

MURDERED IN BED.

KENTUCKY RID OF ONE OF ITS MOST NOTORIOUS DESPERADOES.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Dec. 26.—The notorious Craig Tolliver, leader of a gang of desperadoes in Rowan County, Ky., has figured for the last time in the murderous fights that have disgraced the eastern part of this State. Tolliver was tried for murder at the Circuit Court which convened in Rowan County last July, protected by the militia, and a farce of a trial was enacted which gave him his liberty. He was rearrested and taken to Hamilton County, Ohio, on a charge of cattle stealing and arson. He again eluded justice, this time for want of evidence, and returned to Rowan County, where he lived rather quietly. On Christmas Day he went to Martinsburg, an adjoining town, to a dance at the house of a man named Peter Withe, and his friend and companion, Asbury Crist, went also, accompanied by a young woman. During the night Asbury and Tolliver began drinking, both paying unusual attention to the young woman. Tolliver succeeded in getting her away from Crist, who, angered at the treatment he had received from his friend and the young woman, left the place. Tolliver remained until an early hour this morning, when he went home with the young woman. Crist came back shortly after, and, finding that Tolliver and the girl had left for home, followed them to her house. He managed in some way to effect an entrance, stole to the bedside, and, placing his revolver over Tolliver's heart, pulled the trigger, and then escaped through the window before he could be stopped, leaving the girl uninjured. Assistance coming, Tolliver was found to be fatally wounded. There was a large, gaping wound in his left breast an inch below the heart, from which flowed a torrent of blood. Nothing could be done for him, and he died in a short time. A mob was speedily organized, and squads of men scoured the country in every direction for Crist, but so far they have met with no success.

With Tolliver's death ends the life of one of the most notorious men Eastern Kentucky has ever produced. He was the acknowledged leader of one of the worst gangs of desperadoes that ever infested the State. At an election at Morehead in the Fall of 1884, John Martin, of Farmers, Ky., shot and killed one of Tolliver's friends and was taken to Winchester, Ky., for safekeeping. Tolliver forged an order from the Sheriff of that county for the possession of the prisoner. Arriving at Farmers, the scene of the fight, a party of men boarded the train and emptied the contents of their guns into Martin's body, no less than 13 bullets taking effect. They then left the train, together with the false posse. Tolliver and his friends placed the law at open defiance. As Marshal he attempted to arrest on a trivial charge Cook Humphreys, the Republican Sheriff-elect. Humphreys emptied the contents of his gun into Tolliver's body and escaped. Tolliver recovered, and then began a feud which the militia of the State had to be called on to quell. Humphreys and his party took to the woods, and in the fights that ensued some half dozen men were killed and many others wounded. Humphreys's Deputy Sheriff and the Coroner were among the first killed in an ambush. Ben Rayburn, a friend of Humphreys was killed in a fight in which Humphreys himself was badly wounded, and Taylor Young, the prosecuting attorney and friend of Tolliver, was ambushed twice, but escaped. In the depredations that followed several houses were attacked and riddled with bullets, while others were burned, among them the house of Mrs. Martin, the mother of the man whom the Tolliver party had murdered. For the past 18 months the two factions have kept the citizens of Morehead in terror, business at times being suspended and dozens of good citizens leaving. The murder of Tolliver may cause a rupture among the adherents of this gang, and another disgraceful feud may be the result.