

the use of such a deadly weapon, held it and playfully or with mock-seriousness approached Miss Smith to see how she would take the threat, "just for fun," etc.,—and then!—was "scared" in more ways than one by the unexpected result. "I didn't know it was loaded" has been the remorseful cry of many a person, and that MAY have been what happened in this case.

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LET US ASSUME FOR A MOMENT THAT ANY FRIEND of the young woman had looked into the laundry to examine the gun at her request: In the face of such an accident, how would he reason? If the circumstances would THEMSELVES suggest to others an ULTERIOR motive on his part, how should he explain the "accident" so as to satisfy the querulous and suspicious? Provided others knew of their open and unquestioned friendship, he might describe EXACTLY WHAT OCCURRED—and, overwhelmed with regret but unafraid, leave the judgment to the Powers-that-be, Divine and human. But if something similar happened with one who was practically a stranger—to say no more? . . .

(Readers will accept—and apply—that theory as they are minded.)

* * * * *

ONE OF THE MINOR BITS OF EVIDENCE was suggestive in this connection—though as far as we noted, it was not emphasized elsewhere. The doctor who performed the post mortem examination, mentioned that he found discoloration on the FOREFINGER of the LEFT hand, and he explained how he had sought or found means of taking it off. In explanation of the cause of that marking it was suggested that the deceased might have been touching the oil-charged wheels of the clothes washing or wringing machine. But what would be more natural than for a person who had a gun pointed to-

wards him or her to lift the arm or hand in self-protection, and say by word or action—"Don't!" Whether one lifted the right hand or the left would depend on the DIRECTION in which the other person approached, and also, of course, on whether only one hand was free. If Janet Smith was engaged ironing—and from the evidence that is the belief—may not the discoloration on the forefinger of her LEFT hand have been powder markings? The place and direction of the bullet wound also support the theory that the revolver was held in the RIGHT hand of another person.

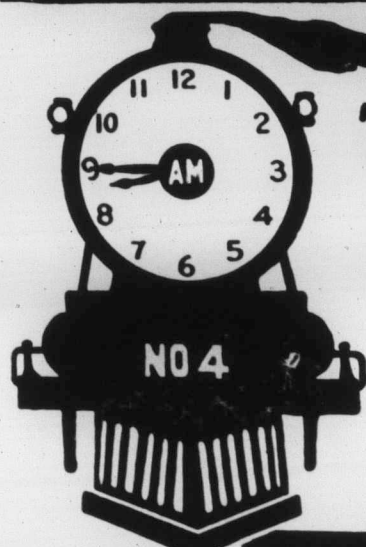
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WHATEVER ELSE FOLLOWS FROM THE DEATH of this nursemaid, who, while having a lightness of disposition common to her years, was,—as the most searching evidence proved,—a young Scotswoman of blameless character, it may be assumed that it will lead to more care being exercised by "returned men" and others as to the use of firearms. Mr. F. L. Baker frankly explained how he had come to leave the revolver as he did, and in so far as he was blameworthy in that, he and his have undergone a good deal of trying publicity as a consequence.

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APART FROM THE ACTUAL WORDING of the verdict at the second inquest, it will be generally recognized that the Scottish Societies of Vancouver are to be congratulated in that they were not content to let the case rest where the altogether unfortunate previous proceedings had left it. It is also matter for satisfaction that arrangements are being made to express in a practical way sympathy with the parents of the late Janet Smith—of whose dutiful disposition evidence was also forthcoming in her commendable mindfulness financially of her home folk.

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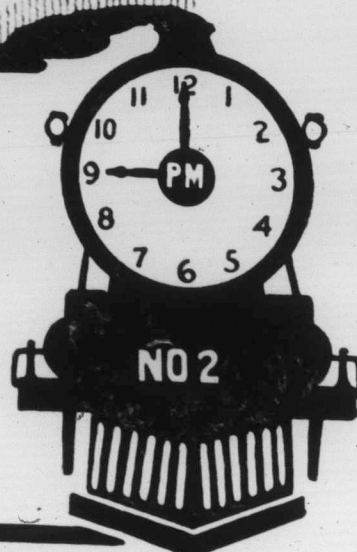
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