

A MILLIONAIRE'S SUICIDE

LAMENTABLE DEATH OF AMASA STONE, OF CLEVELAND.

HE SHOOTS HIMSELF THROUGH THE HEART—LONG-CONTINUED ILL HEALTH AND BUSINESS TROUBLES THE CAUSE.

CLEVELAND, May 11.—The city this evening was thrown into wide-spread consternation by the news that Amasa Stone, a man worth millions, had committed suicide at his residence on Euclid-avenue. The general public looked upon the story as a hoax, but those who knew most about Mr. Stone, and had heard the most regarding his poor health, felt from the first whisper that the story was true. Countless inquiries came in from all parts of the city, and great excitement was manifested in all quarters. After a careful sifting of the rumors and a call upon friends standing close to Mr. Stone, the following facts were brought to light: For some time Mr. Stone has not been in good health, and the heavy load of business that he has been called upon to carry has not done him any good, either mentally or physically. He has been troubled also with serious disorders of the stomach, which, among other things, caused insomnia and indigestion. For several weeks he has been confined closely to his house, riding out only occasionally, and then for only a short time. Of late he has not been able to secure more than two hours of sleep on any night. Early this morning he complained of unusual suffering, and carried the appearance of distress in his looks. He did not arise at his usual hour, but remained in bed until 11 o'clock. He expressed himself as feeling much worse than usual, and at 1 o'clock he retired to his room, with the remark that he would endeavor to take a nap. As nothing was heard from him his family supposed he was asleep, and no one went near him until after 4 o'clock. Mrs. Stone at that time knocked at the door of his room but no response was given. She opened the door, and found the first chamber empty. The door of the bath-room was closed, and a trial showed that it was locked. She endeavored to gain a response by calling, but none was given. She decided that he had fainted in his bath, and called for help. The butler responded, and under Mrs. Stone's directions went through the transom over the door, and found the body of Mr. Stone in the bath-tub and only half-dressed. A bullet-hole in his breast told the whole story. He had left his bed and partially dressed himself, when, either as the result of a long matured decision, or the sudden prompting of an insane impulse, he had decided to kill himself. Close to the bath-tub on the floor lay a small silver-plated Smith & Wesson revolver, with one empty barrel. Death had come instantly. There was no sound that had reached the other parts of the great house, and it was impossible to tell how long he had been dead.

Amasa Stone was born in Charlton, Worcester County, Mass., on April 27, 1818. His father, a farmer, was a descendant of one of the leading members of a colony of Puritans who landed in Massachusetts in 1635. Young Stone remained on the farm until he was 17 years old, receiving such an education as could be had at the district school near his home. When he reached the age of 17 he engaged to work three years to learn the trade of a builder. The first he did on his own account was two years later, when he filed a contract for the joiner-work of a large house in Worcester. When he was 20 years old he and his two elder brothers built a church in East Brookfield, and the next year Mr. Stone was foreman of the men engaged in building two church edifices and several other buildings in different parts of Massachusetts. In 1839 and 1840 Mr. Stone was engaged with Mr. Howe, his brother-in-law, in building a bridge across the Connecticut River at Springfield. Mr. Howe had just secured a patent for his invention of the "Howe truss bridge." Two years later Mr. Stone and A. Booddy purchased from Mr. Howe the right to use the latter's patent in the New-England States, and a company was formed under the title of Booddy, Stone & Co. to construct railroads and railroad bridges. Mr. Stone was appointed Superintendent of the New-Haven, Hartford and Springfield Railroad in 1845, but soon afterward resigned that position, because of the growing business of his firm. After a few years, serious defects were found in the "Howe truss bridge," and it looked as if Mr. Stone's investment of \$40,000 in the patent would be a failure. He set his inventive genius at work, however, and succeeded in so improving the patent that it became a very profitable investment. The bridge over the Connecticut River at Enfield Falls was carried away by a hurricane in 1846, and the New-Haven, Hartford and Springfield Railroad Company asked Mr. Stone to build a new bridge, one-quarter of a mile long, as speedily as possible. In 40 days from the time work was begun trains of cars passed over the bridge and Mr. Stone received complimentary resolutions and an extra check for \$1,000 from the company.

The firm of Booddy, Stone & Co. was dissolved in 1847, and Mr. Stone secured the Howe patent for the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. He formed a partnership with D. L. Harris, which continued two years, and in 1848 he became associated with the late Stillman Witt and Frederick Harbach. This firm contracted with the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Railroad Company to build the road between Cleveland and Columbus. Part of the payment was to be in stock of the company, and many of Mr. Stone's friends urged him not to take the contract, predicting that the stock would not be valuable. Mr. Stone took the contract, however, and the stock proved to be an excellent investment. In 1850 Mr. Stone was made Superintendent of the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Road. He also took the Superintendency of the railroad from Cleveland to Erie, with the construction of which he had been connected. Two years afterward he became a Director of each road, and in 1854 he resigned as Superintendent because of ill health. The following year Messrs. Stone and Witt built the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad, and for many years Mr. Stone was a Director of that road. He was also for several years President of the Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula Railroad. In 1873 he was made Managing Director of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad, which position he filled for two years, resigning in company with the Hon. Henry B. Payne as a protest against the purchase of the Nickel Plate. He was also one of the Directors of the Jamestown and Franklin Railroad.

In addition to his railroad business, Mr. Stone was interested in many other enterprises, especially, in recent years, in the manufacture of iron and steel, having disposed of much of his railroad interest. The recent troubles of the Union Rolling Mills, in Chicago, of which he was the principal owner and creditor, caused a heavy loss to him, and he was also a loser by the failure of Brown, Bonnell & Co., of Youngstown. While these troubles did not materially impair his fortune of \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000, they hurt his pride as a financial manager and affected his mind. Other things also worked upon him. The fall of the Ashtabula bridge, which had been a pet structure of his, and planned out of his practical experience, wore upon him, and no one would have been surprised had he taken his life at that time. He was President of the Mercer Iron and Coal Company, and aided in the establishment of many manufactories. He carried on extensive car-works, and was financially interested in numerous iron manufacturing concerns. In 1861 he erected a large woolen mill in Cleveland. Mr. Stone was one of the original stockholders of the Western Union Telegraph Company, and he was always a large owner of stock in that corporation. He was a Director of the Merchants' Bank of Cleveland, the

Bank of Commerce, the Second National Bank, and the Cleveland Banking Company, and for several years was President of the Toledo branch of the old State Bank of Ohio. Mr. Stone designed many roofs for buildings covering large areas, his latest work in that direction being the roof of the union passenger station at Cleveland. He is said to have been the first person to design and erect a pivot draw-bridge of long span, and he made numerous improvements in the building of cars and locomotives.

During the war Mr. Stone took a prominent part in recruiting and supplying troops for the National Government. President Lincoln offered him a commission as Brigadier-General for the purpose of building a military railroad through Kentucky to Knowlesville. This project, however, was afterward abandoned by the Government. Mr. Stone went to Europe in 1868, and spent two years abroad for the benefit of his health. In 1877 he built and liberally endowed the Home for Aged and Indigent Women, in Cleveland, and he was always liberal toward charitable enterprises. What might be called Mr. Stone's last completed work was the construction of the Adelbert College Building in Cleveland for the Western Reserve College, which has agreed to transfer itself from Hudson to Cleveland. The building had just been finished and put in order when Mr. Stone died, and he had endowed the institution with an open hand. This gift by Mr. Stone was in memory of his own son, Adelbert, and cost him about \$1,000,000.

Mr. Stone was married Jan. 12, 1842, to Miss Julia Ann Gleason, of Warren, Mass. Two daughters and Mrs. Stone survive him. His only son, Adelbert B. Stone, was drowned while a student at Yale College. One of the daughters is the wife of Col. John Hay, ex-Assistant Secretary of State. The other daughter is the wife of Samuel Mather, of Cleveland. Col. Hay and his family are now on their way home from Europe, having sailed from Liverpool yesterday. Mr. Stone leaves an ample fortune. Until the advent of the Rockefeller family, of the Standard Oil Company, he was the richest man in Northern Ohio. In politics Mr. Stone was an earnest Republican, and contributed largely to the expenses of campaigns. His religious sympathies were with the Presbyterians.

CHICAGO, May 11.—A. L. Griffin, Vice President of the Union Iron and Steel Company, in which Amasa Stone was heavily interested, says that his death will not interfere with the contemplated resumption of work on June 1, and that resumption did not contemplate any payment of money by him, and the contract with his signature covering the terms for payment of money due him by the company must bind his heirs. When the company suspended in February judgments were entered in Mr. Stone's favor for \$800,000, none of which has been paid.