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RALPH HARDELLOT'S MEDIATION

BY WILLIAM MINTO.

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

By 10 o'clock there was a considerable muster at Wixoe—in all about 100 men. Sir Richard Rainham was not a popular neighbor, and when it was known that a blow was to be struck at him they came with a will.

Not more than a third of them had regular armor and weapons. But in the light of the shield lanterns carried by Tiler and Barnaby their equipment of scythes, axes, and heaving bills looked ugly and formidable enough. Those who had more special weapons and regular defence of plate, or sword proof leather, were marshalled by Tiler in front. The injunction of silence was well observed; the mystery of the armed gathering, the darkness, the flashing of the uncovered lanterns on face and weapon, the suspense of the issue held them mute.

When all was ready, the slides of the lanterns were shut, and Tiler, who had noted the ground carefully in his morning's excursion, led them to within 100 yards of the outer gate, exhorting them to move as stealthily as possible. Then, after again repeating the injunction of silence, he went forward alone into the darkness.

Presently, while the men stood hardly daring to draw breath, he returned, and told Barnaby, in a voice just audible to all in the hushed silence, that all was right. Then the order was given, and repeated in whispers by the subordinates in command, that no man was to move till a messenger should return with the signal. Then Tiler went forward cautiously again, taking Barnaby with him, and Lawrence, and one of the apprentices. Tiler this time carried a scaling ladder, with iron crooks at one end. Barnaby had a heavy hammer and a crowbar. To a modern eye, accustomed to the apparatus of less simple warfare, it would have looked more like an intended burglary than an operation of war.

Tiler had taken nobody but Barnaby into his confidence. He knew that success depended wholly upon the completeness of the surprise. If the garrison were on their guard an army might beat against such strength for days in vain.

The castle stood, as we have already said, in the middle of a mere, connected with the land by a causeway, protected at the landward end by a fortified gate. This gate was first to be passed.

Tiler had half hoped that this outward might be unguarded. It was not as if Sir Richard lived in a hostile country, or had any reason to apprehend an attack. But in his reconnoitering the cautious leader had observed a figure pacing sentry-wise on the battlemented roof. How to get rid of this sentry was the first question. An arrow might miss him, or strike against his armor, or only wound him so that he might still give the alarm. They could not afford to risk this. A surer way must be found.

Tiler instructed the apprentice to creep to the other side of the gate, and throw a small stone into the water to attract the sentry's attention. He was to throw another at an interval of a minute, and another if necessary. At the first splash the weary sentry looked listlessly over the parapet, wondering whether it was a rat. Just as he was turning away a second came, and he looked again, this time with quicker curiosity. As he peered into the darkness, the gleam of the water just visible, there was a third splash, and he began to suspect human agency.

"It must be some frolicsome wench," he thought, and looking keenly along the shore, and smiling to himself, he called in a soft voice of inquiry, "Moll!" There was another light splash in response.

The sentry was convinced. "Moll!" he cried, "is it you?"

This was too much for the apprentice's gravity. "Yes," he squeaked in a falsetto voice, "it am I. Let me in."

Just at that moment the sentry heard a light footstep behind him, and turned. But he was too late to defend himself. In enterprises of this kind human life was held of light account. Tiler was master of the gate, but it was a more serious business to get inside the castle. For this also, however, he had laid his plot.

The main plan of the castle was of a familiar type of the early feudal stronghold. There was no aperture in the first story big enough to admit a man. The main entrance was high up in one of the sides, and was approached by an outside stair leading up from the causeway and terminating in a drawbridge. The bridge from the stair led on to the first floor, if it may be so called, of a bit of substantial masonry built out square from the main entrance. The first floor of this outbuilding thus served as a landing for the entrance, and an outpost from which the garrison might defend themselves against an enemy that had reached as far as the stair. The windows were tolerably large, larger than any other on the same floor, to permit of the free play of missiles on an attacking party.

It was by one of those windows that Tiler had planned to gain entrance. It was true that even if he got in there he would still be outside the castle, for the square outbuilding before the entrance lay practically outside, separated from the interior by a strong door, with a portcullis that could be let down if necessary. But the dungeon lay underneath, being the ground floor of the outbuilding; and he could get into the dungeon through the trap door, and from the dungeon make his way into

the interior. Moreover, once into the landing room, he could cut down the drawbridge for his followers.

It was a daring plan, and he had no hope of success unless he could gain the window unobserved by the garrison.

Once master of the outer gate, he sent Lawrence back to the main body for a raft, which he and the smith had constructed that afternoon for passing the moat. He told him also to bring up the men, and order them to be more silent than ever.

They advanced as quietly as possible over the causeway, and launched the raft by the side of the stair. Tiler, Barnaby and Lawrence embarked on it, the scaling ladder, the hammer, the crowbar all in readiness.

It was fortunate for the enterprise that the inmates of the castle were all so absorbingly engaged. The first intimation of visitors that reached them was the sound of the smith's blows on the iron grating of the window. Barnaby was a strong man and skilful in his craft, and he soon made room for himself to scramble in. Tiler followed.

It was Lawrence's business to hold the ladder firm, but he was so excited by the adventure that he went beyond his instructions and mounted after his leaders.

It was his voice that called Ralph Hardeholt's name down the trap door from behind Tiler. The smith was otherwise engaged. He was climbing up to break the chains of the drawbridge. Lawrence's impulsive zeal proved of service for once, at least, in the history of that maligned quality. If he had not spoken, Tiler was so wrapped in astonishment at the unexpected scene beneath him, the knight lying bound in his own dungeon and a young man and a damsel standing by, that he would not have raised his head; and so would have failed to see that the main door with a torch in his hand to learn the meaning of the strange knocking that had been heard, and, seeing two strangers kneeling at the trap door, was making for them with a drawn dagger in his hand. Tiler had not time to draw his own dagger, but he seized the man's wrist, and after a brief struggle disarmed him.

Meantime, the smith's sturdy blows had severed the chains of the drawbridge, and it fell with a loud, resounding crack into its place. Barnaby leaped on to it and shouted to the men now gathered on the causeway—

"Now, my boys, up as if the devil was behind you, and roar like fiends!"

Up the steps they rushed pell-mell, and, headed by Tiler, poured into the hall. Rainham's men were overpowered almost before they knew that they were attacked.

CHAPTER X.

The castle was won, but what was to be done with its owner, Sir Richard Rainham? This question, forgotten during the hurry and fury of the assault, and the short, sharp struggle, presently became urgent.

Among the rough neighbors who had rushed into the castle when the smith cut down the drawbridge, only one answer was likely to suggest itself. Rainham was detested for miles around, and with good reason. The tenants and serfs on his lands got little from him that protection in their industry, which the Christian polity of the Middle Ages prescribed as the obligation of the lord of the soil. They were constantly at loggerheads with his bailiffs over the terms of their tenure, and if he demanded sixpence where he was entitled to a groat, or three days' labor instead of two, or double the stipulated number of eggs or chickens or capons, they might grumble, but they rarely escaped the extortion. Sturmer Castle was one of those virtual nests of robbers which the parliaments of the time denounced but could not suppress. Every hamlet had its tale to tell of insolent pillage and outrage by Rainham and his lawless gang.

The victims had now the upper hand, and were not in a mood to lose their opportunity. Towards the end of the hundred years of disorder in which feudalism in England expired, or was at least fundamentally modified, a great constitutional lawyer tried to disabuse the upper classes of a prevalent idea that their only safety lay in keeping the commons poor. If they were kept poor, as the French were, it was argued that they would not rebel, and that their rebellions would not be dangerous, for they would have neither weapons nor armor, nor money to buy these necessities of successful rebellion. A fatal error, argued Sir John Fortescue. Poverty does not make people contented. It is poverty that breeds rebellion. "For nothing may make a people to arise but lack of goods or lack of justice. But yet certainly when they lack goods, they will arise, saying that they lack justice. Nevertheless, if they be not poor, they will never arise, but if their prince so leave justice that he give himself all to tyranny."

The commons in Sir Richard Rainham's neighborhood had been stripped as bare as the cupidity of himself and his followers dictated. But the operation had not improved their temper. They hated him cordially for it. And when the emissaries of the pretended Flemish merchant went round with the news that a friend of John Treisman's was in the hands of Sir Richard Rainham, and invited them to help in the rescue, they were not slow to respond to the summons. The gathering was not a mere rabble.

There was some organization in it, and this organization was based, oddly enough, and yet not inappropriately, upon the established machinery for the conservation of peace. The use made of this machinery in the great Rebellion of the Peasants is one of the most curious features in it, and the least generally understood. The words which describe it in a word or two, seeing that it is one of the main clues to the formidable character of the rebellion.

In the fourteenth century we were of course still very far from the modern institution of police force. If you were robbed in open day, or had your house forcibly entered and pillaged, or were violently assaulted on your way to church or market, there was no civic soldier in blue on the spot, or, as it might be, at some distance from the spot, to protect or pursue. And yet there was a certain guardianship of the peace, an arrangement by which all the able-bodied men of a district were constituted into a sort of reserve police force. Every man, villain and freeman, between the ages of 15 and 60, from the poorest son of the soil to the substantial freeholder, was bound by law to possess arms of some sort. Officers were periodically appointed to make tours of inspection, and see that every man was provided with arms according to his means, from rough dagger, knife, or iron pointed stake, to sword and spear, helmet, and coat of mail. Then in every township there was a constable, and in every hundred a chief constable, whose duty it was to keep the roll of this reserve force and call them out upon occasion. Every man was bound under penalties to respond to the call. When a flagrant breach of the peace was committed, and a hue and cry raised, the force was put in motion through the constables, and criminals were chased from township to township with an ardor proportioned to the unpopularity of the offence. There was thus a simple but effective military organization, strengthened by long established tradition, available for the preservation of order.

When the feudal chiefs began to neglect their duties, and became, many of them, the enemies, instead of the leaders and protectors of the commons, this organization stood ready to the hand of the widespread discontent. It was this that made the insurrection so formidable.

But to return to the armed gathering that had stormed Sturmer Castle.

Why did not Simon d'Ypres, as this agitator of many aliases called himself on his present journey, raise the hue and cry against Rainham in the regular way? A high handed robbery had been committed in broad day on the king's highway. Why did he not appeal at once to the chief constable of the hundred? For the best of reasons, Sir Richard Rainham was himself chief constable. The custom was the sturdy lawbreaker. This was the reason why the plundered traveller appealed to the organization which for some time he and his friends had been secretly building up within the lines of the regular legal organization.

From the moment that the assembled peasants crossed the drawbridge they became a rabble, a rabble infuriated, possessed with the savage instincts of lynx law. The whole affair had been so sudden that there had been no time for such drill as alone can keep in check the irregular, bloodthirsty impulses of excited men with arms in their hands, collected in the name of justice. Justice thus embodied, furious as well as blind, is apt to strike wildly.

Neither Simon nor Tiler had any fixed plan as regarded Rainham himself. Their first and main purpose was the rescue of the prisoners. Simon also wished to recover certain papers, of which he proposed to make use at Stourbridge Fair, his outfit as a Flemish merchant being a blind to his real mission there. Further, he was glad of the chance of testing the efficiency of the new organization. What might become of Rainham in the conflict they had not fully considered.

(To be continued.)

The Telephone.

It has not been many years since a noted scientist, in an exhaustive article, satisfied himself and thousands of others that the telephone could never be brought into practical use. Today it is estimated there are 2,278,000 telephones in use in the United States alone. No man attempts to do business now without the aid of the 'phone. Business is transacted over the telephone, although the parties are separated by thousands of miles. The home and the office are brought together by means of the telephone. Those instruments have now invaded the country districts, and the telephone and free delivery of mail are going hand in hand.

Khaki Color Doomed.

The British war office has decided that after the Boer war is over khaki will not be used, but a working dress will be made of a peculiar drab mixture, which is said to be of a more neutral color than khaki serge, so that the present campaign will doubtless be handed down to posterity as the khaki war. This material, it is complained, has not enhanced the appearance of English soldiers, and the authorities are by no means satisfied that it is divided.

Congressman a Traveler.

Congressman Burk has traveled all over the world outside of the United States, the greater part of which is unknown to him. He says he goes to foreign countries in order to get an entire change from his usual surroundings. He has never been west of Chicago nor south of Washington.

Chicago has three buildings 17 or more stories in height, seven of 16 stories, three of 15, six of 14, and seven of 13. This according to the count of an alderman.

EVENTS OF THE DAY

FROM THE FOUR QUARTERS OF THE WORLD.

A Comprehensive Review of the Important Happenings of the Past Week, Presented in a Condensed Form, Which is Most Likely to Prove of Interest to Our Many Readers.

Two men were killed in a mine explosion near Lake City, Colo.

Congress will not appropriate the necessary funds to raise the Maine this year.

The Standard Oil Company has secured control of its only rival in West Virginia.

One thousand Chinese government troops have deserted in a body and joined the rebels, taking with them their arms, munitions and treasure.

Friends of the Chinese exclusion bill in the senate have about given up hope of the measure passing in its present form.

The situation throughout Belgium remains unchanged. Fresh outbreaks may occur at any time.

During severe fighting in the Transvaal, 200 Boers were killed, captured or wounded. The British also lost heavily.

General Miles will be forced to retire at an early date.

The cholera situation is growing worse in the Philippines.

Fire in a Louisville, Ky., lumberyard destroyed \$70,000 worth of property.

The house has passed the bill granting Mrs. McKinley a pension of \$5,000 a year.

Major Waller has been acquitted of the charge of killing natives of Samar without trial.

Rioting continues in the cities of Belgium. Martial law will be declared throughout the country.

A new independent steel company is to be incorporated in New Jersey with a capital of \$200,000.

England is very hopeful over the prospects of peace. The Boer leaders have been in communication with Lord Kitchener.

Burglars entered an Indiana bank and blew open the safe, but the explosion awoke citizens and no money was secured. The damage by the explosion was \$12,000.

The revolutionary movement in Belgium appears to be spreading.

Wade Hampton, the famous Southern general, is dead. He was 84 years of age.

Sir Hiram Maxim, an English capitalist, offers \$250,000 for a successful airship that is not a balloon.

The Spanish commission which is to value artillery remaining in the West Indies, has sailed for its destination.

Colombian rebels continue to harass the government troops. They are receiving arms from the United States.

The Boers have not yet accepted the British terms of peace. Conferences between the leaders are still in progress.

John D. Rockefeller has given a Brooklyn school \$125,000 provided that friends of the institution raise an equal amount within one year.

Unconfirmed statements are in circulation in London to the effect that the Boer leaders have accepted the British terms of peace.

The body of Cecil Rhodes has been placed in its last resting place.

Fire at Columbus, Ga., destroyed property valued at \$250,000.

Rear Admiral Norman S. Farquhar has retired. His retirement promotes Captains Joseph B. Coghlan and James H. Sands to be rear admirals.

While at the Charleston exposition the president declared his intention of visiting the Northwest at an early date.

Dr. Talmage is much worse. He is now troubled with congestion of the brain.

Socialists mobbed King Leopold, of Belgium, and he had a difficult time in escaping.

The Danish landings, or upper house, voted in favor of selling the West Indies to the United States. The treaty will now go to the lower house.

Cholera is increasing in the Philippines.

The Manchurian treaty has been signed at Peking.

Fire in New York destroyed a six story building. Loss, \$150,000.

Fighting between Christians and Turks is reported in Northern Turkey.

President Roosevelt received a hearty welcome at the Charleston exposition.

The house's first vote on Cuban reciprocity showed both parties to be divided.

Major General W. R. Shafter, United States army (retired), is a candidate for governor of California.

Of the 20 tobacco factories in France 3 are in Paris.

South Africa has ostrich farms containing over 300,000 birds.

In New York city alone there are now about 400,000 Germans.

The governor of Finland has ordered the prosecution of the Lutheran pastors who refuse to read the new Russian army regulations in their churches.

GENERAL MILES MUST GO.

Will be Forced by Secretary Root to Retire at an Early Day.

Washington, April 16.—The issues are fairly joined between the lieutenant general and the secretary of war. The troubles which began long ago under the Cleveland administration have finally reached so critical a stage that a compulsory retirement of General Miles at an early date is an open secret, and is not denied at the White House.

In explanation of President Roosevelt's position, one of his close friends, who unquestionably speaks by authority, said:

"The question is not a personal one between General Miles and Secretary Root. At present Secretary Root has on his shoulders a heavier burden than any other member of the administration. No man less strong could carry it all; and now, at the very time when he requires the most loyal support of every subordinate who wishes well to the army and the nation, he has to spend much of his strength in meeting the opposition of the commanding general. If General Miles is retired, it will be simply because, after a patient trial, President Roosevelt feels that on the highest ethical grounds his retention would work grave and lasting injury to the army as a whole.

"As some of General Miles' friends have said that it would be unfair to retire him, it should be said, in the first place, that he secured his promotion to a brigadier generalship only through the similar forced retirement of General Ord, he himself being jumped over by a number of his senior officers in the vacancy thus created; and, in the second place, that the only action of the kind taken by President Roosevelt since he has been in office was in the case of Colonel Noyes, who was compulsorily retired after reaching the age of 62, on the recommendation of General Miles. In other words, the general has himself recommended and profited by the very action which his friends now fear may be taken at his expense.

"If he should go out before General Brooke is retired, General Brooke, who is General Miles' senior, both in service and in age, and who did gallant and distinguished work as a volunteer in the Civil war, would undoubtedly be put in his place as lieutenant general, as it is known that the administration has been very desirous of recognizing General Brooke's long and faithful service."

PEACE TERMS FOR BOERS.

Details of Proposals Now Under Discussion by Leaders at Pretoria.

The Hague, April 16.—From those close in touch with the Boer leaders here it appears that the latest secret dispatch from South Africa outlines the peace proposals now under discussion at Pretoria. They contain the following details:

The Boers are to accept a British lord commissioner, with a Boer executive, both to be resident at Pretoria; the country is to be divided into districts, with British district officers and a Boer committee chosen by a vote of the burghers; the veto right is to be reserved to the British government; the majority of the British officers must be conversant with the dual language; Johannesburg is to be ceded to the British, with complete British civil government; a war indemnity of 10,000,000 pounds is to be distributed by mixed committees; disarmament is to occur when the first batch of Boer prisoners is sent back to South Africa; no war tax is to be levied; both languages are to be recognized in the schools and courts and in official documents; the expense of the garrisons in South Africa is to be borne by Great Britain; the present Boer leaders are to be retained in office so far as possible.

Cathedral Tower Falls.

Madrid, April 16.—At the close of the celebration of a grand mass today, the tower of the cathedral at Cienfuegos collapsed, and destroyed three adjoining houses and part of the cloisters. The remainder of the cathedral threatens to fall. Two bodies and a number of injured persons have been recovered from the ruins. The number of persons entombed is not known.

Texas Suffering from Drouth.

Austin, Tex., April 16.—Governor Sayres has investigated the condition which prevails in Zapato and has issued an appeal calling on the people of Texas to extend relief to that section, "on account of the very severe and protracted drouth which has prevailed."

First Catholic on the Board.

Washington, April 16.—The president has appointed Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, a member of the board of Indian commissioners. He succeeds Bishop Whipple, the eminent Episcopalian, who died recently, and is the first Catholic prelate appointed on the board.

Thousands of Immigrants.

New York, April 16.—Immigrants to the number of 4,132 arrived during the day from European ports. The Trojan Prince, from ports in the Mediterranean, brought 1,107; the Statendam, from Rotterdam, had 1,097 aboard; the Champagne, from Havre, brought 1,059; the Heperia, from Mediterranean ports, 680, and the Island brought from Denmark 219.

NEWS OF THE STATE

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS OF OREGON.

Commercial and Financial Happenings of Importance—A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvements of the Many Industries Throughout Our Thriving Commonwealth—Latest Market Report.

I. O. O. F. grand lodge of Oregon will meet at Newport May 21.

The electric light plant at Gold Hill will soon be in operation.

The Oregon G. A. R. encampment will be held at Astoria June 4 to 6.

Work has commenced at Grants Pass on a three story brick Masonic hall.

The foundation of the new flouring mill at Condon has been completed and work on the superstructure commenced.

The lambing season in Baker county is proving one of the best in years and the prospects are good for a large wool clip.

Ten stamps and a quantity of machinery and equipment have arrived at Grants Pass for the Europa mine, in the Briggs district, Western Josephine county.

The Salem Fruitgrowers' Union has voted to contract its 1902 crop of strawberries for 3½ cents per pound for the best canning berries and 2½ to 3 cents per pound for other varieties.

The Oregon Lumber Company has purchased the entire plant and holdings of the Beaver Flume Lumber Company, in Beaver valley. The flume ends at Runyon's station on the A. & C. R. R.

The owners of the Red Boy-Concord mines, Granite district, are completing arrangements for installing near Olive lake a large electric light and power plant. They will furnish power to other mines in the same neighborhood.

Polk county is now practically out of debt.

The postoffice at Mabel, Lane county, has been moved one-half mile to the south.

The postoffice at Ridge, Umatilla county, has been moved half a mile to the southwest.

A postoffice has been established at Drew, Douglas county. The office will be supplied with special service from Perdue.

Fruitmen of Polk county predict an immense crop this year. The continued cold, backward spring weather has retarded the development of buds which are not affected by the present severe cold and chilling rains.

Considerable anxiety has been expressed by fruitgrowers in the Hood river valley concerning the probable damage to fruit by the severe freeze in January and February. From present indications, however, the yield will be average, unless some further damage occurs.

The Polk county Mobsir Association has sold its pool of 30,000 pounds at 25 cents per pound.

Mrs. Eliza Jane Wrisley, an Oregon pioneer of 1852, has passed away at her home in Medford. Deceased was born in 1828.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 63@64c; bluestem, 64@65c; Valley, 64@65c; Barley—Feed, 20@21c; brewing, 22@23.50 per ton. Oats—No. 1 white, 1.15@1.22½; gray, 1.10@1.30. Flour—Best grades, 2.85@3.40 per barrel; Graham, 2.50@2.80. Millstuffs—Bran, 18¢ per ton; middlings, 20¢; shorts, 20¢; chop, 18.50¢. Hay—Timothy, 12@15; clover, 7.50@10; Oregon wild hay, 5@6 per ton. Potatoes—Best Burbanks, 1.10@1.40 per cental; ordinary, 1.00@1.10 cental; Early Rose, 1.50@2.00 per cental; growers' prices; sweets, 2.25@2.50 per cental. Butter—Creamery, 20@22½c; dairy, 16@18c; store, 13@15c. Eggs—15¢ for Oregon. Cheese—Full cream, twins, 13@13½c; Young America, 14@15c; factory prices, 1@1½c less. Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 35.50@45.00; hens, 35.00@60.00 per dozen, 11@11½¢ per pound; springs, 11@11½¢ per pound; turkeys, live, 12@13c, dressed, 14@16c per pound; geese, 8½@7¢ per dozen. Mutton—Gross, 4¢ per pound; dressed, 7@7½¢ per pound. Hogs—Gross, 5½c; dressed, 6½@7¢ per pound. Veal—7½@8 for small; 6½@7 for large. Beef—Gross, cows, 3½@4c; steers, 4@4½c; dressed, 6½@7½¢ per pound. Hops—12@13c per pound. Wool—Valley, 13@15c; Eastern Oregon, 8@12½c; mohair, 21@21½¢ per pound.

The weekly wages of operators of typesetting machines in Germany vary from \$4.25 to \$14.25.

The Commercial Club of Louisville uses advertising space in street cars and on bill boards to enjoin readers to patronize home industries.

But little notice was taken in Holland of the anniversary of Queen Wilhelmina's wedding, and no reference what ever appeared in the leading Dutch papers.

Revolt in the Congo.

Paris, April 15.—The minister of the colonies has ordered that reinforcements be sent to the scene of the troubles in the French Congo, as the result of the dispatches he received yesterday confirming the report of a revolt of natives in the Sangha district. The Paris manager of the Sangha Company attributes the outbreak to the fact that the fanaticism of the natives has been aroused by human sacrifices which were celebrated recently. He adds that the natives are well armed with modern rifles.

Brigands Exterminated.

Constantinople, April 15.—A band of seven Bulgarian brigands has been exterminated in the Vilayet of Monastir, in Macedonia, by Turkish troops. The brigands captured the tower of the village of Kadi Koi and then fortified themselves. The troops surrounded the place and demanded the surrender of the brigands, who replied with a fusillade, which was returned by the Turks until all the occupants of the tower were dead.

SOUTH CHICAGO FIREBUG.

Seventeen Incendiary Fires were Started During One Night.

Chicago, April 15.—After extinguishing 10 fires yesterday, most of them close together, and apparently of incendiary origin, the firemen of South Chicago at daybreak today were called upon to contend with the most serious of the long string of blazes.

The first of this morning's fires consumed a barn containing several horses. St. Patrick's church came next, and was destroyed before the firemen could reach it. Scarcely had they reached the church when they were recalled to fight a dangerous looking fire at Willard Sons bell forge works. After a hard fight here the flames were checked. Meanwhile the warehouse of the Washington Ice Company had caught fire, and before the flames were subdued \$5,000 damage had been done. The Calumet theater came next, sustaining \$10,000 damage before the fire was extinguished. A four story structure, having a feed store on the ground floor, and dwellings above, was discovered to be burning before the theater fire was put out. Two families escaped in their night clothes. The building was destroyed. Meanwhile a saloon had burned down.

The total loss of this morning's fires is put at \$50,000. As the buildings were not near each other, the firemen declare that the fires were the work of an incendiary. The people of South Chicago were greatly alarmed by the rapid work of the firebug.

The financial loss in the fires yesterday amounted to \$60,000. Evidence of incendiaryism was so convincing, however, that citizens joined the police in patrolling the streets in an effort to guard property and capture the incendiary or incendiaries. In spite of the extra precautions, however, today's fires were started. Citizens were bewildered at the attack, and daylight was welcomed with great relief.

MEAT FAMINE IN ENGLAND.

Retailers Determined that Consumers Shall be Made to Suffer.

London, April 15.—The so-called meat famine, which has been exploited through out the British press, has become a matter of keen interest to Londoners, who hitherto have not been affected by the prevailing scarcity. A careful canvass of London shows that the retailers at the present time are the sole sufferers by the advance in the wholesale price, which amounts to a penny per pound on all grades of meat. Since January, the majority of the retailers have been running their business without profit, because lack of organization prevented a uniform increase of prices. A meeting, however, has been called, which undoubtedly will result in a uniform increase in the price of meat on the part of retailers throughout London.