is confined to her bed in the St. Isidore Asylum. The sisters have received expressions of sympathy from all parts of the continent.

For a reminder of home the WEEKLY TIMES fills the bill to perfection and only costs \$1.00 per year.

—Preserved violets are a dainty confectionery, but they are indigestible.

LOOK BENEATH THE CASE. Beneath a fair exterior A rascal often lurks: It is true of men and watches; You may tell them by their works.

THE BRAVEST MAN. The bravest man is he who wears, Regardless of remarks and stares, The First Straw Hat!

Crispi's wife was snubbed by the Italian queen once, but after the premier sent her royal highness word that if it occurred again he would declare the republic in Italy, she was cordially received at court.

An effort will be made this season to popularize the common sense, broad-scolled, low-heeled, beach brown shoe.

George W. White, a Washington bicyclist, while taking a spin a few evenings ago was dashed against a telegraph pole with a force that may kill him, the machine having slipped and "doubled up."

The marriage contract of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, with Francis II. is to be sold by auction shortly in London. It is a quaint old manuscript of nine folio pages.

U. S. Senator Beck, recently dead, often quoted Burns and could, it is said, repeat Scott's "Lady of the Lake" offhand.

The excavations being pursued at Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, under the direction of the British School of Archaeology, have resulted in some interesting discoveries.

There are now placed in the museum at Pompeii the plaster casts of the bodies of two men and a woman taken from impressions made in a stratum of ashes outside the Stabian gates.

News has reached Ottawa that the Imperial Government has, or is about to, disallow the Canadian Copyright Act of last session.

# ALL ABOUT A SEIZURE.

## A Yankee Skipper Lays His Case Before Uncle Sam.

### HE DEMANDS SATISFACTION.

A Washington despatch says: Capt White, of the United States fishery vessel Rapid Transit, of Gloucester, Mass., part of whose cargo was recently thrown overboard by the Newfoundland authorities under the new Bait Act, has made his official statement to the Secretary of State. The following are some of the vital parts of it: "I was adjudged to pay \$1 per ton for the measurement of my vessel and to take one barrel of bait only per ton. My vessel measured 80 tons. I was also to sign a bond that 80 barrels only would be landed in the United States, and that the remainder of the cargo should be given to them. In default of this I was to pay a fine of \$500 and to have the whole cargo confiscated, and in default of the fine I was to go to prison for three months. He said, "Which option will you take?"

"I said, 'I will do neither one thing nor the other.' I demanded time to consult counsel and to communicate with my partner and the other owner in the vessel. He said, 'I will give you thirty minutes to decide.' He said to the commander, 'See that my orders are executed.' They were getting up steam, and were about to start with me to jail. I sought to communicate with somebody and to secure counsel.

He said, 'You cannot leave here until you decide which option you will take.' There was an officer at the door. I found that I could not do any better, so I decided to take the first option, to pay the \$80 and to give to them the residue of the cargo and to sign a bond that these 80 barrels would be delivered in the United States.

THE BOSTON HARBOR ACT.

As soon as I did so he ordered me to leave over my cargo. I said, 'I will do no such thing, I will not throw my property overboard.'

In an instant Commander McGraw, of the Fiona, said, 'We will do it then.'

"I said, 'If you do this, you will do it entirely on your own responsibility.'

He said, 'We will take all these chances,' or something to that effect. He ordered two boat loads of men to go to work and to leave over my cargo, and finally I got in a boat with him. He came alongside of my vessel, ordered his men into the hold, and they shovelled out the herring with their large coal shovels. It took them from 9 o'clock in the morning until half past 10 in the evening, steady work, to do this. He wished me to go down and see whether there were eighty barrels left. I told him that I did not care whether there were eighty barrels left or not, as they were then no good to me. Finally I went down and said that there seemed to be eighty barrels there, but that they were all worthless to me. The fish were all tramped upon and cut up by the boots and the shovels of the men.

He said, 'All we care about is to leave you eighty barrels.'

RATHER SHADY IF TRUE.

"I said, 'I demand that you put this vessel in a seaworthy condition. She was in a good condition this morning. Now she has no ballast. You have thrown over my cargo. I have no conveniences for securing ballast. I have only an old dory, which leaks.'

He said, 'It is too bad. I am sorry. I have only done my duty and can do no more.'

Within an hour's time he had left. The next day it was blowing a gale of wind. The wind increased. I feared that without ballast we should go ashore. The next day the wind had moderated somewhat. We left about 1 p.m. We made a harbor about four miles distant in order to procure ballast. This was the 18th or 19th. We left there and proceeded to St. Jacques. In Port Miquelon I cleared my vessel with the 80 barrels on board for a home port in the United States. We left St. Jacques and arrived at St. Pierre that same evening. We went to St. Pierre because that was the nearest port where there was a United States consul. The next morning I entered a protest with the United States consul there and left soon after for home. The judge convicted me under the Bait Act of 1889, but he imposed the penalty of the new Act of 1890. I had loaded my vessel with this herring before this new Bait Act took effect. I had bought the herring on the 5th, and loaded it on the 7th. The Act was passed April 2nd, 1890, took effect on the 8th, consequently my herring was bought and loaded, and on board before that Act when into effect. And I never heard anything about this Act until April 13th, when the steamer came in. I asked throughout all these proceedings for counsel and for time, and both were refused me.

THAT POOR HOUSE FIRE.

The Loss of Life Much Greater Than at First Supposed.

A Utica, N. Y., despatch says: The number of bodies found in the ruins of the poorhouse in Preston, Chenango county, already number thirteen. The impression is growing that the loss of life far exceeds the first estimate. In the building were many aged men and women, some of whom had not left their beds for months, and others who from weakness of mind were incapable of finding their way out of the building in the midst of the confusion and excitement which prevailed. It is believed that a number of these perished, and this belief is strengthened by the discovery of a body this morning at some distance from the department occupied by the imbeciles. There are several feet of ashes and debris in the cellar, and the probabilities are that when they are removed a number of bodies will be found. Many of the old people had no relatives, and they are only brought to mind by the recollection of the keeper and their companions. So it is impossible yet to say who and how many are missing. The building burned very rapidly, as if pitched and tarred, and with great fierceness. The fire was intensely hot, and the belief exists that some of the bodies were so completely burned that no trace of them can be found.

On Monday the coroner's jury will begin the taking of testimony, and it is not expected that the full number of those missing will be known till then, as the officials are very reticent. The insane paupers will be brought to Utica to-morrow, and preparations are being made in the State hospital to receive them.

A man never gets married so many times that he will not hold his breath at that part of the ceremony where those who have objections are invited to come forward.

Two Ways of Raising It.

Rev. Mr. Choker—Has your congregation raised your salary lately, Brother Thirdly.

Brother Thirdly (from the country)—No, sir; it seldom raises more than half of its any given year.

It is the man who is too full for utterance who never knows when he's loaded.

Sir George Elliot, the wealthy English coal operator and baronet, is of quite humble origin. In his youth he was a colliery hand in the Durham coal pits, of which he successively became overseer, manager and owner.

Charming dresses can be made of 30 cent gannis striped flannels. One of these towns is worth half a dozen cotton dresses.

# HE WRUNG HER NECK.

## The Revolting Deed of a French Teamster.

### HE WILL BE GUILLOTINED.

A Paris cable says: A meek, inoffensive-looking man, of middle age, at the Paris Assizes to-day, was tried and condemned to death for a double crime almost unparalleled in atrocious savagery. This monster is Jean Vodable, a Paris carter. Vodable used to live with a scavenger Pauline Malfeatre, who after three years' experience wearied of her lover's brutal usage and showed him the door. Breathing threats of vengeance Vodable went away and remained absent about a month. On the morning of November 30th Mme. Malfeatre found Vodable in her apartment. He urged her to resume her former relations, emphasizing his entreaties by showing a rope with which he said he would hang himself in case of refusal. Mme. Malfeatre compromised matters by agreeing to spend the day with Vodable. She had a daughter, Alexandrine, 12 years old, whom she supposed to be at school as usual. When midday came Alexandrine did not return at luncheon time. Her mother grew anxious, but Vodable quieted her by saying that he had given Alexandrine three sous to get her meal at school. The afternoon was passed by Vodable and Mme. Malfeatre in quaffing bottles of wine. As twilight gathered and Alexandrine still did not return, her mother's anxiety revived. Accompanied by Vodable, she went to the school, where she learned that Alexandrine had not attended. Thence she went to the police station, and an inquiry was set on foot, but nothing could be learned of the missing child. Finally, tired and disconsolate, Mme. Malfeatre went home, still in company with Vodable, who passed the night at her house. Vodable took his leave early in the morning, and Mme. Malfeatre set about tidying the room. While thus engaged she noticed a bit of red cloth peeping out from under the bed. The woman staggered back in terrible fear, then she stooped and pulled the cloth towards her. It was her child's dress. Alexandrine was found a last. A shriek rang through the house, and when the alarmed neighbors entered the room they found the hapless mother lying insensible upon the corpse of the child. A medical examination showed that a brutal assault had been committed upon the girl. Suspicion was at once directed to Vodable, who, after keeping the police at bay for a couple of days, gave himself up of his own accord, confessing that he was guilty of the crime of murder.

His counsel at the opening of the trial begged a remand, in order that Vodable might undergo a medical examination. This was refused by the presiding judge, who forthwith began his cross questioning. Vodable answered composedly, almost carelessly, and kept locking round the packed court as if he was a spectator, and the persons present were there for his amusement. Vodable had suffered several condemnations for wounding with a knife or revolver women with whom he had lived. He lightly acknowledged that he had shot one woman and stabbed another in moments of exasperation, but strenuously maintained that he had been an industrious and temperate workman, adding, "I was a great fool to bear with her as long as I did." Coming to the murder, the judge asked the prisoner to relate the details.

"I found," said Vodable, "Alexandrine getting ready to go to school, and asked her about the visits paid to her mother. She said she could tell me nothing, as it was not her business. I said, 'If you don't tell me I'll wring your neck. I took her and wrung her neck.' A shudder ran through the audience. Vodable had told the tale without a tremor in his voice, leaning the while unconcernedly over the rail of the dock. When silence, broken by a murmur of loathing from the public, had been restored, he resumed without waiting for the judge. "Then I pushed her under the bed. As she moved a bit I took a stick and pushed her further under." Vodable's counsel made strenuous efforts to save his client's neck, depicting him a jealous lover whose passion had maddened, but the jury, admirably pitiless, returned a verdict of guilty. "J'y suis," remarked Vodable after listening impassively to the sentence which consigned him to the guillotine.

That poor house fire. The loss of life much greater than at first supposed. A Utica, N. Y., despatch says: The number of bodies found in the ruins of the poorhouse in Preston, Chenango county, already number thirteen. The impression is growing that the loss of life far exceeds the first estimate. In the building were many aged men and women, some of whom had not left their beds for months, and others who from weakness of mind were incapable of finding their way out of the building in the midst of the confusion and excitement which prevailed. It is believed that a number of these perished, and this belief is strengthened by the discovery of a body this morning at some distance from the department occupied by the imbeciles. There are several feet of ashes and debris in the cellar, and the probabilities are that when they are removed a number of bodies will be found. Many of the old people had no relatives, and they are only brought to mind by the recollection of the keeper and their companions. So it is impossible yet to say who and how many are missing. The building burned very rapidly, as if pitched and tarred, and with great fierceness. The fire was intensely hot, and the belief exists that some of the bodies were so completely burned that no trace of them can be found.

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