

Weekly Messenger

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CASUALTY.

There was a large gathering of Sunday-school children at a Christmas dinner in Montgomery, Kentucky, and a Christmas tree was erected on the stage. A man disguised as Santa Claus came forward when the curtain rose, and in passing the tree his clothing caught fire and the flames quickly covered him. He jumped down among the audience, when he was wrapped with an overcoat by somebody and held down. Another overcoat was thrown at him, but knocked a lamp down, spilling the oil over him. Then desperate efforts were made to save the man's life, pans full of dish water being among the means employed. The flames were at length subdued, but the victim, George Smedes, was badly burned. A portion of the audience, fleeing in a panic when the man in flames jumped among them, trampled upon each other in the scramble to get down stairs. Annie Sullivan is the name of a woman who lived one hundred and two years to be killed by being run over by the cars at Winchester, Massachusetts, on the twenty-sixth of December last. While playing with a pistol that another boy gave him, in New York city lately, Samuel Blackwood, aged twelve, not knowing the weapon was loaded, shot Louise Stanwood, of Stapleton, Long Island, the same age as himself, in the forehead, causing what was thought a fatal wound. A number of young men in Corvallis, Oregon, went to bed in their lodging-place while drunk, and a large fire they left communicated to the building, which was burned down, two of the men perishing in the flames and a third being seriously burned. Patrick O'Neil was lighting gasoline in the street lamps of Lexington, Kentucky, on the twenty-sixth of December, when he overturned a lamp and the burning fluid poured over himself and the horse he was riding. The terrified animal ran off and in turning a corner threw the rider, who rushed all ablaze into the nearest house, but was fatally burned before the fire was smothered, his body to the waist being burned to a crisp. In New York a few days ago Marcus Pike playfully snapped a rusty toy pistol at his sister aged twenty, and the bullet entered her face near the nose and produced a dangerous wound. A huge chimney in Bradford, England, on December twenty-eighth fell upon a building full of operatives. One hundred and twenty were taken out alive, but about forty are known to be killed. The damage done is estimated at over three hundred thousand dollars, and three thousand persons are thrown out of employment, as eight mills that had flue connections with the chimney are stopped. Two sons of James McRae, Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, were playing with a pistol on Christmas day, and it went off while the elder, aged seventeen, was loading it, and the bullet entered the body of the younger, aged eleven, placing him in a critical though not hopeless condition. Captain Michael Wilson was shot in the neck in Halifax, Nova Scotia, lately, by a young friend, a clerk in a hardware store, who in fun pointed a gun supposed to be unloaded, at him and snapped it, and by last accounts the wound had taken a dangerous turn. Floods have been doing vast damage in Germany, Austria, Switzerland

and France; cities being damaged, villages destroyed, bridge and railway embankments washed away, and many lives lost by drowning at various places. Charles Banks was killed at Laona, New York, the other day by a large icicle falling upon his head from a roof. A lad of sixteen, son of Charles Keith, was killed in his father's mill at Montague River, Prince Edward Island, recently, by being caught in one of the belts.

CRIME.

Some indignation is felt in Minnesota over the pardoning of W. Keen, a bank cashier, sentenced in 1879 to seven years' imprisonment for embezzling a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. A band of counterfeiters have been caught near Parkersburg, West Virginia, who had been flooding that and adjoining States with base silver for some time. At Ladonia, Texas, the day before Christmas, a ruffian named William Vaughan ended a trivial dispute by shooting with mortal effect two brothers named Boone, great grandsons of Daniel Boone, the famous pioneer explorer of Kentucky. A hundred men set out in pursuit of the murderer. Selah C. Caril was sentenced in New York on December 26th to fifteen years for passing four hundred and seventy thousand dollars of counterfeit bonds. Merriman Montgomery, about twenty-eight years old, on December 26th at Packardville, Massachusetts, shot his two children—George, aged six, and Eva, aged four—and would have murdered his wife and father-in-law had the latter not been able to hold him until help arrived. The murderer was arrested, but denied knowledge of the crime when taken before the authorities at Northampton. The family came from the West last spring, and little is known of them. Montgomery had not lived with his wife for eight months, and it was upon her refusal to live with him that he set about his fearful work. Thomas Kerr murdered William Hartley in cold blood in a saloon at Globe, Arizona, and, after being informally tried by a jury of twelve men, was given an hour to settle his affairs. He coolly wrote a letter to his mother in Lexington, Ill., and requested that his effects should be given to her, and after he had several drinks the citizens took him out to a sycamore tree, where he made a speech, confessing to the murder of several men. Upon being let down after hanging a moment, he asked leave to take off his boots, saying he did not want to die with them on. The request was granted and the murderer was then swung up until dead. The celebration of Christmas in many cities of the Southern States was marked by drunkenness and crime to an appalling extent. There were two or three murders in Atlanta, Georgia, besides numerous acts of violence, and New Orleans, Louisiana, also devoted the day to debauchery and disorder. Charles Russell and Charles Carey, book-keepers for two large establishments at Syracuse, New York, disappeared lately, and an examination of their books showed that they had stolen large amounts. Burglary showing a skilled hand has lately been committed at St. Catharines, Ontario, the marauder getting two hundred and fifty dollars from a safe. A reign of terror is said to exist in Chicago, highway robbery

being of almost hourly occurrence after nightfall. An affray with pistols took place at Abilene, Kansas, arising from an affront taken by friends of a young lady at a jumping-jack being placed on a Christmas tree for her. Shadinger, the man who gave the odd present, and Foreman, a brother of the young lady, were mortally wounded by each other, and several of their respective sides were wounded, some seriously. Timothy Toomey has been arrested at Calais, Maine, in consequence of Mrs. Carr having been found dead in his house on New Year's morning, supposed to have been killed in a drunken row. Watch night services in a church in Reading, Pennsylvania, were rudely disturbed by the discharge of a large cannon, loaded with stones and powder, which stove in the front wall and shattered nearly all the windows of the building. No one was hurt in the audience, although, of course, the greatest excitement was produced. Eighty arrests were made in connection with the outrage. Mrs. Jay Stillwell confessed to three murders, recently, while upon her deathbed at Mount Vernon, Ohio. Benjamin Swigert, her first husband, she had killed in Maryville, Missouri, in 1877, with the aid of her mother and brother. The same assistants had part with her in the murder of a stranger for his money while stopping at her boarding-house. Her third victim was her daughter of fourteen, whom she strangled in the presence of her mother at Rulo, Nebraska, in 1880. The wretch, who was dying of consumption, also confessed to three attempts upon the life of her present husband, with the object of getting his life insurance. One of the most horrible crimes on record was committed in the usually quiet village of Little Bideau, Prescott county, Ontario, on the morning of January second. A farmer named Mr. Raggles W. Cooke, his wife, daughter Emma and son George were killed outright, his son William supposed mortally wounded, daughters Fannie severely and Maggie slightly wounded. The murderer is a young Englishman named Frederick Mann, lately from London, a baker by trade but employed by Mr. Cooke the past three months as a farm servant. Emma Cook and her mother were first attacked, the monster strangling them with a rope. The father was killed in the barnyard with an axe, and George was slain with the same weapon, while sleeping in his bed. The murderer then rushed into Willie's room and struck the occupant on the thigh with the axe, inflicting a terrible wound, but the disabled boy grappled with him, and Maggie and Fannie hearing the noise came to their brother's assistance. In a struggle that ensued Maggie secured the axe, when Mann seized a lamp and gave Fannie a severe wound on the head with it. He then fled down the back stairs, and the two girls going down the front way met him in the dining-room armed with a poker, with which he attacked them. They managed to shut a door against him and one of them hailed a passer-by, who called for more assistance, and then the murderer fled and at last accounts had not been caught.

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT has been summoned to meet on February fifteenth.

FIRES.

The main building of the Somerset Fibre Company, Fairfield, Maine, was burned on December 27th, causing a loss of fifty-five thousand dollars, and by the explosion of a digester John Pooler was killed. The New Brunswick Cordage Works, St. John, N.E., owned by Thomas Connor & Son, were burned on December 26th; loss eight thousand dollars, fully insured. A sugar refinery in Greenock, Scotland, has been burned, the loss being a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars; and extensive flour mills in Belfast, Ireland, lost two hundred thousand dollars. Addison's panning mill in Hamilton, Ontario, was burned December 29th, loss two thousand dollars. Byrne & Smith's bleachery at Lodi, New Jersey, was burned December 29th, loss two hundred thousand dollars. The wood of Bostwick Hall, Norfolk, England, has been swept off by fire; loss two hundred thousand dollars. The Pennsylvania Coal Company suffered a loss of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars by a fire at their works in Pittston, Pennsylvania, on January first. A fire in a building in Boston on the night of December 31st caused a loss of one hundred and twenty-three thousand dollars, as follows: Thirty thousand to the Mystic Rubber Company; fifteen thousand to the Copeland Lasting Company; eight thousand to Jones, McDuffie & Stratton, crockery and glassware dealers; ten thousand to Lawrence & Co., dry goods; fifty thousand to C. W. Clement, and three thousand to Frank Breed, boot and shoe manufacturers; five thousand to the building.

M. LEON GAMBETTA, the foremost Republican statesman of France, died about midnight of the closing day of the old year. He had been wounded in the hand with a pistol shot—some say fired by a woman who had lived for some years with him improperly as his wife, but his friends deny this. Being in too much of a hurry to be about his business again, he induced his physician to heal the wound too quickly, and the result was the suppressed pus found its way all through the patient's system and poisoned the sources of life, making death inevitable. The deceased statesman is distinguished principally from his desperate but courageous effort to retrieve the fortunes of France after the surrender of the Emperor Napoleon III. to the Germans at Sedan in 1870, and, that failing, from his bringing order out of confusion and establishing the Republic upon the ruins of the Empire. Some opinion tends to the belief that the death of M. Gambetta is favorable to European peace, as his fondest dream was revenge upon Germany and the recovery of the territory taken from France by that Power. Others regard the loss of its leading man as fatal to the Republic, and look for the restoration of monarchical government. The deceased statesman was forty-four years of age.

SMALL-POX is rife in Baltimore, Maryland, seventy-one deaths occurring from it last week. A case was discovered in the city jail on Monday, and forthwith three hundred prisoners in for minor offences were discharged.