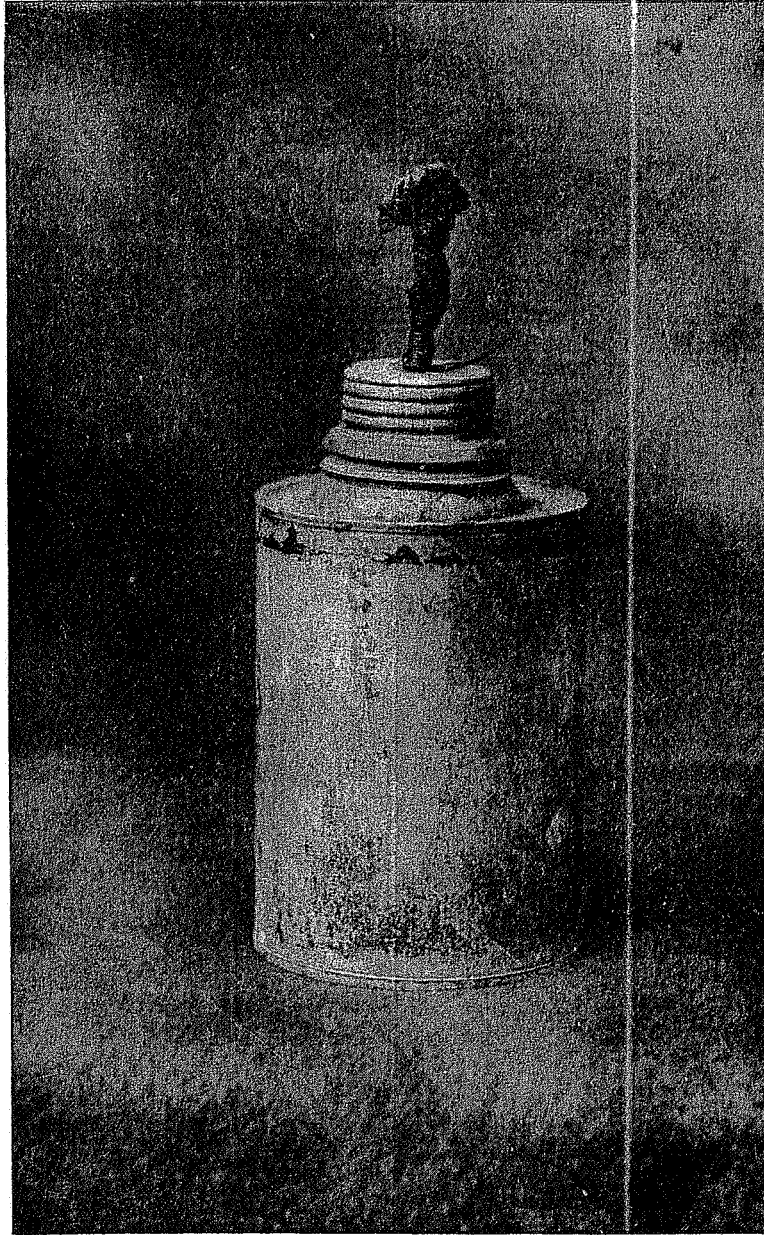


## CHAPTER XVIII.

The Plot against the Police — Anarchist Banners and Emblems — Stealing a Captured Flag — A Mystery at a Station-house — Finding the Fire-cans — Their Construction and Use — Imitating the Parisian Petroleuses — Glass Bombs — Putting the Women Forward — Cans and Bombs Still Hidden Among the Bohemians — Testing the Infernal Machines — The Effects of Anarchy — The Moral to be Drawn — Looking for Labor Sympathy — A Crazy Scheme — Gatling Gun *vs.* Dynamite — The Threatened Attack on the Station-houses — Watching the Third Window — Selecting a Weapon — Planning Murder — The Test of Would-be Assassins — The Meeting at Lincoln Park — Peril of the Hinman Street Station-house — A Fortunate Escape.

IN the numerous arrests and raids made, the police became thoroughly acquainted with the most notorious Anarchists in the city, the ins and outs of their resorts, and even the interior arrangement of their dwelling-places. Not only were suspects arrested, but search was made for contraband articles. A varied collection of arms, bombs, etc., and a large assortment of red bunting thus found their way to the Chicago Avenue Station. In all the public demonstrations made by the Anarchists in the city they had carried many flags, banners and transparencies as emblems of defiance, and whenever such were found they were carefully taken in charge. When the investigations were concluded, the inner room of my private office was well filled with a most curious display of these time-worn and weather-beaten ensigns, and the collection is very interesting as a reminder of a critical period in the history of Chicago. There are flags of a very primitive and cheap description, and flags more or less elaborate and expensive. They varied in size and differed in the degree of their crimson colors. Those belonging to groups were large and plain, showing frequent handling by dirt-begrimed hands, and were mounted on plain pine staffs. Those carried by the Lehr und Wehr Verein were of finer texture and larger in size, its principal standard, of silk, being a present from the female revolutionists and gorgeous in the amplitude of its folds. This silken standard was the pride and joy of the whole fraternity, and at one time it served to relieve the motley collection with its bright vermilion, but in some unaccountable manner it disappeared one day from a West Side police station. The reds had evidently set their hearts on recapturing it, and by some sort of legerdemain they succeeded. Who it was that accomplished the deed has never been disclosed, and in whose custody it is now is a profound secret, carefully kept by the Anarchists.

The men who were always relied upon to carry these flags in the processions of the reds were Ernst Hubner, Appelman, Paul Otto, Stohlbaum, W. Hageman, Seliger, Lutz, Gustav Lehman, Paul Lehman, and Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Holmes and some other women, and possibly some of these



AN INCENDIARY CAN.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

This is a tin can filled with petroleum, and provided with a small powder flask, secured in the center by means of a screw-top, which also serves to hold the fuse in position. Numbers of these cans were found. They were intended for setting fire to buildings and other property.

may know something of the mysterious disappearance of the Anarchists' chief standard.

During the searches by the department for other suspicious and inflammatory articles, several fire-cans were found in the northwest part of the city, on the 3d of June, by Officer Whalen. In exterior appearance these looked very harmless, but an examination of their contents showed them capable of doing a great deal of mischief. They each had a capacity of a quart, and were made of medium heavy tin, with a round hole in the center of the top, about an inch in diameter. This opening was provided with a threaded neck of tin about an inch high, with a cover to fit. Underneath the cover was a sort of clasp, into which fitted the neck of a small vial, and through the cover a small hole was bored, for the admission of a fuse into the vial. When ready for use the can would be filled with an explosive or with coal-oil, and the flask would contain powder. All that then remained would be to light the fuse, throw the can either into a lumber-yard or under the stairway of some residence or business block, and no one would know the perpetrator of a possibly disastrous fire. The cans found by Officer Whalen were loaded and had evidently been intended for use on the night of May 4. Fortunately the owner must have become frightened and hid them to escape arrest.

The suggestion for the manufacture of these cans came from across the water. A short time preceding May 4, at a meeting held in Thalia Hall, a few Frenchmen and several Germans, who had passed through the reign of the Commune in Paris in 1871, gave a general idea of the important part such cans had played in that city and added that women at that time did as good work with them as the men. Such fire-cans, together with glass balls filled with nitro-glycerine, were carried in baskets, and if the reds wanted to destroy a building they would throw a can through the window, or if they desired to annihilate a guard of soldiers they would hurl into their midst one of the glass balls, which would explode by concussion and tear the men to pieces.

These missiles had created great havoc in Paris, and the members of the Thalia Hall gathering were urged to adopt them for use in Chicago. At that time there were enough desperate Anarchists in the city to have used all that could have been manufactured, but some of the men at the meeting insisted that the women should be asked to assist in disposing of them to the destruction of the town. One big, loud-mouthed fellow, evidently a coward, shouted:

"My wife will do that. She is an Anarchist as good as any one of us."

No doubt she was an Anarchist, as the city had a great many of these poor, deluded creatures at the time, who were willing to do almost anything their husbands might ask, but many of whom have since had occasion

to feel the poverty into which they were finally forced by men who neglected work, family and all for the sake of talking revolution.

Many of these men were just cowardly enough to thrust their wives forward where danger lurked, and while they themselves enjoyed the safety of a groggery, they would have been pleased, "for principle's sake," to see their poor helpmeets go around and set fire to houses and other property, so that the dauntless husbands could brag of the brave achievements of "the family."

The meeting in question must have set the Anarchists to thinking; and it is a matter of record that Parsons had fallen into the same idea when he addressed a secret meeting on the North Side, to which I shall subsequently refer. It is certain that many of these fire-cans were manufactured.

Besides the petroleum-cans discovered by Officer Whalén, a lot of the same kind were taken out of the city by way of West Lake Street on May 7, when the Anarchists were hurrying their ammunition out of town to prevent detection. According to the statements of some reformed reds, there are a great many of these cans and bombs still concealed in the Bohemian settlement in the southwest part of the city.

On the 8th of June, 1886, I decided to have the cans tested, and for this purpose detailed Officers Rehm and Coughlin. The latter had at one time been a miner, and was therefore experienced in the use of explosives. The two officers took one of the cans to the lake shore. The can was placed on a plot of grass and the fuse lighted. In eight seconds an explosion followed. The grass burned within a circumference of five feet. The flame extended four feet in height and continued for about three minutes. The officers gave it as their opinion that any one of the cans was sufficient to set a building on fire.

What a blessing it was for our citizens that this devilish invention did not spread its destructive work before May 4, 1886.

As stated at the outset, the police were brought, in all these raids, into close acquaintanceship with the malcontents, and often came in close contact with their families. Some of the sights they saw were shocking in the extreme, and they had many opportunities to sound the depths of misery and want entailed upon families by husbands gone daft on Anarchy. The tales of woe and domestic infelicity poured into their ears would fill many pages, but the general tenor of all can be judged by what has been revealed in the statements given in the preceding chapters.

Anarchy may look extremely inviting when depicted by a plausible speaker, but its practical side is strikingly brought out in the home life of its devotees. Any one visiting the homes of Anarchists, and carefully contrasting the surroundings with those of true laboring men not affected by the taint of revolution, would give Anarchy a wide berth. But unfortunately men get their brains turned over sophistical arguments against

capital and madly rush to ruin without thinking of consequences until it is too late. Read the reports made to me at the time, and they all tell the same story of want and degradation.

There always has been and always will be a fascination about any scheme that promises ease without labor. So long as men can be found with impressionable minds that can be swayed by demagogues into a belief that Anarchy has in it the elements of comfort, splendor and luxury with very little toil, so long, no doubt, will dupes be found ready to sacrifice energy, thrift and independence for the life-degrading scarlet banner. But such ease can never be attained through blood in the United States. That fact has been established in Chicago, and the precedent ought to serve as



HENRY SPIES.  
From a Photograph.

a terrible warning to all malcontents. If the abject want of those who constitute the bulk of the revolutionists, whose very squalor has been the result of their zeal for Anarchy, is not sufficient to deter men from becoming Anarchists, the fate of the eight conspirators who were brought to trial in Chicago ought at least to prevent men from plotting murder, incendiarism and pillage.

With the tremendous odds against them, it is surprising that men could be found willing to take up arms for the destruction of life and property, and the action of the reds in Chicago can be explained only on the theory that they felt they had only to strike one severe blow to bring thousands of secret sympathizers into line, and cause capitalists to humble themselves in the dust before the Social Revolution. This theory

is borne out by the statements of the many repentant Anarchists who came under the displeasure of the police. In their excited gatherings they had each propped up the hopes and spirits of the others, and all reason was sunk in the one frenzied, consuming desire to wreak vengeance upon those who had accumulated more wealth than themselves. They were bent on wresting away the wealth of others, and no mercy was to be shown to those who stood between them and that end.

The police, as protectors of wealth in property and property in wealth, were the immediate objects of their enmity and wrath, and throughout the Anarchistic conspiracy, as has been shown by the disclosures made, we were to receive their first and special attention before the grand onslaught

upon capitalists. Crazy by their speakers and dazed with the glittering prospect held out to them, the human fiends proposed to exterminate us with dynamite and then vanquish the rich and abolish all forms of property.

Could anything be more absurd? And yet that is what they sought to accomplish on the eventful night of May 4th.

It would seem that the scheme to blow up the police stations could only originate in a lunatic asylum, but the confessions of those arrested show that men with apparently sound minds—minds at least sane enough to keep them out of such institutions—actually contemplated it and had made all the necessary arrangements to execute the plot. Strange must have been their conceptions of public sentiment when they believed that the execution of their bloody plan would result in the establishment of wider and freer social conditions, and strange, indeed, must have been their hallucinations when they thought that the devastation they proposed would be seconded and aided by the laboring men whom they counted upon as secret sympathizers ready to reveal their true feelings the moment the revolution was generally inaugurated.

The danger of the scheme to themselves did not strike them until the last moment, when their courage was to be put to a practical test, but, fortunately for themselves, they went no further than the Haymarket riot.

That they seriously contemplated more than they perpetrated is beyond dispute. They saw the intense excitement consequent on the eight-hour strike and the troubles at McCormick's factory, and knew that the police stations would be filled with officers in readiness for emergencies. They had called the Haymarket meeting for the express purpose of provoking hostilities, and they regarded it as an opportune time to strike a terrible blow against the police all over the city. Their calculations in that respect were eminently correct.

The moment the reds began to incite a vicious mob to deeds of bloodshed, hostilities were provoked, and they got a dose of their own medicine. Had it not been for their precipitate flight they would have fared far worse. All the police stations were full of men, all the reserves having been called out for duty on the first sign of violent demonstrations, and these stood ready to make short work of all who might stand up against them in a conflict. It was fortunate for the conspirators that they considered "discretion the better part of valor" at the Haymarket, and doubly fortunate that they received no signal to commence their bloody operations at the stations.

The loss of life no doubt would have been appalling on both sides, but the outcome, as far as the triumph of law and order is concerned, would have been the same. The bomb would have done deadly work at the start, but the Gatling gun would have come to the rescue had the police been seriously crippled.

Missiles of dynamite hurled into the stations on that eventful night of

May 4 would indeed have created terrible havoc. In fact, the reds could not have chosen a time more favorable for their bloody plans. The East Chicago Avenue Station that night contained a very large force. I had in reserve and waiting orders one hundred and twenty-five officers. They were all over the building, up and down stairs, in the court-room, in the reception-room and in every other available place. Many were in the office, which is used as a roll-call room, and in which all details of officers are made. This office is in the center of the building and overlooks an alley on the east. The officers were organized into five companies, and all duly numbered. Any company could be called at any time, and in less than five minutes it would be in marching order.

This precaution was taken in expectation of a call to the Haymarket, and the Anarchists, in the damnable conspiracies of that evening, had anticipated such preparations. They were accordingly on the ground. Fifteen members of the North Side group, as appears plainly from the confessions of some of the Anarchists, loitered around the station, waiting for orders or signal, or to abide their own pleasure as soon as they could see for themselves that the riot had begun on the West Side. When that time arrived, they were to watch the windows of the roll-call room from the alley and throw their infernal machines into the midst of the officers the moment the room was full.

The cut-throats skulked around the station like so many Indians around the cabin of a helpless settler, constantly dodging around in the darkness, fearful that they might be discovered. True to their instincts, however, these Chicago reds could not do without their beer while awake, and they made frequent trips to neighboring beer-saloons. About 9:30 o'clock Lieut. Baus and Lieut. Lloyd, each with a company of officers, returned from the Central Station, where I had sent them as a reserve during the Haymarket meeting, and when the Anarchists saw them in the roll-call room of my station, they sneaked around on the dark side of the alley and selected the third and fourth windows as those through which their deadly bombs should crash on their destructive mission. These windows are in the center of the large room. They had with them a number of bombs, both of the round lead and the long gas-pipe variety. While they stood underneath those windows, they got into a whispered quarrel about the kind of bomb that should be used.

Bock had a round lead bomb, and he said :

"I don't think this will go off. Let one of you throw a larger bomb."

Then Abraham Hermann became angry and said :

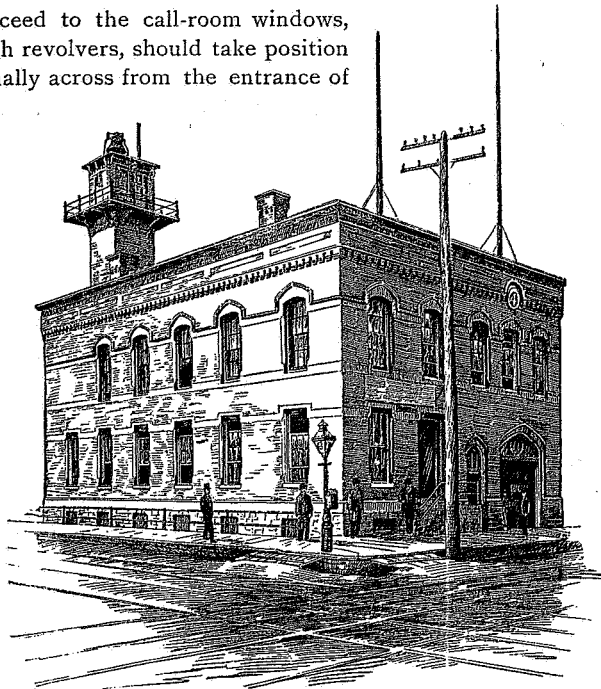
"You d——d fool, what the d——l are you here for, if your d——d bombs are no good? You are too much of a coward to throw them."

Just at this point two officers left the station to visit a cigar-store, and stopped for a moment at the entrance of the alley to finish their conversation.

The Anarchists saw them, and, thinking that they had been discovered, they hurriedly made their exit in an opposite direction, running to the rear of the building on its dark side and then emerging on Superior Street. Some of them went over to the West Side, to the Haymarket meeting, and others sought different saloons on Clark Street.

After frequent libations, some met again on Superior Street in the vicinity of a wagon-manufacturing establishment, and, under the cover of numerous wagons standing on the street between Clark Street and La Salle Avenue, they decided that the men who then had bombs should proceed to the call-room windows, and the others, with revolvers, should take position in the alley diagonally across from the entrance of the station. Then, at the proper signal, the bombs were to be hurled into the room, and the men across the way were to fire a volley into such officers as might come out.

While this plan was being formed, I received an order from Inspector Bonfield to send all my men to the West Side double-quick, ready for action, with a hurried explanation of the riot and the killing of



THE LARRABEE STREET STATION.

From a Photograph.

officers, and in less than four minutes I had seventy-five men on the way to the Haymarket. The Anarchists were still standing among the wagons, and, to their great surprise and dismay, they saw three patrol wagons passing with a tremendous speed. Their hearts at once fell into their boots, and they knew that the trouble had commenced. They repaired to Moody's church and remained there a few moments deliberating what should be done. One of them tried to brace up the flagging spirits of his comrades by saying that "now the time had arrived when something must be done, but they



must never tell of their being there." Not one, however, seemed willing to execute the plot they had agreed upon. On the contrary, they turned up La Salle Avenue and ran to Neff's Hall as fast as their legs could carry them. What occurred at that hall that night I have already shown in a preceding chapter.

The plan to throw bombs into the roll-call room was afterwards unfolded to me by one of those in the plot, and, had it not been for the two officers accidentally stopping at the entrance of the alley, many of the boys of the Fifth Precinct would have been murdered even before the commencement of the riot at the Haymarket. The ruffians who hung around that station were Abraham Hermann, Lorenz Hermann, the two Hageman brothers, Habizreiter, Heineman, Charles Bock, Heumann, and others from the North Side group and Lake View.

Another station in great danger that night was that on Larrabee Street, in charge of Lieut. John Baus, with forty-eight officers. It is located on the northwest corner of Larrabee Street and North Avenue, and is a two-story brick building with a basement. This basement contains a cell-room located in the center of the building, with windows on the North Avenue side, and that side was chosen for the scene of operations. The men especially relied upon to blow up this building were Lingg, Seliger, Muntzenberg, Huber, Thielen and Hirschberger, and they, together with other members of the North Side group, lingered in the vicinity, loaded with bombs, and waiting only to see "the heavens illuminated" or to receive a message from one of the runners. But before they knew what had transpired at the Haymarket a patrol wagon dashed out of the station and whizzed by with a load of officers. This dazed them, and they hurried to Neff's Hall to learn particulars and receive new instructions. When they got there Neff told them that they were all a set of cowards and advised them to go home. They took his advice and were glad to crawl back into their holes.

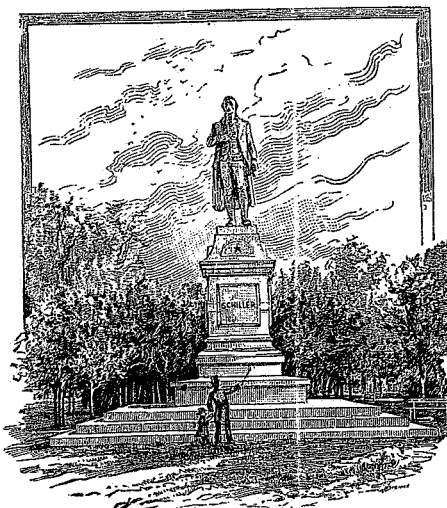
Webster Avenue Station, in charge of Lieut. Elias E. Lloyd, with forty-four officers, also received attention. The building is a two-story frame located on the north side of the street, near Lincoln Avenue, and its principal apartment, the roll-call room, is on the first floor facing the street. The men especially assigned to the destruction of this station were Ernst Hubner, Gustav Lehman, Otto Lehman, Jebolinski and Lange, backed by several other frowsy and low-skulled sneaks, and these hovered around the station, hiding in dark recesses whenever some one casually passed along the sidewalk, or dodging into an alley whenever an officer was discovered approaching them. They all waited for "the signal which never came," and, getting tired of stimulating each other with a courage they did not possess, they finally concluded to adjourn to Neff's Hall. Whenever, on the way to that place, one upbraided the other for not throwing a bomb,

each would point to the fact that the area in front of the building was always occupied by officers sitting in easy chairs and sniffing the evening breeze, and there was no chance to get near the cell-room; but they all promised one another that they would go back and blow the building into smithereens and the officers into shreds of flesh, regardless of personal consequences, if they should hear "good news" at Neff's. But they did not go back. Lieut. Lloyd was not called on for assistance at the Haymarket until about eleven o'clock, and by that time the cowards had got their information at Neff's and were glad for an excuse to make a "bee line" for home, if the hovels they lived in can be dignified by that designation.

There is no doubt that these wretches would have blown up the station if the police had dispersed the Haymarket meeting earlier in the evening, but by waiting so long they lost what little courage they had. There was no patrol wagon attached to this station at that time, but, as one of them told me afterwards, the Anarchists stood ready to hurl a bomb into a street-car had the officers come out earlier to take the cars in order to hasten to the assistance of the force at the Haymarket. They intended to make their work complete, and they were all well provided with bombs, even though they were rather short on courage. This was a part of the gang which had an appointment at Lincoln Park, only five blocks from the station, and some of them sought there early in the evening for a large number of recruits who failed to materialize when danger was in sight.

The spot chosen for the meeting-place in Lincoln Park was at "Schiller's Denkmal" (monument). Here it was that a few gathered, but, not finding as many present as they expected, they separated to the several localities assigned them for the execution of their plot.

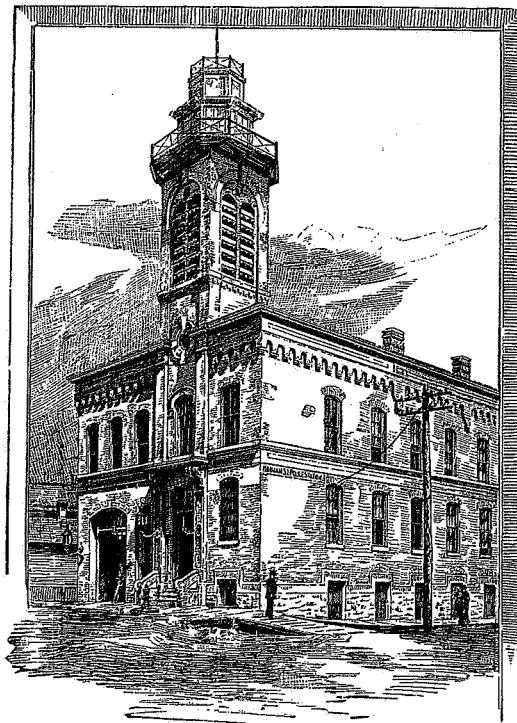
It will be recalled that, at the Monday night meeting preceding the Haymarket riot, those living on the North Side were ordered to report at Lincoln Park for definite instructions, and those on the West Side at Wicker Park, and the order seems to have been obeyed by a few of the more courageous Anarchists.



THE SCHILLER MONUMENT.

From a Photograph.

The vicinity of the Schiller monument was the place also where those who had been arrested and had made confessions met, along with other Anarchists, on the night preceding the taking of testimony in the trial of the prisoners, and on this occasion, Mr. Furthmann tells me, they agreed, with one exception, to inform the prosecution that they would not take the witness-stand to testify to the matters they had revealed to the State. If they were put on as witnesses, they agreed, they could swear that all they had told me and Mr. Furthmann with reference to the conspiracy was pure



THE HINMAN STREET STATION.  
From a Photograph.

and unadulterated falsehood. Mr. Waller refused to be a party to such an agreement, and by his stubborn stand he caused several of the other witnesses for the State to change their minds and stick to the truth. Others, however, held out, and, when asked by the State to appear, refused. Waller proved a very strong witness, and, as Mr. Furthmann says, not one of the witnesses for the defense dared to contradict his testimony.

But to return to the contemplated attacks on the police stations. The Hinman Street house was the fourth one in the list marked for destruction. This station was in charge of Lieut. Richard Shepard, and contained on the night in question

thirty-four officers. It is a two-story brick building with basement, and is situated at the northwest corner of Hinman and Paulina Streets. The basement is used as a lock-up for the detention of prisoners, and all the offices are located on the first floor, facing Paulina Street. The patrol-wagon barn is situated in the rear of the station, contiguous to an alley, through which the street is reached. Around this locality between eighty and a hundred Anarchists gathered for work and to await the

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signal. Mende and Sisterer were at the head of this murderous gang. Some were to exploit with rifles from the alley north of the station and on the east side of the street; others, with dynamite bombs, were to look after the officers in the rooms where they might happen to be most numerous, and those with revolvers were to station themselves in the alley directly behind the station to shoot down any of the officers who might come out in the patrol wagon, and also to kill the horses. Others, again, with revolvers, were to post themselves in front of the station to kill those who might escape the deadly bombs and seek safety by rushing into the street. The riflemen were to come as a reserve force to shoot down any who might have escaped both the revolvers and bombs. They were a desperate set and appeared determined on the execution of the plot. The men who composed the gang were Germans, Bohemians and Poles, all members of the West Side group, and some outsiders who worked in freight-houses and lumber-yards, and not one of them had any love for a policeman. This district had been for several years the scene of numerous strikes, and, as the officers had always suppressed the rioters, the latter were viciously disposed towards the guardians of the peace. Some of these reds were very anxious to see the work of annihilation commence, and they loitered around in small squads so as not to arouse suspicion until they could learn whether the revolution had been inaugurated at the Haymarket meeting. There was no call on this station for assistance at the time of the explosion, as Inspector Bonfield thought it possible that trouble might arise at McCormick's, and the officers in that locality might thus be required in that direction; and as the diabolical conspirators saw no officers or patrol wagon move out, they became anxious to know how the Haymarket affair had terminated, and one by one they sneaked away from their hiding-places. When they finally learned particulars about the shooting, they ran home, and, like the cowards they were, kept under cover for several days. Later in the evening one company was ordered from this station to guard Desplaines Street, after the wounded officers had all been brought from the Haymarket. When the wagon had reached Halsted and Harrison Streets, however, Capt. O'Donnell halted it and ordered the officers back to the station, as it had been ascertained that all the Anarchists had sought their homes for the night.

It was very fortunate that the officers were not called out earlier in the evening. If Inspector Bonfield had ordered them to report a few moments after the riot, very few of the men would have escaped alive. I have since learned that the brigands who were sneaking around that station that night numbered nearly one hundred, and as one-half of them were under the influence of liquor, it is very likely that they would have committed desperate deeds had the occasion offered.