

THE KREIDERS BURIED.

ENORMOUS CROWD AT THE FUNERAL.

Upward of Fifteen Thousand People at the Biers of Bomberger's Six Victims—They View the Corpses of the Murdered Family—Buried in One Grave.

This morning all that was mortal of the murdered members of the Kreider family was laid to rest in one huge grave at Risser's Mennonite Meeting House in Mt. Joy township, three miles distant from Elizabethtown. It is not saying too much to affirm that it was the largest funeral by far that was ever held in Lancaster county, noted as it is for big funerals. The scenes that transpired in connection with it were of a character that only a master hand could adequately describe.

The awful tragedy, as our readers know, occurred many hundreds of miles away from this county, on the farm of Daniel S. Kreider, nearly two miles from Cando, in distant North Dakota. By it six persons were deprived of their lives by a fiend in human form—Albert Bomberger, a young man of but twenty-two years of age, who was employed as a laborer on the farm. The fact that the murderer is a native of Lebanon county, and the elder Kreiders former residents of our own county, is a fact that gives additional interest to one of the most fearful tragedies in the annals of crime.

Story of the Crime.

The papers of the East have published comparatively meagre details of this frightful butchery, and the following particulars, learned by a representative of THE NEW ERA just previous to the funeral from a relative of the victims, will be read with interest. Some information about the family will not be amiss.

Daniel S. Kreider and his young wife, Barbara, a daughter of John H. Risser, a prosperous farmer residing near Risser's Meeting House, went to Missouri from Lancaster county about fifteen years ago. After residing there some years they removed to the farm in North Dakota, where they met their death. Happy years were those which they spent together, although not free from toil, the common lot of mankind. Children were born to them, and seven of these pledges of love had they when the act was committed that has caused a shock of horror to run all over the country. Sad to tell Mrs. Kreider was soon again to have become a mother.

Ten months ago Albert Bomberger went to live with the Kreiders in the capacity of a hired man, he being related to them through marriage. Though his work was not by any means satisfactory, he was still retained by the farmer, but at times he gave evidence of displeasure by reason of Mr. Kreider remonstrating with him. Revenge over what he considered as neglect towards him on the part of the family is one of the motives attributed for his commission of the crime, but it was whispered about at the funeral that he was in love with pretty Annie Kreider, the fifteen-year-old daughter of the family, and that the parents were opposed to his suit for various reasons. If such was the case, the parents' action may furnish another motive for his hellish deed. This was committed early last Friday morning, and only the evening previous the fiend had played croquet with several of the children who became his victims. Shortly after Mrs. Kreider arose, her husband being still a-bed, and while she was in the kitchen peeling potatoes, she was suddenly startled by the crack of a gun in her bedroom on the first floor. Running to the door to ascertain the cause she was met by Albert Bomberger, who held in his hands a gun. With it he had shot and killed Mr. Kreider as he lay asleep, and he never awakened to consciousness before being sent by the murderer's bullet to his last account. The wretch, a powerful young man, caught hold of the frightened woman and dragged her into the kitchen, she pleading piteously all the time for her life. Then he shot her to death, the bleeding body dropping to the kitchen floor. The noise of the firing, the weapon used being a breech-loading shotgun which Bom-

ber originally assaulted her her relatives here cannot say, though the press despatches from North Dakota stated such was the case. But he bound her, hand and foot, to a post in the stable and after beating her terribly with the end of a rope he rode away on the pony that poor little Burnice intended using. After he was gone the oldest surviving boy, Aaron, timidly crept to the stable and finally succeeded in untying the ropes that bound his sister. Leaving the two children on the scene of the tragedy, Annie, brave girl that she is, only partly dressed, hasted as fast as her trembling limbs would carry her to Cando. Here she burst in upon a friend of their family, Samuel Brightbill, a merchant, and a former resident of Lancaster county, and to whom she told her tearful story. Without loss of time he summoned ten men to his assistance, all mounted, and together they repaired to the Kreider homestead. There it was easy enough to find the trail of the murderer, and soon a posse of mounted men were on his trail. News of the butchery spread rapidly, and a scene of great excitement followed. Details of the pursuit and capture of the murderer have already been published in full, and on this point it is unnecessary to say anything.

Mr. Brightbill proved a staunch friend to the orphans, and after communicating by wire with their relatives in the East he had the bodies of the victims prepared for shipment to Lancaster county. Mr. Brightbill, whose goodness to the children of his murdered friend cannot be too highly extolled, accompanied them East, the bodies of the victims coming on the same train. All arrived at Elizabethtown on the Atlantic Express at noon of Tuesday, a great crowd of relatives and friends and the curious public gathering at the station to meet them. The meeting between Mr. Risser, the grandfather, and other relatives with the orphans was of too sad a nature to be dwelt upon here. Mr. Risser drove the children at once to his home, where they will remain for the present. Undertaker Christian Ober, of Milton Grove, assumed charge of the bodies, taking them at once to Risser's Meeting House, in the basement of which they remained under guard until this morning. The same evening great crowds of people viewed the remains, and this morning thousands of people fought and struggled through dense throngs to get a view of the bodies.

The Funeral.

At daylight to-day the crowds began gathering, coming in all sorts of vehicles and afoot. Elizabethtown was almost completely deserted and so was the country for many miles about Risser's Mennonite Meeting House. At 9 o'clock, by actual count, there were over twenty-five hundred teams hitched along the roads and in the fields. On the road leading from Elizabethtown there were teams hitched a full mile from the meeting house. Every road leading to the place of interment was filled with a line of teams, like a huge procession. By the time the funeral services began not less than three thousand teams were hitched in the neighborhood. A conservative estimate places the number of people in and about the meeting house at twelve thousand, while others thought they were safe in making the number fifteen thousand. It was beyond a doubt the greatest funeral gathering ever witnessed in Lancaster county.

The meeting house is a spacious frame structure, standing in a clump of trees just off the road, and the big churchyard surrounding it and the adjoining burying ground were not only packed with people, but they filled the roads converging there. Less than a quarter of a mile from the meeting house is the pretty frame dwelling of Mr. Risser, and a long while before the services a great crowd of relatives and friends and curious people gathered there. Such scenes as were to be seen beggar description. Everybody struggled for entrance into the meeting house or to get as near to it as possible, and in the crush numbers of women fainted and strong men cried out aloud in their pain, when the crush was greatest. There were all sorts of people in the mighty concourse, old men and women and even babes in arms being there in large numbers. Everybody old enough to think appeared bent on one thing, to see and hear everything connected with the awful tragedy.

Viewing the Bodies.

of the firing, the weapon used being a breech-loading shotgun which Bomberger reloaded as fast as he discharged the loads, aroused the children, who were sleeping upstairs and all but the youngest boy came rushing down to learn what had happened. Before them appeared the wretch who had slaughtered their parents, and with brutal blows and vile oaths he drove them back upstairs, whither he followed. There the slaughter was renewed, Murbey R., aged eleven years; Mary R., aged nine years, and David R., aged four years, being butchered. He shot them all, but the two youngest not being killed outright, he finished his work with a knife. Burnice R., thirteen years old, hid herself under the bed while these scenes were being enacted, and as soon as Bomberger left the room the child leaped from the second story window and hastened to a field where a pony was kept. Many a time had the child rode the animal without saddle or bridle, but in an evil moment she stopped long enough to procure a bridle, intending to ride off for assistance, and before she could mount the murderer had overtaken and made her prisoner. "Where is father?" asked the terrified child. "He's gone to a better land," was the reply. When the little girl said she wanted to see him the villain even took her to where her parent lay weltering in his blood, and after gazing upon him in horror, she next asked for her mother. "You shall see her, too," replied the wretch to her; "there she lays like a dead cat," and after showing the bleeding corpse of her mother the murderer coolly turned his gun upon the little one and shot her down. As she did not instantly expire he dispatched her by cutting her throat from ear to ear. Three more children yet remained, Annie, fifteen years of age, Aaron, aged five years, and baby Henry, two years of age. By a merciful Providence these were spared, Annie because of her piteous pleadings, and doubtless because of the affection he felt for her. Why he let the other two children live is a mystery. After all was over Bomberger compelled Annie to show him where her father kept his money, and he secured \$50 and two watches. Some money that was kept in another place, which she did not know was in the house, escaped his clutches. Then the wretch compelled the girl, almost insane as she was through terror and grief, to prepare him some breakfast, and while waiting for it he drew out a watch and looked at it, then coolly remarking, "It only took twenty minutes to do the whole business." After eating he dragged the girl to the stable, where she fully expected to be murdered. Whether or not

At an early hour people were admitted to view the bodies, arranged in a room in the basement of the meeting house, just as they were placed the evening previous. Every coffin had an inside glass cover over the upper part of the body it enclosed, but by reason of the decomposed condition of the remains only one body was exposed to view without the glass, and that was the body of one of the children. Terrible scenes of confusion resulted through the frantic efforts of the crowd to see the bodies, and finally several strong men were placed at the only door to admit the people gradually, passing them out after a hasty view of the corpses through the windows of the room.

The main room of the building, where the funeral services were held, contained over a thousand people, literally packing it by the time the services began. Long before this time the Risaer family and the orphaned children of Mr. and Mrs. Kreider came to the meeting house and occupied seats directly in front of the pulpit. Annie is an unusually pretty girl, with black hair and eyes and a rosy complexion in spite of her terrible mental suffering. She and the other children, sturdy little ones, were dressed in black, and they were the centre of observation of the people who crowded in and out of the building before the preaching began. Their kind-hearted old grandfather and other relatives attended the forlorn little group and did their best to comfort them. The services in the meeting house were conducted by the Rev. Jacob N. Brubaker, of near Mt. Joy, assisted by the Rev. Martin N. Rutt, of Maytown, and Rev. John G. Ebersole, of Lawu, Lebanon county. These services continued an hour and were of an impressive character. When they were ended everybody made a rush for the graveyard, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the funeral cortege could reach the grave. People thronged a fence near the grave and this giving way with a great crash nearly caused a panic, although nobody was hurt. Women fainted and children screamed, and it was long before the services could be proceeded with. Those at the grave were conducted by the Rev. Ephraim N. Nisaley, of Donegal, and Rev. John E. Brubaker, of Rdursertown. One huge grave had been prepared by Undertaker Ober for the six coffins, it being fourteen feet in length by seven and a-half feet in width. It would be too harrowing to dwell on the scenes of anguish witnessed by the grave as the orphaned children looked their last upon the coffins of those so dear to them, and we draw a

veil over the scene. After the mourners returned to Mr. Risser's great numbers of people gathered about the grave to look at it. The rough boxes were lined with lead and after the lids were placed on them they were firmly secured.

Feeding the Multitude.

From the graveyard hundreds and hundreds of people went to the Risser homestead, and it is probable that nearly two thousand people were entertained there at dinner.

The following are the ages of the members of this fearfully stricken family. Daniel S. Kreider, the father, was born October 17, 1856, and was therefore in 36th year of his age; his wife, Barbara, was also in the 36th year of her age, having been born November 21, 1856; Burnice, the eldest child slain, was born January 10, 1890; Murbey R., another victim, September 24, 1881; Mary K., still another victim, November 10, 1883, and the last of the victims, David R., October 24, 1885. The surviving children are Annie, aged 15; Aaron, aged 5; Eva, aged 4, and Henry, aged 2 years.

The Murderer.

Albert Bomberger is but twenty-two years of age, and was born at Campbelltown, Lebanon county, his father being John H. Bomberger, now residing at No. 1103 Lehman street, Lebanon. He is employed at the Coleman furnaces as a laborer. The murderer's mother is also alive, and he has three sisters. People of Campbelltown who knew him well say he was a bad boy, a swearing, fighting bully. He ran away from home a little over six years ago, going to Missouri first, and thence to North Dakota, a short distance east of Cando. He worked as a farm hand awhile, and then went on a ranch owned by his cousins, David and Samuel Brightbill, the latter being the gentleman above mentioned. He left them after awhile and went to the State of Washington, eventually returning to his cousin's ranch. During these years he had been a cowboy and farm laborer. Ten months ago he went to live with the family of Mr. Kreider, repaying much kindness by committing a deed that has shocked the entire country.