

The Corvallis Times.

WEEKLY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.

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CORVALLIS, OREGON, JANUARY 30, 1904.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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DOWN TO DEATH

STRAIN PROVES TOO HEAVY
AND THE CABLE PARIS
AT TOP OF SHAFT.

Bloody Trail Marks Flight of Cage
With Human Freight—Only
One of Sixteen Men Escaped
and Is Badly Injured
—Other News.

Victor, Colo., Jan. 26.—As a result of an accident that occurred about 3 o'clock this morning at the Stratton Independence mine, located near the center of this city, 14 men are dead and one severely injured.

In the main shaft of the mine 16 men were being hoisted in the cage from the sixth, seventh and eighth levels. When the cage got to the surface of the shafthouse the engineer, for some reason unexplained, was unable to stop the engine, and the cage, with its load of human freight, was drawn up into the balloons frame, where it became lodged temporarily. The strain on the cable caused it to part, releasing the cage which went down the shaft, 1500 feet, at a terrific momentum. Two of the occupants of the cage, had become entangled with the timbers, and one of them, L. P. Jackson, was crushed to death by the sheave wheel falling upon him. The other, James Bullbek, had a marvelous escape from death, but received painful injuries. He was rescued from his perilous position by men in the shafthouse.

The shift boss and a number of miners later went down into the mine through another compartment of the shaft and found that all the fourteen men who started with the cage on its wild flight of 1500 feet to the bottom of the shaft were dead, their bodies being scattered at the stations at different points. Their arms and bodies were mangled, their heads crushed and their clothing stripped from their bodies. From the 700-foot level to the bottom the shaft is stattered with blood, and here and there pieces of flesh clinging to projections. At the bottom of the shaft stands 25 feet of water, and into this the cage plunged. Some of the men were carried with the cage into this dump.

A squad of military has taken charge of the property and citizens will not be allowed to enter the mine or shafthouse until after a thorough examination of the machinery has been made by competent engineers.

Frank Gellere, the engineer in charge of the machinery when the accident occurred, surrendered himself to the military and was locked up in the bullpen. He would not express any opinion as to how the cage got beyond control. Gellere is a new comer in the district, but is said to have been strongly recommended as a competent engineer.

The bodies buried under the cage at the bottom of the dump have not yet been recovered. Nearly all the men killed leave widows and children.

The accident is believed to have been due to a defect in the hoisting-engine brake connections, which are controlled by air. The engine is a first-motion double-reel, and the two cages work as counterbalances. The cages each weigh nearly two tons. In starting the cage from the 600-foot level this morning with the 16 miners aboard, steam was used; but after the cage had gone upward a certain distance under steam pressure the steam was shut off by Engineer Frank Gellere and the weight of the counterbalancing descending cage in the other shaft was allowed to bring the load of miners to the surface as is the custom.

When the cage, with the 16 miners, arrived at the surface in the shafthouse, Engineer Gellere, to his horror, discovered that the air brakes would not work.

Similar accidents, in which no lives were lost, have occurred twice before at the independence, with the same engine now in use there.

Chicago, Jan. 27.—Mayor Harrison was this afternoon ordered by Judge Richard S. Tutill to be discharged immediately from custody and relieved from any responsibility for the wholesale loss of life at the Iroquois Theatre fire. The

judge declared the mayor was in no way whatever guilty or liable, and the coroner's jury, in ordering him held to the grand jury, had put an unjust stigma on the mayor, who had failed in no particular whatever in omission or commission.

The court declared the chief executive of the city could not legally be held for any alleged failure of subordinates to perform their duties. The mayor secured his release on a writ of habeas corpus, as his arrest while in office was unusual. The reading of the verdict of the coroner's jury was that the mayor and the others accused of responsibility should be held "until discharged by due process of law."

The mayor, as soon as he decided on his course, accompanied by his bondsmen and an attorney, appeared at the criminal court building, where Mayor Harrison formerly surrendered himself to Sheriff Barrett and thus nullified the bond of \$15,000 given yesterday in court to secure the mayor's freedom from literal custody. Notice was simultaneously served on the state's attorney that an application for a writ of habeas corpus would be at once filed with Judge Tutill.

In delivering his opinion Judge Tutill said:

"I have gone over the testimony of Fire Marshal Musham and Building Commissioner Williams and the mayor particularly, and I can say without qualification or hesitation that I find not one word in the evidence, so far as I have examined it, which tends even remotely, in my judgment to show that the mayor had any knowledge of this matter, or that he was in any respect negligent of any duty imposed upon him by the laws or by the rules that commonly apply to persons who are responsible for the safety of others.

"I find there were gross violations not only of the city ordinances but of common rules of safety that anybody without expert knowledge would have said was absolutely essential at the Iroquois. But how the mayor, who is simply at the head of the city government, could be held responsible for any misconduct on his part in view of this evidence I cannot conceive.

Following his release, Mayor Harrison made the following statement to the Associated Press:

"The only possible feature which the jury was able to find connecting me with the Iroquois fire disaster was the alleged negligence and incompetency of my appointees, Fire Chief Musham and Building Inspector Williams. I want to call attention to the fact that Chief Musham has been connected with the Chicago fire department for 40 years, beginning at the bottom of the ladder, and winning his way to the position of assistant chief by the gallant and heroic conduct of a lifetime. Upon the retirement of Chief Sweeney I appointed Musham chief. The appointment was on merit, and met with unanimous approval.

"When the position of building commissioner became vacant, last summer, I invited the Builders' Club, the Association of Architects and various nonpartisan professional organizations to name the best available man for the vacancy. They named Mr. Williams, a republican, and gave me the strongest testimonials to his character and efficiency. I appointed him, and he entered most earnestly upon his duties. The imputation of guilt upon these two men is unjustifiable, but to strike at me over their shoulders is little short of infamy."

A DOUBLE TRAGEDY.

PENDLETON TEACHER KILLS
HIS WIFE AND THEN
HIMSELF.

No More Mysterious Killing
Has Occurred in the Annals of
Oregon—J. T. Brown, of
Iowa, the Murderer
and Suicide.

Pendleton, Or., Jan. 26.—A horrible double tragedy was committed here some time during last night, when John T. Brown, a school teacher, cut his wife's throat and then blew out his own brains with a revolver. The two embraced in death were found about noon today in a little field south of this city. A note which they had left in their room was the cause of finding their bodies.

The double deed was premeditated, but so far no cause has been ascertained. A number of letters have been left, but up to one o'clock none of them have been opened.

Brown, after the two had gone to the field, a short distance from the home of Edward L. Smith, where the two were boarding, cut the woman's throat with a razor and then shot her through the left breast, digging over the heart, undoubtedly killing her instantly.

He then placed the revolver to his right temple and fired a shot which killed him instantly, and ended one of the most sensational tragedies that had been enacted in this city for years and years.

When they were found this forenoon they were in each others arms, he having laid down beside his dead young wife before he took his own life. Mrs. Brown would have been 25 years old today, as this is her birthday. Brown has been teaching school on McKay Creek for some little time and is 35 years of age. The two were boarding with Mr. Smith, Brown walking the distance each morning and night. Mr. and Mrs. Brown went to the opera last evening to see Human Hearts, and the deed was committed after they returned. Just how the deed was committed is not known, but officers think it was as follows:

After the show the two went to the little field, where the wife was killed. Brown then went back to Smith's house and left the following note:

"Mrs. Brown and I have got tired of life and you will find us on the hill southeast of here. Please see that my effects reach my mother at Reinbeck, Iowa, address M. A. Brown."

Mrs. Smith awoke about two o'clock this morning and heard some one coming to the house and then they left again. It is thought Brown killed his wife, came back, and then went out and killed himself. His overcoat had been thrown over the body of his dead wife, showing that she had been killed before he died. The bloody razor lay near him and the revolver was still in the grasp of his hand. The letters left were to the I. O. O. F. and A. O. U. W. lodges, Pendleton; Mrs. M. A. Brown of Reinbeck, Ia., care of M. L. Brown, and to Mrs. M. Whitman, of Pendleton.

Pendleton, Or., Jan. 26.—Insanely jealous, without cause apparent to a coroner's jury, John T. Brown, an Umatilla county school teacher, induced his wife to submit to being killed and then ended his own existence. The dead bodies of the two young people were found on the crest of the high hill south of this city this morning about 10 o'clock by Sheriff Taylor and Policeman Meeker, and Coroner Cole held an inquest tonight, when the following letter of Jan. 25, addressed to Brown's mother, was introduced in evidence.

"My dear mother: When this reaches you I suppose you will know that I am out of existence. Knowing what I know of my wife I find it impossible to live with her, so have concluded to end her existence and mine. May God comfort you. Had she been true to me nothing would have driven me to such a step, but there are some things worse than death, and this is one of them.

"No, I am not insane, but I have looked the future fair in the face and find this the only solution.

Forget me as soon as possible and give my love to all. Again, may God comfort you, for I know this will hurt you, but if you know my suffering you would not want me to live. Yours affectionately,
JOHN."

The woman left a letter addressed to her brother, Tom, other name and address unknown, saying goodbye, but in the stove, torn to pieces, was found a letter addressed to Tom as follows:

"Dear Brother Tom: When this reaches you I shall be no more, if you know what that means. I suppose I will soon know, as I have reached a crisis in my life. I have found a man in Oregon I love better than my husband. Oh (here the name of some person is lost and the piece could not be found) how I love him."

The jurors do not believe there was another man in the case unless it was one of the actors in the play. Morbidness and temporary insanity brought on by witnessing the play is the verdict of the jury and no one is connected with the case. Both were young and had bright prospects as the man was an excellent teacher. They were saving their money to buy a fruit farm in the Grand Ronde. He had \$100 in the bank and some money on his person. The letters of the lodges directed the disposal of his body, and that he be buried at Rexburg, Idaho.

Pendleton, Or., Jan. 27.—Investigation this afternoon brought to light the causes leading up to the shooting of Mrs. Brown and the suicide of John T. Brown, whose bodies were found yesterday morning. The husband had become insanely jealous, caused by his wife allowing a young man to kiss her while playing a game of forfeits at a party in the country, where Brown was teaching school.

It was known at the inquest last night that Mrs. Brown had left a letter addressed to a young man named Bert Whitman, son of Mrs. Whitman, at whose house Brown boarded while teaching school. Also on a sheet of paper found on her breast was:

"Bert Whitman can explain all." This letter, left addressed to Bert Whitman, was opened by the authorities, but its contents was not divulged until this afternoon. In the letter Mrs. Brown says (to Whitman) that her husband, "Jack," has grown so jealous because of the kiss at the party that she finds it impossible to live with him longer, and as she no longer loves her husband as she should, she is willing that they both die. She gives her love to Bert, and speaks of the good times she enjoyed the month she stayed with her husband at Mrs. Whitman's home.

There is no incriminating evidence whatever to be found in the letter to Whitman, and the authorities declare that this kiss was the only cause for Brown's jealousy. Mrs. Brown, during November, stayed at Mrs. Whitman's with her husband. She then returned to the city and resumed her position as domestic in the home of Judge S. A. Lowell.

Letters found in Brown's valise today show that he had accused his wife of allowing this young man to kiss her, and she had replied that all of the other women at the party did and she thought nothing of it, but had she known that he, Brown, was going to take it so seriously she would never have permitted it. The last letter was written about three weeks ago, and she again denies any wrong intentions in allowing the kiss.

Brown suffered from dyspepsia and tuberculosis and was never known to smile. It is thought here that he brooded over this kiss and so magnified the action that he became insanely jealous. It is believed that he chided her so continuously about it that he grew desperate and discouraged and was willing to die.

CROUP
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