

was found upon the painted surface of the vault door. It was made during her violent struggle before her death. It was also easy to give to Miss Williams a delayed letter stating that her sister's proposed visit had been given up, and also by intercepting later letters and substituting others to keep her from learning that the sister had left the South.

**The Second Williams Murder.**

Having secured all the money and property Miss Williams had, it was time that she was killed. Owing to a fire that occurred in the castle I was unable to resort to the usual method in taking her life, and after some delay took her to Monmouth, Ill., about November 15, 1892, registering at a hotel near the post office, under an assumed name, but as man and wife. My intention was to quietly kill in some sure manner, but a freight wreck that occurred on the outskirts of the town the day following my arrival there, which out of curiosity I visited, brought me in contact with a passenger conductor, Peck, who knew me, and I therefore abandoned it, but later returned and took her eight miles east of Monmouth on a freight line little used and ended her life with poison, and buried her body in the basement of the house spoken of at about the time of the Irvington discoveries, 1895.

It was a great wonder that the body was not found at that time, if the detectives in reality went to that location. Nothing would at present time give me so much satisfaction as to know that her body had been properly buried. I would be willing to give up the few remaining days I have to live if by so doing this would be accomplished. Because of her spotless life, before she knew me, because of the large amount of money I defrauded her of, because I killed her sister and brother, and because, not being satisfied with all this, I endeavored after my arrest to blacken her good name by charging her with the death of her sister, and later with the instigation of the murder of the two Pitzel children; endeavoring to have it believed that her motive for so doing was to afford an avenue of escape for herself, if ever apprehended for her sister's death, by pointing to me as a wholesale murderer, and therefore presumably guilty of the sister's death as well; for all these reasons, this is without exception the saddest and most heinous of all my crimes.

**Another Forgotten Victim.**

A man who came to Chicago to attend the Columbian Exposition, but whose name I cannot recall, was my next victim. The Chicago authorities can, if they choose, learn the name by inquiries made of the Hartford Insurance Company, a Mr. Lasher, of the Stock Exchange Building; T. D. Duncomb, Metropolitan Building, all of Chicago; a sash and door manufacturing company, opposite the Deering, Illinois, station, or F. L. Jones, a notary public, at Indianapolis, at some one of which places I have either his name of handwriting may have been preserved, thus affording a clue for identification by his friends. I determined to use this man in my various business dealings, and did so for a time, until I found he had not the ability I had at first thought he possessed, and I therefore decided to kill him. This was done.

After Miss Williams's death, I found among her papers an insurance policy, made in her favor, by her brother, Baldwin Williams, of Leadville, Col. I therefore went to that city in 1894, and found him. Later he lost his

A little later the assignment of the policy, to which I had forged Miss Williams's name, to John Maxwell, of Leadville, the administrator of the Williams estate, was honored and the money paid. Both in this instance and that of \$1,000 check given by D. Tolman, and checks aggregating 2,500, by J. R. Hitt & Co., of Chicago, inasmuch as the indorsements are forgeries, the Williams heirs can now recover these amounts, although it will be an undeserved hardship on those who have once advanced the money upon them.

**The Pitzel Murders.**

Benjamin F. Pitzel—So much has already been printed (even in South Africa, when the case was recently given considerable prominence in a local issue there) regarding this case that there is little will be little for me to tell, save the actual

manner in which his death was brought about. It will be understood that from the first hour of our acquaintance, even before I knew he had a family who would later afford me additional victims for the gratification of my blood-thirstiness, I intended to kill him, and all my subsequent care of him, as well as my apparent trust in him by placing in his name large amounts of property, was simply to gain the confidence of him and his family, so when the time was ripe they would more readily fall into my hands.

It seems almost incredible now as I look back that I could have expected to have experienced sufficient satisfaction in witnessing their death to repay me for even the physical exertion that I had put forth in their behalf during those seven long years, to say nothing of the amount of money I had expended for their welfare over and above what I could have expected to have received from his comparatively small life insurance. Yet, so it is, and it furnishes a very striking illustration of the vagaries in which this human mind will under certain circumstances indulge. Vagaries in comparison with which the seeking of buried treasure at the rainbow's end, the delusions of the exponent of perpetual motion, or the dreams of the haphazard fiend are sanity itself.

**Burned Him Alive.**

Pitzel left his home for the last time late in July, 1894. We journeyed together

quietly unlocked the door and stole noiselessly within, and in the second-story room I found him insensibly drunk, as I expected. Even in this condition the question may be asked, "Had I no fear that he might be only naturally asleep or partially insensible, and therefore likely at any moment to come to himself and defend himself?" I answer, "NO." Only one difficulty presented itself. It was necessary for me to kill him in such a manner that no struggle or movement of his body should occur, otherwise, his clothing being in any way displaced, it would have been impossible to again put them in a

an opportunity to gratify my fiendish lust for blood by going to the graveyard where he had been taken, and under pretence of securing certain portions of his body for microscopical examinations removed same with a knife, and the heartless manner in which I did this and the evident gratification it afforded me has been most forcibly told by Mr. Smith upon the witness stand. As an instance of the infallibility of justice, as a triumph of right over wrong, and of the general safety of condemning

detectives learned that I made this call upon the date that they knew the insurance settlement took place, they no longer hesitated in stating that I, and I alone, could have murdered the boy.

Upon October 4, I returned to Indianapolis, and later in the same day went to Franklin, Ind., which is situated south of Indianapolis, while Irvington is east thereof. Franklin to Irvington, representing the hypothenuse of a triangle, Franklin to Indianapolis, and Indianapolis to Irvington, the two shorter sides so that one could go from Franklin to Irvington direct without making the longer journey via Indianapolis.

On October 5 the rent of the house was paid, and at about 9 a. m. October 6 I called upon Dr. Thompson, at Irvington, for the keys, he having been a former occupant. At 5 o'clock upon the same day I called upon Mr. Brown at Irvington to engage him to make some repairs upon the house, and upon his appearing indifferent I became very angry with him and my only wonder now is that I did not entice him to the house and kill him also. This small circumstance aided in bringing the crime home to me when it was made known to the detectives and considered by them in connection of many other complaints of my

"If I could now recall one circumstance, a dollar of money to be gained, a disagreeable act or word on his part in justification of this horrible crime, it would be a satisfaction to me, but to think that I committed this and other crimes for the pleasure of killing my fellow beings, to hear their cries for mercy, and pleas to be allowed even sufficient time to pray and prepare for death, all this is now too horrible for even me, hardened criminal as I am, to again live over without a shudder. It is to be wondered at that since my arrest my days have been those of self-reproaching torture, and my nights of sleepless fear, or that even before my death I have commenced to assume the form and features of the evil one himself. After I had finished the cremation of my victim, I made the excavation in which the few remaining portions were found at the time the horror was brought to light, which, together with the stove and other evidences of my wrong doing, were brought here to Philadelphia at the time of my trial to mock me in my efforts to save my life.

Then, after I had removed the blood and other evidences of the crime and had buried the contents of the trunk and part of the trunk itself, I went to the office of Powell & Harter, at Indianapolis, for my mail; from there to the hotel for the other two children, whom I took at once to Chicago. I immediately returned to the Irvington House, and was seen there by Mr. Armstrong, a teamster, at such an hour as to have made it a foolish act for me to have persisted in saying that it was some other person whom he saw. My identification in Chicago by a woman with whom the children boarded and by the station agent at Milwaukee, and later at Adrian, Mich., all showed the uselessness of trying to escape from one's self, or from the responsibility of one's wrong act. In Detroit I hired a house and made an excavation in the basement, where I left a note in my own handwriting, all of which I hastened to tell the detectives as soon as I was arrested, so that by their going to the house and finding both the excavation and the note they would not be inclined to make a similar search in Toronto or other places.

**Smothered Two in a Trunk.**

I now with much reluctance come to the discussion of the murders of Alice and Nellie Pitzel, whose deaths will seem to many to be the saddest of all, both on account of the terribly heartless manner in which they were accomplished, and because in one instance, that of Alice, the oldest of these children, her death was the least of the wrongs suffered at my hands. Here again I am tempted to either pass the matter by without speaking of it, or to altogether deny it, but to what purpose. It was publicly known and freely commented upon on my trial, and to deny it now would only serve the double purpose of breaking my resolution, and nothing in reserve, and of causing many who are somewhat familiar with the details of the different cases to disbelieve me in other matters; moreover the testimony already given by Mrs. Adla Alcorn, and the opinion of Coroner Ashbridge and Mr. Perry, who knew the mental condition of the child upon the following day, would, if called for, be sufficient to decide the matter.

These children, after boarding in Detroit for about one week, reached Toronto, and were taken to the Albion Hotel, where they boarded until they were killed. Upon October 26 I hired the Vincent street house, having the lease made in the name of H. M. Howard in order to avert suspicion as much as possible in case an investigation followed. Between 5 and 8 p. m. the same day I took a large empty trunk to the house, and then passed the following day at Niagara Falls. On the 23d I bought and took to the house the furniture, stove and bedding, and on the 23d the children went to the house for a few hours. The 24th was passed in other parts of the city, but on the 25th, the fatal day of their death, they were seen at the house at 1 p. m., and a little later they accompanied me to several clothing stores, and finally, at 4 p. m., while they were in a restaurant near by, I entered a large store in which I believed I should meet Mrs. Pitzel, holding in my hands some heavy winter underwear, which I had bought for the little boy already dead at

violence and ungovernable temper that had come to their knowledge.

On October 7 I called at the Irvington drug store early in the evening and purchased the drugs I needed to kill the boy, and the following evening I again went to the same store and bought an additional supply, as I found I had not obtained a sufficient quantity on my first visit. My next step was to secure the furniture for the house.

**Poisoned the Boy.**

This was done on October 8, late in the afternoon, at such an hour that made it impossible for the store owners to deliver them, and as I wished to stay at Irvington that night, I hired a conveyance and started the goods to the house myself, keeping the horse there until the next day. It was also upon the 8th, early in the forenoon,



JUDGE MICHAEL ARNOLD.

The learned jurist who so ably passed upon the evidence that sent Howard to the scaffold.



normal condition. I overcame this difficulty by first binding his hand and foot, and having done this, I proceeded to burn him alive, saturating his clothing and his face with benzine, and lighting it with a match. So horrible was this torture that in writing it I have been tempted to attribute his death to some more humane means; not with a wish to spare myself, but because I fear that it will not be believed that one could be so heartless and depraved, but such a course would be useless. The authorities have determined for me that his death could only have occurred in this manner—no blows or bruises upon the body and no drug administered save chloroform, which was not placed in his stomach until at least thirty minutes after his death. To now make a misstatement of the facts would only serve to draw out additional criticism from them. The least I can do is to spare my readers the victim's cries for mercy, his prayers, and finally his plea for a more speedy termination of his sufferings, all of which upon me had no effect. Finally, when he was dead, I removed the strips and ropes that bound him and extinguished the flames, and a little later poured into his stomach one and a half ounces of chloroform.

**The Fiend's Philosophy.**

It has been asked why I did this after I knew he was dead—what possible use it could have served? My answer to this is that I placed it there so that at the time the post-mortem examination, which I knew would be held, the Coroner's physician would be warranted in reporting that death was accidental and due to a cleaning fluid composed of benzine and chloroform, and that the chloroform had at the time of the explosion passed into his stomach. Suburban Train Service to Bound Brook.

Commencing Monday, April 13, Lehigh Valley R. R. will run extra trains between New York and Bound Brook, leaving New York at foot of Cortlandt at 12:30 p. m., 2:30 p. m., 4:30 p. m., and 6:30 p. m., and arriving at Bound Brook at 1:30 p. m., 3:30 p. m., 5:30 p. m., and 7:30 p. m.

On receipt of such intelligence I believed the insurance company would at once pay the full amount of the claim.

Chloroform did more than this, however; it developed the condition of his body that in my limited medical experience I have never seen or heard of, and I mention it here as a fact of scientific interest that I believe is not generally known. It drove from his entire body tissue, brain and viscera all evidence of recent intoxication to such an extent that the physicians who examined the body after death were warranted in stating under oath that there was no evidence of and they did not believe the man was drunk at the time of his death or within twelve hours theretofore. That they were wrong in making such deductions is proven by the well-known fact that all the testimony and circumstances at my trial tended to show that he must have been insensible from liquor and that only in this condition could I have killed him; a fact so strongly brought out that the learned trial judge in his argument commented upon it at some length.

After his death I gathered together various assignments of patents and deeds to property he had held for me that I had been careful to have him sign over days before, so I should not suffer pecuniary loss. I also wrote the cipher message found by the insurance company among my papers after my arrest imitating his handwriting, and after placing the body in such a position that by a cunning arrangement of a window shutter upon the south side of the building the sun would be reflected on his face the entire day, I left the house without the slightest feeling of remorse for my terrible acts.

**A Respite from Murder.**

For one month and six days thereafter I took no human life, although about three weeks after Pitzel's death I was afforded

to death upon circumstantial evidence alone, this case is destined to long remain prominent as a warning to those viciously inclined, and be a warning that their only safe course is to avoid even the appearance of evil.

Two questions that have been often asked I will answer:

"Why did I make no defense at my trial when by so doing I could lose nothing and possibly could have gained?"

I answer that after Detective Geyer's Western investigations, which we could not at that time in any way refute, and in the case of Dr. Luffman's learned statements, it would have been but a waste of my counsel's energies and of my own to have tried to convince the most impartial of juries that it was a case of suicide and not murder.

Is it to be wondered at that I hesitated before placing the defense of suicide before a jury composed of men who had, with three exceptions, stated under oath before being passed upon by the Court as competent, that they had already formed opinions prejudiced to my interests?

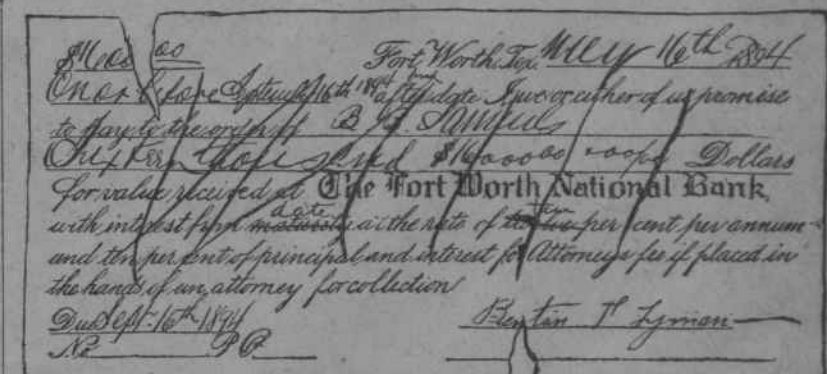
The second question is, did Pitzel during his eight years' acquaintance and almost constant association with me know that I was a multi-murderer; and if he did know, was he a party to such crimes?

I answer that he neither knew or nor was a party to the taking of any human life, and I earnestly beg that this statement may be believed both in justice to his memory and on account of the surviving members of his family. The worst acts he ever participated in were dishonesties regarding properties and unlawful acts of trade, in which he aided me freely.

In support of my statement that he was not cognizant of any of the given crimes which I have so freely confessed herein, I will mention one of many instances already known to the authorities, viz.: That for six months previous to his death he had planned openly with his wife that their daughter, Alice, should spend a year at a school he believed Miss Williams intended to open near Boston, and their plans were of such a nature that Mrs. Pitzel knew he was not deceiving her. He would not have made their arrangements and there would have been no occasion for him to have deceived her or family if he believed Miss Williams was not alive.

**The Pitzel Children.**

Upon the first day of October, 1894, I took the three Pitzel children to the Circle House at Indianapolis, where I engaged permanent board for them until such a time as I could kill one or more of them. Upon the evening of that day I went to St. Louis, where I remained until October 4, busily engaged in setting up the insurance matter with McDonald and Howe, the attorneys. During this time I also called upon the agent or owner of the Irvington or Indianapolis House, this was my first Indianapolis step and was destined to fasten the crime upon me, for later, when the de-



THE FORGED CHECKS GIVEN TO MRS. PITZEL IN THE PLAN OF FRAUD AND MURDER.

that I went to the repair shop for the long knives I had previously left there to be sharpened. Early in the afternoon of October 10, I had the boy's trunk and a stove I had bought taken to the depot, and they arrived at the Irvington house at about 6 p. m., at which time Mr. Morcam was the last person who saw the boy alive, for almost immediately I called him into the house an unsuspecting that he go to bed at once, first giving him the fatal dose of medicine.

As soon as he had ceased to breathe I cut his body into pieces that would pass through the door of the stove, and by the combined use of gas and carbolic, proceeded to burn it, with as little feeling as though it had been some inanimate article.

Indianapolis. At this meeting Mrs. Pitzel has said "I believed my children were at that time in that store with me."

I immediately took them to the Vincent street house, and compelled them both to get within the large trunk, through the cover of which I made an opening. Here I left them until I should return and at my

Continued on Page Five.

