

THE DEERING MURDER.

Probst's Full Confession—A Fearful Story of Crime.

From the Philadelphia Ledger, May 8.

ANTON PROBST has at last succumbed. He has made a full and free confession of his crime, detailing the circumstances of the murders, and the motive that induced him to commit them. Sunday he made the first approach toward a confession, and then he admitted to the priest, Rev. Mr. GUNTHER, that he alone was responsible for the death of the eight persons found dead on the Deering farm. This was stated in the presence of the priest, Mr. PERKINS, and Dr. CLAPP, of the prison. Yesterday morning the priest communicated the fact of the confession to the Mayor. Later in the day, his counsel, JOHN P. O'NEILL and JOHN A. WOLBERT, visited him, and to them he made a statement of his connection with the murder. At 3 o'clock, Chief-Detective FRANKLIN and a number of reporters visited the cell of PROBST, for the purpose of obtaining the confession in full. PROBST was found sitting on his bed on the floor, and as Mr. FRANKLIN entered he recognized him and greeted him familiarly.

There is little perceptible change in his appearance, his face still having the flush that was so noticeable during his attendance at Court. He was in nowise abashed by the appearance of his visitors, and in response to Mr. FRANKLIN'S questions gave his answers promptly and without hesitation. During the time he was detailing the facts connected with the butchery he never once appeared to recognize that he was telling a story calculated to curdle the blood of the most callous, but in all his speech he was quiet and subdued, varying the recital with a smile whenever anything was said by himself appealing to his sense of the ridiculous.

Mr. FRANKLIN introduced the conversation by remarking: "So, PROBST, you have concluded, at last, to tell the whole story of the murder?" "Yes," said the prisoner. Q.—You thought over the murder for some time, didn't you? A.—Oh, yes. Q.—You had seen Mr. DEARING count money? A.—Yes. Q.—You made up your mind to kill him? A.—Yes, at the first chance. Q.—Were you ever in the road, waiting for him? A.—No. Q.—Did you say anything to CAREY about it? A.—No. Q.—Did you say anything to CAREY about the money in the house? A.—No. Q.—Did you have any conversation at all on the subject with CAREY? A.—No. Q.—When did you come to this country? A.—In 1863; I landed at Castle Garden; came on the ship *Columbus*; I am from Bremen, and am 25 years old; was in New-York two hours before I enlisted; I landed on the 9th of May, and went into the Twelfth New-York Cavalry; stayed in camp five weeks, and then went to Washington; after that I deserted, and went to Baltimore, and from there to Philadelphia and to New-York; next I enlisted in the Forty-first New-York Regiment, Infantry, and was sent to South Carolina, and served on Folly Island; stayed there nine months, and got orders to come to Washington; there I took my musket and everything and left. [Smiling.] Q.—You deserted again? A.—Yes; I was stopped, but I told them I was not a soldier, and was going to work; was arrested at Baltimore, and taken to the Provost-Marshal's office and kept for five days; they asked me what regiment I belonged to, and I told them I was not a soldier; they let me go, and I came to Philadelphia, and stopped in Carpenter-street below Broad; stayed there a couple of times, and then went to CHRIS. MOORE'S, in Front-street; he took me to West Chester, and I enlisted in the Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry; was discharged on the 28th of May, 1865, at Richmond; came to Fortress Monroe, then to Baltimore and to Philadelphia, and went to CHRIS. MOORE'S and got my bounty; I spent that money in about fourteen days, and then went to New-York; went to Greenwich-street; was there in June, 1865. Q.—Your name is registered there on the 6th of June. What name did you give—your right name? A.—Yes, I suppose so. Q.—Don't you remember writing your name? A.—No. Q.—Where did you go then? A.—I went to Hoboken, to New-street, and got work; after that I came to Philadelphia and went again to CHRIS. MOORE, and stopped there two or three days; I looked for work, and got it at a sugar factory in St. John-street. Q.—Did you give your right name then, or that of JACOB GANTER? A.—I gave my right name. Q.—Was it not at LOVERING'S? A.—I don't know. Q.—Was it near a church? A.—Yes.

Mr. FRANKLIN—Yes, your name is there on the books.

Q.—The work was too hot for you? A.—Yes; I was there about eight weeks; left there, and for some time had a room with another man at Third and Brown streets; never went to any other sugar factory; never worked at GILLESPIE'S; I went to an employment office, and they sent me to Maryland to pick peaches, and I stayed there two weeks and got sick with the fever; came back to Philadelphia and went to the Soldiers' Home in Christian-street; stayed there fifteen days, and when I got well I went to CHRIS. MOORE'S, and then went to West Chester. Q.—Did you work in New-Jersey? A.—No. Q.—When did you come back? A.—In November; went to CHRIS. MOORE'S and stayed there six or eight days and got sick. Q.—How did you spend all your money—your bounty? A.—(Smiling) Drinking beer. Q.—Any other way—with females? PROBST merely smiled in answer to this question, and continued: As my money was out I thought the best thing I could do was to go the almshouse; got a ticket at Third and Brown; left the almshouse about the first of December; I worked in the kitchen. Q.—I want you to come to the first time you got to Mr. DEARING'S. A.—Oh, I forgot that; after I got back from Maryland I traveled around the country, and was sick, and came to CHRIS. MOORE'S, and looked around for work and came across Mr. DEARING. Q.—Mr. DEARING didn't look for you? A.—No. Q.—What did he say to you? A.—I got there in the morning, about eight o'clock, and he was not there, and his woman was alone, and I asked her if she wanted a man to work; she told me yes, but her husband was not in, and would be in the evening; I went back to the city, and went down again in the evening, about half-past five o'clock, and he (DEARING) was there, and he said yes, he wanted one, and he promised me \$15 a month; I stayed there about three weeks; it was three or four days before the month was up. Q.—How did you come to me? A.—It rained very hard one day, and he sent me out in the field, and I didn't want to go, and he said, "You pay me off and I'll go away," and he said "all right." Q.—During all the time you were there you saw him counting a great deal of money? A.—Yes; when I left I got on the cart and rode up to the city with CORNELIUS; then went to CHRIS. MOORE'S and stayed there three or four days, and then went to the country, into West Chester; came back and went to CHRIS. MOORE'S, and stayed there ten or fourteen days; attended his horse and wagon; then went to the almshouse and worked in the cook-house until the 14th of February; gave my right name there; got a ticket to leave, and didn't go back; stayed two days at CHRIS. MOORE'S, and one day at LECKFELDT'S, and left a carpet-bag there, with a couple of shirts, a pair of pants, and a pair of boots and a necktie; stayed at his house one day and then went to Mr. DEARING'S; it was Friday evening, in February. Q.—What did you tell them? A.—I told them I had no work and no money, and I wanted some work. Q.—Did you tell them anything about your being to Germany? A.—Yes, I told them I had been there, and I told them I had walked all the way from New-York. Q.—You made up your mind, when you went back, to get some of DEARING'S money? A.—Yes. Q.—Did you ever go the drove-yard with DEARING? A.—Yes. Q.—How often? A.—Four times. Q.—Did you make any acquaintances there? A.—Oh! I guess so. Q.—Who? A.—Some men who wanted me to go to work. Q.—When you went back you made up your mind to get the money? A.—Yes. Q.—How did you plan this thing? A.—I planned it a good many times—whenever I got a chance. Q.—Did you think of the murder? A.—Never thought of that until the morning before. Q.—Did you try any way to get this money before? A.—No.

Mr. PERKINS, who was present—You told me something about eight days before the murder, what was that—your thought of murdering the man? A.—About eight days before I did think of killing the whole family. Q.—What was your first plan? A.—I thought I would kill them, as I could get the money in that way. Mr. PERKINS—You thought of killing them in the morning? A.—Yes, as they came down stairs. Q.—Did you have an ax there at any time? Q.—How was it you did not do it then? A.—My heart failed me, and I could not do it. Q.—Was DEARING always at home in the evening? A.—Yes. Q.—How about this morning? A.—It was dark and raining, and CORNELIUS and me went to the meadow; Mr. DEARING had gone to the city; then I made up my mind to do this. Q.—Had you made up your mind to kill DEARING when he came home? A.—Yes. Q.—Was the money in the house? A.—I didn't know, CORNELIUS and I went to work about eight o'clock; Mr. DEARING went before that, and said he would be back about one o'clock; CAREY and me were at work in the meadow, about one hundred yards from the haystack; we took the horse and cart. Q.—What did you take to kill him? A.—The big axe, to cut roots. Q.—Were you down in the ditch or on the bank? A.—Under the

big tree; he was sitting down under that tree and I stood behind him, and I got the axe; he was talking about work; I could not do it, and I drew back two or three times before I could do it, and then I struck him on the left side. Q.—Did he halloo? A.—No; after he fell I gave him two or three more blows, and then I cut his throat. Q.—Did he bleed much? A.—Yes; then I put him in the cart. Q.—Did he have that strap around him then? A.—Yes; he had that all the time. Q.—Was this not in view of Mr. WILD'S house? A.—Yes. Q.—Were you not afraid of them seeing it? A.—Oh, I looked over there first; I took the cart and hauled him to the hayrick and covered him up. Q.—Was there blood in the cart? A.—Yes, but I took some hay and wiped it off. Q.—What next? A.—I then went to the house with the horse and cart; this was after 10 o'clock; I put a little wood on the cart when I drove to the house, and I left the cart standing there, and went over to the stable and got the other axe and hammer, and put them in the corner near the door, and then I came over to the house again. Q.—Had you any blood on you then? A.—A little; but I took a little hay and wiped it off; when I got to the house Mrs. DEARING was at the ditch with a bucket, getting water, but I told JOHNNY (the oldest boy) to come to the stable to help me; well, he comes, and I took him inside the door and got the little axe, and, as soon as he got in, I knocked him down, and he fell inside. Q.—Did he halloo? A.—No; after he fell I gave him one or two more blows, and cut his throat. Q.—What did you do with him? A.—I hid him there with hay, and took a little hay and wiped the blood up. I then took the axe and put it in its place in the corner, and then came out and told Mrs. DEARING there was something the matter with the little horse—that he was loose, and I could not tie him myself. She came in two or three minutes. Q.—What did she say? A.—Nothing; she came inside the stable; I was inside, and I hit her on the head, and she fell into the stable. Q.—Did she cry out? A.—No. Q.—What did you do with her? A.—Pulled her in the little barn; I got in first, and pulled her by the shoulders; then I went to get the other boy (THOMAS). Q.—What did you tell him? A.—I told him his mother wanted to see him; he came right along; I walked ahead of him, and when he got in I knocked him on the head. Q.—Did they cry out? A.—No. Q.—How many times did you hit him? A.—Well, I hit him one, and after that I hit him again; then I left the ax in the same place, and went to the house and took ANNIE, and told her her mother wanted to see her; at the same time I took the baby on my arm, and ANNIE walked alongside of me to the stable; I put the baby on the floor, on the hay, and took ANNIE inside; ANNIE looked around for her mother. Q.—Did she ask for her mother? A.—(Smiling.) I was too much in a hurry. (Meaning, no doubt, that he did not give her time to ask.) Q.—Well, what did you do? A.—I knocked her down and cut her throat, and then I took the baby and cut it; then I took the ax and put it on the bench under the porch, where it was always kept; then I went to the house and took the horse from the cart and put him in the stable, and then went back to the house and stayed there waiting for Mr. DEARING. Q.—You did not search the house then? A.—No; Mr. DEARING came about half past one o'clock; I saw him coming from the window down stairs, and saw Miss DOLAN with him. Q.—Then you were worried? A.—Yes; I went outside and waited until they came; when he stepped out of the wagon I told him that the steer was sick in the table and I wanted him to come and look at it. Q.—What became of Miss DOLAN? A.—She went into the house; then I went into the stable and he came, and I took the ax right behind him and hit him in the middle of the stable and knocked him down on his face; used the small ax; when he was down I turned him over and gave him one or two more hits, and then cut his throat. Q.—Did he make any noise? A.—No; he said nothing except when I first spoke to him he said the steer didn't look so bad in the morning. Q.—What next? A.—I put a little hay over him, and I came out and left him in the same place behind the door; Miss DOLAN called me and said that the horse could not stand, and she said—"ANTON, take the horse out." I told her that Mr. DEARING wanted to see her over in the stable; she came and she asked me whose Mrs. DEARING and the children were; I told her they were in the stable; she walked into the stable, and I took the hammer in my left hand, about five or six feet inside the door, and I hit her once on the head, and she fell right on his (DEARING'S) face; then I took the little axe and chopped her neck; then I shut the stable door, and took the watch and big pocket-book from DEARING, and I took the little purse from Miss DOLAN; then I took Mr. DEARING and put him where you found him, and then Miss DOLAN, and I covered them with hay; I then came out and shut the door and brought the horse over to the stable and gave him plenty of hay, and I gave the same to all the horses, as much as I could, and then I shut the door, and went to the house and shut the poor and fastened it, and I looked all around; I took out the pocket-book to see what money I had; the big book you found in the house had \$10 in greenbacks and two \$2 notes, counterfeits, and one \$3; that was all the money; then I looked at Miss DOLAN'S purse, and saw nothing but the postage stamps. Q.—Are you certain of that? A.—Yes; I would not lie now; I left the watch and pocket-book on the table, and went up stairs, and I found a pocket-book in the bed where he slept, a \$3 note, and 65 cents in change; found the revolvers; the small one was loaded; took the revolvers down and put them under the other things; then I went up stairs again and looked all through, and could not find anything; so I took the shirts, pants and vest of Mr. DEARING down stairs; then shaved myself with Mr. DEARING'S razor, washed and dressed myself, and put Mr. DEARING'S clothes on; then I ate some bread and butter, and went up stairs and looked all around again, but could find nothing; then I put everything in the carpet-bag and made ready to go away; when Miss DOLAN went inside she took off her furs and put them on the bed. Q.—How late did you stay? A.—Until about half-past six o'clock. Q.—Did anybody come then? A.—No, I didn't see any one. Q.—What had you in the house in case anybody came? A.—Nothing. Q.—When you left, which way did you go? A.—By the Point House road; I left the door of the barn open, so that the cattle could get away.

Mr. PERKINS—Before you left you gave the chickens feed? A.—Yes.

Mr. FRANKLIN—What about the water for the horses; you forgot that? A.—Yes. Q.—Well, go on? A.—When I left one of the dogs went with me. Q.—Did he follow you of his own accord, or did you coax him? A.—No. Q.—Did any of the dogs follow you around the barn when you were doing all this? A.—No. Q.—How did you get up to town? A.—I came up in a Third-street car, and that is the way I got rid of the dog; I got out of the car at Callowhill-street and went to LECKFELDT'S; I had the valise with me and an umbrella.

PROBST then gave his wanderings around Front-street, exactly as the witnesses detailed on the stand during the trial. He then continued: On Thursday night I went out Market-street. Q.—What for? A.—To go to the country. Q.—What for? A.—I was going through the whole country. Q.—Why—did you feel bad? A.—Yes. Q.—Had you seen the news in the papers? A.—Yes. Q.—Did you look at the paper every day to see? A.—Yes. Q.—When did you see it first? A.—On Thursday morning, in the German papers. Q.—Did you expect to be arrested? A.—Yes; when I passed the three officers at Twenty-third and Market, I heard them say, "That is the man," [smiling] but I walked pretty sharp. I didn't care whether they got me or not; I had no money and I didn't feel right. Q.—Felt sorry for what you had done? A.—Yes.

Mr. PERKINS—ANTON, you said that after you killed the first boy you would have gone through with it if there had been a hundred men there. A.—Yes, that is so. Q.—They always treated you well? A.—I can't say that. Q.—Before you came to this country, did you ever do anything wrong? A.—No; I have a father and mother and a brother and sister living; my father is a carpenter; I used to work for him. Q.—What brought you to this country? Did you have any trouble there? A.—No, Sir.

Mr. PERKINS—He says he thought this was the best country.

PROBST—Yes, that is so.

Q.—Why did you say there was another man in this? A.—I was afraid.

Mr. PERKINS—He says he was afraid the mob would be too strong for the Police.

PROBST—That is it.

Q.—You are satisfied that you had a fair trial? A.—Yes. Q.—What did you do with the silver watch? A.—I told you that I sold it at Second and Poplar. Q.—We went there, but couldn't find it. A.—I can't help that; I sold it there and got two dollars for it. Q.—What else besides what was found with you did you get? A.—Nothing. Q.—When did you take the boots off of Mr. DEARING? A.—Before I pulled him up to the crib. Q.—Before you killed Miss DOLAN? A.—Yes, and hid them in the hay. Q.—Why did you take them off? A.—I thought he had something in them. Q.—Money? A.—Yes. Q.—None of these people hallooed? A.—None. Q.—Didn't the little boy throw up his arm to save himself? A.—No; Miss Dolan threw up her hands. Q.—Didn't she say something—didn't she say "Oh!"? A.—No. Q.—Did the baby cry? A.—No. Q.—Why did you kill the baby? A.—Because I was afraid it would cry and make a noise. Q.—But the baby was cut more than the others. A.—Well, I was in a hurry, and I didn't look where I cut her. Q.—All the time you were in the army were you ever in a fight? A.—Yes, on James Island. Q.—You lost your thumb by your own musket? A.—Yes. I was dozing on picket and fell and my thumb was over the muzzle when the gun went off.

After a few more remarks, in the course of which PROBST said he felt relieved since his confession, the party left him. During the day he was visited by a number of Catholic clergymen, and at the time he was telling his story he was twirling the rosary around his fingers. He reclined partly on his bed and gave all his answers promptly and without any apparent desire to gloss over any part of the transaction.