

ily and alone to a dingy little office in a grain elevator, like old Ralph Nickleby to his garret, and was found the next morning hanging by the neck—dead! May wheat has scored one more triumph. 'You can guess the rest.' His family was left almost without a penny.

"What Chicagoan does not remember the sensational suicide of Banker W. F. Coolbaugh on the steps of the Douglass monument a dozen years ago? He was president of the Union National Bank and was a millionaire many times over, being rated as one of the great financial kings of the city. What drove a man so fortunately situated to a deed of despair? He had not lost his fortune by speculation, like Jackson, of St. Louis. He had a family, the members of which were prominent in society, and all his surroundings were to the outward world of the happiest character. But there was a skeleton in the family closet. It preyed on the millionaire banker's mind till his reason was dethroned. His millions were of no avail.

"He was less happy than Omar Khayyam, who asked nothing to make him happy but 'a flask of red wine, a book of poetry, a moment of respite in life, and half a loaf. If with that I might, dear one, dwell with thee in some desert place it would be happiness preferable to a Sultan's in his realm.' Poor, distracted Coolbaugh turned his back on his home, his family, and his millions and sought relief in self-inflicted death. The spot in which he chose to die was a historic one, and there he sent the fatal bullet into his brain.

"Lyman Blair, another wealthy banker, was found dead in his elegant residence at Peck Court and Michigan Avenue one day in September, 1883. The top of his head was blown off with a gun. Some claimed that it was all an accident, but the accident was never clearly explained. Blair was a prominent figure in the financial world. He had every luxury. But there was a fatal secret at his heart. He had more desperation than Hamlet, and he resolved to quit his life, whatever they were, and fly to others that he knew not of. Who can imagine what a story of wretchedness and despair this rich man might have told!

"John M. Rountree was a tall, handsome lawyer, with a lucrative practice and apparently nothing to disturb the equanimity of his life. He even loved outdoor sports, and often went for recreation with rod and gun. One bright April morning in 1886 the newsboys were crying a new and exciting tragedy in the streets.

"What was it?

"Lawyer Rountree had gone serenely into a Madison Street gun store, where he was a frequent and welcome visitor, asked to see a new revolver, told the clerk to load it, and put it to his temple and fired. Not a word of explanation. Can anybody picture his thoughts as they were when he went into that gun store? Was he silently bidding farewell to the world?

"And then there was Charles H. Curtis, the prosperous and wealthy real estate dealer. What particular reason had this man for shirking his responsibilities and shuffling himself out of this world? He had a wife and family of grown children who needed his counsel and guardianship. But he couldn't stand the loss of money. Some said it made him crazy. The Cheltenham Beach enterprise was a losing investment for Curtis, and the only way he could see out of his troubles was to throw himself into Lake Michigan.

"It was Jan. 3, 1886, when Curtis quit the earthly shore. A cold day for a man to seek after rest and comfort under the waves that can not be still.

"And think of that dramatic suicide of the popular manager of the Boston oyster-house.

"Seth M. Murdough was his name. He had a fine position, a good salary, was popular and well liked by almost everybody; yet he was not happy. Something was wrong around the domestic hearthstone. So one day in May, 1887, Murdough went up to the top of the tall building occupied by his employers, at the southeast corner of Clark and Madison streets, stood near the edge of the cornice on the roof, and shot himself in the right temple.

"Down he came, tumbling through the air like a bag of sawdust and lay sprawling on the pavement, dead. He fell where thousands of people would pass within a few minutes and see him. But none of them knew the true story of why life was undesirable and bitter for him. His wife was a fine, handsome-appearing woman. She soon found another husband and put aside her weeds.

"Wm. S. Hartwell, freight auditor of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad, sat down in a bath-tub and shot himself to the heart in March, 1888. He was so thoughtful about it that he did not want to soil the carpet of his bed-chamber and sought the bath-room. His wife wept and said to the reporters that she knew of no reason why he should go down to death in that horrid way.

"But the reason became apparent the next day or two. A young minicure in the Japanese building, on State Street, confessed that she was in love with Hartwell and that Hartwell was in love with her. Then she swallowed a dose of poison and joined him in another clime. There are women who will justify the course they took.

"In January, 1886, Charley Clowes, the rich young distiller, made the sensation of the hour by spending the night at a notorious house. The next morning two sharp pistol shots were heard, and they who entered the chamber of death found Clowes and his mistress dead. A weak, vain, and worthless man, he had grown weary of the life of a rounder and of being a faithless husband. The news of his end was carried to a heart-broken young wife on the west side.

"John W. Miller, the large, tall, handsome circulator of a morning paper, overworked himself for a few years, drank liquor and absinthe to steady his wasted nerves, till one day in July, 1888, he walked down to the lake shore at Sixteenth Street and shot himself in the head. The waves lashing themselves into fury so near his resting place were not more turbulent than was his disordered mind.

"Frederick W. Bidwell, the agent and traveler for large paper concerns, only last January engaged a room at the Hotel Grace, and without so much as making a complaint took a razor and severed his head almost from his body. He took his grievance, whatever it might have been, to the grave with him.

"Walter S. Bradley at the Hotel Portland, in February, was not prepared to shoot himself until he had shot his wife. Jealousy prompted his deed.

"Oers Barothy, the romantic young Hungarian who was found lying on the Lake Shore drive with two bullet holes in his breast in September, 1888, was supposed to have been crazed by love for his half-brother's wife. But the story afterward came out that he had drawn a black ball in a quarrel with an army comrade in Europe and in accordance with agreement preserved his honor by ending his life on a certain day.

"One day about eight years ago a despondent young German tourist climbed with laborious effort to the water-tower's top. There he enjoyed a bird's eye view of the greatest of modern cities, having seen which he was content to die. He threw himself to the pavement, 180 feet below.

"The vices of the spendthrift and rone might be named as the causes that drove John Sidney Walters, the well-born young Englishman, to suicide at the Hotel Richelieu last Wednesday evening. H. H. Angell, the Oak Park coal dealer, had poor health; and found the struggle for existence too hard to prolong it. Mrs. Caroline Bruckner had some reason for wanting to take her daughter with her on the long journey, so she generously divided her poisonous dose with the maiden.

"The methods of suicide are various; the reasons are many. Where will it all end?"

Even the term "suicide" itself is a puzzle to philologists. Trench says that till the middle of the Seventeenth century the word had not established itself in the languages; "self-homicide" was used instead. The Abbe Desfontaines is credited with its invention or construction. It is traced by etymologists to the Latin *sui*, genitive of *se*, and *caedo* to kill. One writer named Phillips maintained that there was just as much reason in tracing it to *sua*, a sow, as to *sui*, of oneself. One thing is certain—no national homegrown appellation exists anywhere for the act usually designated self-murder or suicide. In no language is it a pure national substantive; it is always a manufactured mixture. It is an outcast from speech. No tongue has cared to