

MURDER MOST FOUL.

An Aged Couple Brutally Murdered—The Crime a Mystery—Empanelling the Jury.

A murder trial which promises to be a *cause celebre* recently commenced at Chicago, Ill., and it is not without interest to Canadians, as the accused is one Neil McKeague, the son of a farmer who lives near Thorold, Ont. Most murders in Chicago, though brutal, are done in the light of day; but this one is shrouded in mystery. The story of the crime is briefly this:—Sixteen miles north of Chicago lies the pretty little suburban village of Winnetka. In a handsome two-story cottage, isolated from the other houses, lived James L. Willson and his wife. Willson was 72 years old and his wife 82 years. They were wealthy, and the husband frequently came to the city to superintend his money matters. On Wednesday, Feb. 13, a young lady named Miss Emma Dwyer (whose custom it was to call at the house and remain with the old lady while Willson was in the city), rang the door bell, but received no answer. The house was barred, and no noise could be heard inside. She passed to the rear, and entered through a kitchen window. What a sight met her gaze!

BLOOD WAS EVERYWHERE, on the walls, the ceiling, the furniture, the floor. The old man Willson lay near the door of his bed-chamber, dead. Two bullets were lodged in his body, and the breast-bone and nine ribs had been crushed in by the jumping of the murderer upon him. Upstairs, in her bed, was Mrs. Willson, beaten almost out of human semblance. The right arm lay outside the blood-soaked coverlet. Her thin fingers were grasping a stout cane which had snapped in two when she defended herself. She had been beaten to death with a pair of iron tongs, which were found dripping with blood at the bedside. Her lower jaw was splintered, her eyes gouged, and her right arm broken in two places. The young woman was horrified, and ran to a butcher whose shop was within sight, and solicited his assistance. That person was Neil McKeague, the new prisoner. When she came to the shop she found McKeague standing in the doorway, looking apparently towards Willson's house.

THE CRIME A MYSTERY. Who committed the murders was naturally the first thought. Its object was plainly robbery; but why should robbers kill the old couple if they were not known to them, as ordinary professional crackmen would have been? A number of arrests were made pro forma of tramps and other suspicious persons seen in the neighbourhood, but there was no evidence forthcoming to warrant their detention. The heir of the old couple called in the services of Pinkerton's detectives, and a clue was quickly followed up, which led to an arrest. At the time of the murder there was snow upon the ground. Tracks were found in the snow leading to the front gate. Exact plaster casts of these tracks were taken by the detectives. In the rooms where the crime was committed were found three rubber vest buttons of peculiar make. The name of a Paris maker was stamped on them. All were blood-stained. One had a piece of cloth attached, as if rent from somebody's clothes. These valuable links in the evidence were naturally taken care of. The day before the murder, Willson had received a considerable sum of money through the sale of some property. All this money, his gold watch, a memorandum book, and other valuable papers were gone; but \$350 in cash and \$3,000 in village bonds were found in an old trunk undisturbed. They were probably overlooked.

THE SUSPICION FIXED. Among the villagers who was fond of discussing the murder was the young Canadian butcher, McKeague. He repeated constantly, with varying details, a story to the effect that the night before the murder Willson came to his store and said "that he expected a caller that night and wanted an extra nice steak." The constant reiteration of this story made people whisper that it might be possible there was an object in his doing so. The whispering became loud talking. McKeague's custom fell off. His store was avoided. It became known that McKeague owed Willson a large sum of money, but the evidence of this debt was taken in the papers carried off by the murderer. Detectives watched McKeague. His clothes were secretly examined and the three buttons matched other buttons upon his clothes. The microscope identified the threads attached to one button as being the same material as in one of his vests. His pistol carried bullets of the same calibre as those in the old man's body. Despite his protestations of innocence, this circumstantial evidence was deemed sufficient for his arrest. His father, a gentlemanly old man, came on from Thorold, Ont., interviewed his son, and pronounced him guiltless. He then secured eminent counsel and employed detectives for the defence.

MCKEAGUE IN THE DOCK. His trial was opened before Judge Anthony. The prisoner is a cleanly-shaved, plump-faced, rather good-looking man, and decidedly free from the hang-dog appearance usually ascribed to murderers. He was fashionably but inexpensively dressed. His coat was closely buttoned to the chin. A bright cameo pin relieved his dark scarf. His collar was altogether of the latest fashion, and his get-up unlike that of a man who has been in gaol for some time. His hair was worn short, and parted nearly in the middle. The whole day was wasted in challenging the jurors. Everybody who had conscientious objections to capital punishment, or were over 60 years old, or who had formed an opinion about the murder from reading the newspapers were allowed to stand aside. It was amusing to notice how the "pre-formed conviction" racket was worked by the jurors who wanted to get away. From ten in the morning till five in the afternoon not a single juror had been selected. If somebody had put the newspaper-reading test to the presiding judge it is possible he would have "excused" himself from attendance also.

EMPANELLING A JURY. The McKeague trial continues to draw a crowded court, although not a particle of evidence has yet been submitted. Only four jurors having been sworn so far. Every person presented as a possible juror is as a rule willingly excused from further attendance. Nearly one hundred persons have been rejected. McKeague's counsel appears confident of a verdict of acquittal, and so do his aged Scotch father and mother, who are

here from Thorold. His sister, aunt, and affianced, Belle Hagen, are in court every day. The press is devoting much attention to the trial, and one journal is publishing neat sketches of the principal witnesses, counsel, &c. All the evidence is circumstantial and is now centered around a single waistcoat button with a few threads attached. The defence confidently assert McKeague's innocence, and maintain that Pinkerton's Detective Agency employed by the prosecution to work the case up knows that he is guiltless. For this latter reason the defence challenged all the jurors who have had dealings with these renowned detectives.

Major-General F. D. Middleton.

Major-General Middleton, who has accepted the command of the Canadian Militia, will proceed to Ottawa immediately upon his arrival in the country to assume his new duties. The General will be much missed at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, where he has been Commandant and Secretary since September, 1874. In alluding to his departure from that establishment the *Army and Navy Gazette* says that he has earned the respect and gratitude of everybody, and that the thoroughness with which he has carried out the duties of his by no means sinecure appointment has done much to raise the general tone of the college. The *Gazette* goes on to say that it would have been impossible to have found a more worthy successor to General Luard, and if Major-General Middleton does not continue the good work commenced by Sir Edward Selby Smith and continued by General Luard, it will be due to a want of official encouragement on the part of the Canadian Government, and not to any lack of zeal on his part.

The General is already well known in Canada, where he first came at the time of the Trent affair as a Major in the 29th Regt. The headquarters of that corps were at Hamilton, but Major Middleton spent a great deal of his time in Montreal, where he is widely known and universally liked. After serving some ten years on the staff of General Windham he left for home at the time of the withdrawal of the Imperial troops, and soon afterwards was appointed Commandant of the Royal Military College. The General obtained his first commission as ensign on the 30th December, 1842, and saw his first active service in 1846, in the southern part of New Zealand, where he took part in the attack on Wanganui. He afterwards served in India during the Santhal rebellion and the never to be forgotten Sepoy Mutiny of 1857-58. He was orderly officer to General Franks in the action of Solanpore, and subsequent affairs on the advance to Lucknow. At the siege and capture of that city he was A. D. C. to General Luard, and took part in the storming of Bank's House, and the Martiniere, where his gallant conduct gained him the Brevet of Major. The General subsequently served in nearly all the principal actions during the mutiny, and was time and again specially mentioned in home despatches and has received the order of Commander of the Bath. According to the new rules relative to compulsory retirement Major-General Middleton would have had to leave the army as a Colonel next November, but getting the command of the Canadian Militia and his Major-Generalship he can now serve on for some years. The General was recommended to Lord Clyde by Lieutenant Sir E. Lugard for the Victoria Cross for two acts of bravery of which the following is a brief outline: On April 15, 1858, in the engagement near Azemghur a troop of the military train charged a large body of rebels. Captain Middleton, staff officer, had been ordered by Sir Edward Lugard to take command of the party and gallantly led it. In the *melee*, Lieutenant Hamilton, 3rd Sikh Cavalry, fell from his horse mortally wounded. A body of Sepoys, tulwar in hand, rushed at him to cut him to pieces, Captain Middleton and Farrier Francis Murphy, in a desperate hand to hand fight, killed several of the enemy and drove off the rest and enabled some others, who afterwards came up, to carry off the wounded officer. On the same day and about the same time, Private Fowles of the Military Train was unhorsed and wounded. The rebels were swarming about him and were on the point of cutting him to pieces when Captain Middleton coolly dismounted placed Fowles on his horse and brought him into camp. More devoted and heroic conduct was never rewarded by the Victoria Cross. Yet, though Murphy received the decoration in question, Lord Clyde declined to recommend Captain Middleton on the ground that he was on the personal staff at the time. In writing about this the *Army and Navy Gazette* stated that this was incorrect, for Captain Middleton had been expressly placed in command of the party. But even had he been merely present as a staff officer, the *Gazette* fails to see how that fact would have diminished the credit due for his unselfish and heroic conduct.

Corporal Punishment. "Do you believe in corporal punishment?" asked a visitor in a large grammar school out West. "That depends," replied the lady-teacher, with a peculiar look, "on the size of the boy. If he is bigger than I am, I try moral suasion." "What if the moral suasion doesn't persuade?" "In that case, I have a method which never fails." "What is that?" "I hand the ferule to the refractory pupil and compel him to give me as many strokes with it as he thinks his own punishment deserves." "How many times have you done that?" "Only twice within six years. So I think the system a good one." "Yes, I should think it was," and the visitor went away, thoughtful. The idea is by no means new. Every boy and girl who has read Miss Alcott's "Little Men" will remember the case of Father Baer and Emil. It must be said, however, that such a system of punishment might safely be followed by a lady-teacher, when the result would not always be so pleasant if a gentleman should adopt it.

Accounted For.

Mrs. Plaindame, after looking long and thoughtfully at a plaster cast of Shakspeare, remarked: "Poor man! how pale he was! He couldn't have been well when it was taken." "No," replied Fogg, "he was dead." "Ah! that accounts for it," said Mrs. P., drawing a sympathetic breath.—*Buffalo Express.*

How to Prevent Fires.

The following simple precautions suggested by the *New York Independent*, if strictly followed, would prevent a great many destructive fires. The rules might be posted in every store, dwelling, and factory with good results:

1. The leading causes of fires are kerosene oil, matches, and furnaces.
2. Always buy the best quality of oil.
3. Never make a sudden motion with a lamp, either in lifting it or setting it down.
4. Never place a lamp on the edge of a table or mantel.
5. Never fill a lamp after dark, even if you should have to go without a light.
6. See that the lamp wicks are always clean and that they work freely in the tube.
7. Never blow out a lamp from the top.
8. Never take a light to a closet where there are clothes. If necessary to go to the closet, place the light at a distance.
9. Use candles just as much as possible in going about the house and in bedrooms. They are cheaper, can't explode, and for very many purposes are just as good as lamps.
10. Matches should always be kept in earthen jars, or in tin.
11. They should never be left where rats or mice can get hold of them. There is nothing more to the taste of a rat than phosphorus. They will eat it if they can get at it. A bunch of matches is almost certain to be set fire if a rat gets at it.
12. Have good safes in every place where matches are to be used, and never let a match be left on the floor.
13. Never let a match go out of your hand after lighting it until you are sure the fire is out, and then it is better to put it in a stove or an earthen dish.
14. It is far better to use the safety matches, which can only be lighted upon the box which contains them.
15. Have your furnaces examined carefully in the fall, and at least once during the winter by a competent person. All of the pipes and flues should be carefully looked to.
16. If there are any closets in the house near chimneys or flues, which there ought not to be, put nothing of a combustible nature in them.
17. Never leave any wood near a furnace, range, or stove to dry.
18. Have your stove looked frequently, to see that there are no holes for coal to drop out.
19. Never put any hot ashes or coal in a wooden receptacle.
20. Be sure that there are no curtains or shades that can be blown into a gaslight.
21. Never examine a gas meter after dark.

Fires, of course, arise from other causes than those we have stated. Smokers burn up much valuable property which is not in the shape of cigars. Bunches of oiled rags of the most inanimate nature in themselves still perform the most wonderful feats in the destruction of property. Tramps, with their old pipes, will creep into barns and haymows, and servants will be careless in thousands of ways, but if every person who owns property will give the subject attention, and see that those around him are posted, and see that reasonable rules are always obeyed, many thousands of dollars could be saved annually which are now burned out of existence.

Great Men's Diversions.

Greatness unbending from its dignified surroundings to refresh itself with the amusements of common folk envelopes itself, in so doing, with a peculiar charm. Many a man plays on the floor with his children, without any fear that such romping may go to make history. The diversions of busy men are seldom what we should imagine them to be; for the reason that, in order to produce the desired effect; they must as far as possible produce a contrast to their daily toil. Beethoven, when in want of a change after mental labor, liked best of all to run round the largest square in his vicinity. Hartley Coleridge, in the same way, was fond of tearing wildly round a field. Richter's relaxation was a long walk on a rainy day. He took his family with him—all being clad in clothing that a thorough wetting would not spoil. Jean Paul averred that the electrical effect of such a rain-bath on the human system is one of the best therapeutics in the world; and we incline to agree with him. Victor Hugo does his locomotion by proxy; next to playing with his grand-children he loves to knock about Paris on the top of omnibuses.

Carlyle, on the other hand, liked traveling inside an omnibus, though why, nobody, apparently has discovered. Adam Smith's sole indulgence (beyond a taste for finely bound books) was a passion for pedestrianism. Never was there a more peripatetic philosopher. One Sunday morning in 1775, he went to his door in Kirkcaldy, to feel the fresh air; the peripatetic instinct came upon him unawares. He walked straight away to Burntisland, many miles from Kirkcaldy, and astonished the kirk going folk there with an apparition in dressing gown and slippers. During this particular walk Smith excoagitated the first chapter of the "Wealth of Nations."

Scott was a great pedestrian, lame though he was. Christopher North once walked seventy miles in one day for some loch fishing; Dickens could have emulated the feat; and Professor Blackie has boasted that he has not only walked seventy miles in one day, but slept by the roadside during the following night. This eccentric Scotch Professor has made' such good use of his legs that there are few towns in England and none in Scotland to which he has not walked. Mr. Fawcett, though blind, takes the keenest delight in fishing, and casts a fly with the utmost skill. Mr. Bright is another votary of the rod. At the Reform Club, in winter, he may be found playing billiards with the zest of a "good cue." But his highest enjoyment lies in our poets. He reads himself to sleep every night with the work of one of our classical bards. It may be wondered whether, in some secret drawer, the orator preserves some little bundle of his own verses, prompted by such continuous reading in the harmonious thoughts of mighty men. Campbell declared that there was no inspiration to the writing of poetry so good as the reading of poetry.

Little Nell: "Mamma, what is color blind?" Mamma: "Inability to tell one color from another, my dear." Little Nell: "Then I des the man that made my geography, is color-blind." Mamma: "And why?" Little Nell: "Because he's got Greenland painted Yellow, and the Red Sea painter black."

The Royal Wedding.

At the marriage of the Princess Victoria of Hesse to Prince Louis of Battenburg, recently in Darmstadt, the streets were profusely decorated with flags in honor of the event, and were thronged with sightseers. After the performance of the civil marriage, the bride was led to the palace chapel by her grandmother, the mother of Grand Duke Louis. They were followed by a procession of Royal guests, Queen Victoria leading, followed by the Prince and Princess Imperial of Germany, the Prince and Princess of Wales, Princess Beatrice, Prince William of Prussia, and Prince Alexander, of Bulgaria, the brother of the bridegroom. In the bridal possession the bride and the bridegroom walked between the Princesses of Battenberg. When the bride and bridegroom exchanged rings at the altar a salute of thirty-six guns was fired. Queen Victoria stood during the choral portion of the services. At the conclusion of the ceremony she embraced the couple. The bride wore the veil of her mother, the late Princess Alice. All the guests except Queen Victoria attended the banquet in the evening. The only toast drunk was to the health of the newly wedded pair. The couple afterward started for Jugenheim amid the plaudits of throngs of people. The streets were beautifully illuminated in the evening. A performance of "Colomb" was given on Wednesday at the Opera House. The Princess Victoria and Prince Louis of Battenburg occupied the front centre places of the royal box, and grouped around them were other royal personages. The city was brilliantly illuminated and there were a torchlight procession and serenades. Princess Victoria was born at Windsor, on the 5th of April, 1863. She is the eldest daughter of the Grand Duke Ludwig IV. of Hesse-Darmstadt and the late Princess Alice, daughter of Queen Victoria. Prince Louis of Battenberg is a comely, graceful young fellow and a great favorite in royal German circles. He is the oldest son of Prince Alexander of Hesse, the uncle of the Grand Duke. This young Prince was born May 24th, 1854, and became a naval officer in the British navy, besides being an officer in the Hessian Royal Artillery. He is of an ambitious nature, and took a decided position of activity in pushing his brother Alexander into place as Prince of Bulgaria. He first met the Princess in Darmstadt, and, obtaining the aid of the Prince of Wales, pursued his suit and got the sanction of the head of the Hesse house. He then proceeded to Windsor, when the Queen of England approved the betrothal, thus adding another link to the German chain that encircles the British throne.

Blessed for Charity.

A little old woman, pale-faced and bowed in form, dressed in the habit of the order of St. Vincent de Paul, is always to be found pacing the wards or corridors of the chain of institutions which surround the block bounded by Sixty-eighth and Sixty-ninth streets, Lexington and Third Avenues, New York. This is Sister Irene, the foster mother of thousands of foundlings. Toddlers of all complexions cling to her skirts and nestle at her side, awaiting her benignant smile and loving greeting. Four fully appointed buildings, the Asylum, St. Ann's and St. John's Hospitals, and an imposing chapel, occupy the square purchased by the efforts of this woman, who began her work without a penny in her pocket. Sister Irene and Mrs. P. L. Thebaud begged the first ten dollars that was the nest-egg of the fund to save the foundlings. Last week \$10,017 was paid as wages to the nurses who take care of the children in their homes. There are nearly two thousand children in the asylum, besides 1,700 nurses outside. The number left in the crèche daily average forty-nine. "The great effort of my life," says Sister Irene, "is to restore the mothers; if they come here they are shielded, and, by kindness and good counsel, brought back to a virtuous way of living."

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