

MRS. PLACE PUT TO DEATH.

Electricity Did Its Work at Sing Sing Without a Hitch.

FIRST WOMAN ELECTROCUTED

Two Women Attended the Murderess in the Death Chamber—Heart Ceased Beating Within One Minute—Her Stepdaughter's Murder Her Crime.

SING SING, N. Y., March 21.—Mrs. Martha Place died in the electric chair at 11 o'clock this morning for the murder of her stepdaughter Ida. She went calmly to the chair, leaning on Warden Sage's arm. Her eyes were closed and she seemed neither to see nor hear. She murmured a prayer. Two women attended her—one a prison attendant, the other a physician. Death was instantaneous. Mrs. Place is the first woman to die in the electric chair.

The witnesses entered the death chamber at exactly 10:45 o'clock. Five minutes later Warden Sage left the house for Mrs. Place's room. He remained away eight minutes, during which time a keeper outside the corridor came into the death chamber and called out another keeper. It was feared then that Mrs. Place had broken down and would have to be carried to the chair. Nothing of that kind, however, had occurred.

A moment or two before 11 o'clock there was the shuffling of feet down the hall and the death march was ended. Mrs. Place's face was pallid. She breathed in gasps. Her eyes were closed, but she bore herself steadily and seemed to almost pick her way across the short space that separated her from death.

The warden was pale and the women with Mrs. Place, following behind, helped to assist her to the chair. She sat down and said, "God help me."

IN A DRESS OF BLACK.

She was dressed in black, the suit that she had made herself—a plain gown, which was lifted quickly to the knee. She wore black stockings and low tan shoes. The woman attendant stood before her. The physician adjusted the electrode to her bare leg, while the prison attendant stood with skirts outspread. The electrode was fastened in a moment; another was placed over her thick light hair, turning gray, a small circle of which had been clipped away. The straps were adjusted over her face and a pad over the forehead. Only her mouth was visible.

Not an instant was lost in throwing down the lever. In her hand Mrs. Place carried a prayer book, and when the shock came she gripped it tightly. The other hand held fast to the chair handle. The woman's mouth merely closed; the face became a trifle livid. Her heart ceased to beat within a minute.

The first shock lasted four seconds. The voltage was 1,760. It was then reduced to 300 for fifty-six seconds. A second shock was given.

HER LAST DAY.

Yesterday at noon Warden Sage decided again to notify Mrs. Place of the day of her death, and to tell her that she must be ready. Mrs. Place met him in her quiet way, and he said: "I have come, Mrs. Place, so that there will be no mistake; so that there will be no misunderstanding, and to explain to you that you are to be ready on Monday morning at 11 o'clock."

The woman looked at him and said simply: "I will be ready; I will put my trust in God."

After he left her, Mrs. Place cried a little, but bore up well. She had understood, she said, that she must die. Mrs. Place still occupied the room she had tenanted since the day she was brought here. It is the room in which Marie Barabie, the Italian girl, spent her prison days, upon the top floor of the old building that served in years past as a hospital.

Everything possible to give Mrs. Place comfort and courage the warden and his wife and her daughters did. Mrs. Sage was with her several times each day. Yesterday afternoon the warden's wife spent an hour reading to the condemned woman from the Bible, and Mrs. Place herself occupied an hour or two in reading tracts that had been sent to her.

In the evening the Rev. Dr. Cole of Yorkers came to her. After his departure Mrs. Place had no consolation but her Bible. With her in her room all night was Mrs. Cathryn Coultray, one of the matrons. All night she sat beside her in a chair, and never for a moment did she trust the condemned woman to herself. Mrs. Place got up several times and looked from her window at the storm that was howling across the Hudson.

READING HER BIBLE.

Early today the following official statement was given out in the warden's office: "The matron reports that Mrs. Place did not lie down until half past two and then did so without removing her clothing. She then slept well until 6 o'clock. The early part of the night was spent in reading her Bible, in being read to, and in conversation with her attendant."

"A number of times after reading a chapter she knelt with her attendant and prayed. She is reasonably composed this morning and ate some breakfast with apparent relish."

Mrs. Place's money and small property are to go to her brother, Peter Place, of New Brunswick, N. J. That was arranged when the brother was with her Saturday. She had an account in Brooklyn and at a Newark bank. Together they amount to \$1,500. A few trinkets are to be given to Mr. Garrison's daughters. She asked Warden Sage yesterday to see

that all her wishes in these matters be carried out.

MURDER OF HER DAUGHTER.

Mrs. Place killed her stepdaughter, Ida Place, at their home, 508 Hancock street, Brooklyn, February 7, 1895. The girl was 22 years old. A double murder had been planned by the woman. She killed her stepdaughter when the girl was taking an afternoon nap, splitting her skull with an axe, and pouring vitriol on her face. The same evening the woman lay in wait for her husband, William W. Place, in the darkened hallway of the house, and when he entered she struck him in the face with the axe, and inflicted a serious wound. He got outside the front door and alarmed the neighbors before he became unconscious. When the police and neighbors entered the house they found Mrs. Place in a bedroom in which gas was escaping. She was shamming unconsciousness. Mr. Place recovered consciousness, and said his wife had tried to murder him. The woman was arrested, after they both had been taken to a hospital.

The motive for the woman's crime was jealousy of her stepdaughter. Place's first wife died six or seven years ago, and about eighteen months afterward he engaged the woman who became his second wife, to act as his housekeeper. Her maiden name was Garretson, but she had been married to a man named Savacoli, now dead. As long as she was housekeeper it is said she was extremely kind to Place's daughter Ida, but she became quite a different person when Place married her. Her ungovernable temper led to frequent quarrels with Ida, and Mrs. Place was embittered because her husband took the young woman's part. Another cause of family bickering was Place's refusal to have his wife's adopted son live with them. The woman was much inferior to her husband and stepdaughter in education and social qualities, and many friends of Mr. Place had cut his acquaintance on account of his marriage. Miss Place was popular with the families in the neighborhood and this also made the step-mother jealous.

Mrs. Place's story of the crime was that she had thrown sulphuric acid in her stepdaughter's face during one of their quarrels, and then got the axe to defend herself from an attack by her daughter. It came out during her trial that she had made preparations for flight and had written to her brother that she would go to him.

APPEALS TO THE GOVERNOR.

Mrs. Place was tried before Judge Hurd in Brooklyn last summer and was found guilty of murder in the first degree. The case was carried to the court of appeals, but the conviction was affirmed and she was sentenced to death. Governor Roosevelt was then petitioned to exercise clemency on the plea that Mrs. Place was insane at the time the crime was committed, and he appointed Dr. Dana and Dr. Polk of New York city to report to him on this point. They informed the governor that the woman was sane when she killed her stepdaughter and was sane now. This destroyed her last hope of life, and Wednesday Governor Roosevelt announced his refusal to interfere, accompanying it with a memorandum in which he said:

"There is no question of the woman's guilt and no question of her sanity. All that remains is the question as to whether I should be justified in interfering to save a murderess on the ground of her sex when no justification would exist to interfere on behalf of a murderer. This murder was one of peculiar deliberation and atrocity. To interfere with the courts of the law in this case could be justified only on the ground that never hereafter, under any circumstances, should capital punishment be inflicted upon any murderess, even though the victim was herself a woman, and even though that victim's torture preceded her death."

Captain Neill Under Arrest.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 21.—Captain Neill of the Fourth cavalry, who disappeared recently, leaving his financial affairs in a bad way, has returned from Mexico. He reported to-day at the Presidio and was immediately placed under arrest. It is stated that the shortage in his accounts has been made good and he may escape with a mere reprimand.

The Relief Boats Port Said.

PORT SAID, March 21.—The United States supply ship Relief arrived here yesterday on her way to Manila. The Relief passed out at Sandy Hook March 2. She carried a hospital corps of 150 men and seven women, and medical supplies for 25,000 men for a year.

MR. SHERMAN NOT SO WELL.

The Doctors Discouraged Over the Ex-Secretary's Condition. Kinston, Jamaica, March 21.—The condition of ex-Secretary John Sherman, who is a passenger on board the American line steamer Paris, is not favorable. He is much weaker and the doctors are discouraged.

No Use for Watermen Inspectors.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo., March 21.—Tribble's bill to repeal the law which authorizes the appointment of an inspector of watermen by certain counties, was engrossed by the House on the strength of Tribble's assertion that these inspectors delay shipments of melons and often permit rotten melons to be sold.

\$5,000 for a Y. W. U. A. Home.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 21.—Colonel James L. Abernathy, president of the Abernathy Furniture company, has offered to give \$5,000 toward the building of a home for the Young Women's Christian association in this city if some one will give a suitable piece of ground on which to erect the building.

POPULIST FIELD DAY

(Continued from page 1.)

State. If the present State officers who hold passes were influenced by those passes it would have been easy for them to have overlooked that clause in the decree and thus leave the railroads secure in a right worth to them one hundred times more than even Mr. Lichty's idea of the value of the passes received during the last two years by the Auditor's office. But they did not overlook it, but on the contrary they secured the elimination of it and thus restored to the people of the State the right to regulate freight rates.

The Board of Transportation under the law which now governs it is entirely powerless to make any valid order or grant any relief against railroads unless a complaint has first been filed. During the past two years many complaints have been filed and everyone has been sustained by the Board and the relief prayed for therein granted. Thus did the Board do all the law empowered it to do and if it has not done more the fault is not with the Board but with the Legislature in not giving it the necessary power. From the foregoing does the record of the Board show that the members thereof have been influenced by their passes or have neglected their duty to the people in any way whatever? Certainly not? Why then, did not the Committee so state? Why present the phase of the question which appears to condemn and neglect to present the one which shows there is no just ground for condemnation?

I have said that with one exception there was no evidence to show that passes had ever been solicited by a State officer. Samuel Lichty appeared before the Committee and told it a long story about the number of passes solicited by the Auditor and the judges of the courts. The testimony is abstracted and given a prominent place in the report of the majority. It is a concoction of facts, hearsay and imagination. All he says about the judges is mere hearsay. It is a purported conversation had with Mr. J. H. Agor. Mr. Agor appeared before the Committee afterwards and denied in toto as wholly false the material parts thereof. The majority forgot to say a word about this in its report. This honorable body is entitled to know in the report of the Committee that Lichty's testimony in that regard was not only challenged but flatly denied. The only testimony which Lichty gave that would be admissible in a court of justice was with respect to what he learned from Mr. Cornell at the latter's residence—communicated to him as a friend while he was visiting as Mr. Cornell's guest. How much the testimony of such a witness is worth this body must determine. Mr. Lichty further said that the amount of free mileage which the Auditor's office received during the two years he was in that office was worth \$20,000.00. How he learned this and why he did not denounce it before he was discharged he did not tell the Committee. Has such testimony any probative value? \$20,000.00 in passes would permit one man to travel 668,666 miles a three cents a mile. Travelling on a train running at the rate of thirty miles an hour running twenty-four hours a day and running every day in the year Sundays included it would require one man two and a half years in which to use up the mileage. Or it would require two men fifteen months to dispose of the passes, or four men seven and a half months to perform the same task. This shows the absurdity of the statement and in showing it enables the inquiring mind to judge of the reasonableness of the balance of his testimony.

The resolution authorized the Committee to extend their investigation to all State officers. The Judges and Commissioners of the Supreme Court are State officers. I requested a subpoena for those gentlemen not only because my duty as a member of the Committee to do so but also because I deemed it due to them that they should be given an opportunity to meet very serious charges made by Mr. Lichty against their characters as public officials but I was denied the subpoena and the judges and commissioners are permitted to remain under the cloud, if any, created by the testimony of Mr. Lichty.

Conclusions in the whole matter. 1. The present State officers have not ridden on passes and charged the State for mileage. 2. The present State officers have not solicited passes from the railroad companies and such passes as they have were delivered to them without request or condition expressed or implied in accordance with a long standing custom. 3. The present State officers have used their passes for the benefit of the State and thus saved the tax payers thousands of dollars and they have not used them except to a very inconsiderable extent for their own benefit—the State and not the officers is obligated to the railroads for the passes delivered. 4. The officers by accepting passes from the railroads were not thereby influenced even in the least to neglect their duty to the people with respect to the railroads and the railroads have at all times been compelled by those officers to perform the full measure of their duty to the people so far as it was in the power of the officers to so compel them. 5. The Committee should have enquired whether the ex-State officers who served with Governor Holcomb had ridden on passes on those occasions for which mileage was charged by them, and the Committee in failing to make such an inquiry failed to perform its whole duty. 6. The Committee should have inquired whether or not the judges and commissioners of the Supreme Court travelled on passes and charged the State for mileage. 7. In conclusion I find that the charges made on the floor of this house to the effect that the present State officers charged mileage for rides made on passes, which charge lead to the appointment of the Committee, is wholly untrue.

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