

### Villers Dead.

Bismarck Tribune:—M. J. Villers, a life prisoner in the penitentiary from LaMoure county, died Sunday of cystitis. He has been ill for several years, in fact having come to the institution seven or eight years ago in such poor health that he was at once put under medical care. The case of Villers was one of the most interesting from a criminal standpoint of any in the institution. He was first brought to the penitentiary in 1895 for an assault upon Mrs. August Tromner. The history of the case briefly is as follows: In the year 1895 or thereabouts August Tromner, a farmer living in LaMoure county, disappeared. No one knew of his whereabouts, although the last seen of him he was with Villers. Some time after he disappeared. Villers went to the Tromner place, assaulted Mrs. Tromner and threw her in an old well, at the same time firing the barn. He thought no doubt he had killed the woman but she managed to crawl out of the well and crawled to the neighbors, stating what had been done. Villers was arrested and sentenced to nine and a half years in the penitentiary. After he had been in the institution for a year or so, a farmer plowing in the field, saw some bones that had evidently been thrown up by a badger. Further investigation disclosed the remains of a man who had been buried in the field, but in such a state of decay that identification was impossible except for some articles which had been buried with him and which were identified by Mrs. Tromner as having belonged to her husband. Suspicion was at once directed to Villers as having killed Tromner and buried his body there and an order was obtained from the district court of that district for the return of Villers from the state penitentiary for trial. He was tried for the murder of Tromner, found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment for life, being at the time of his death serving the life sentence. Villers was in his sixty-second year at the time of his death. A coroner's inquest will be held, as provided by law in the case of prisoners dying at the penitentiary. Villers is the second lifer to die in the last few months, the other having been Thomas Swidensky, who was convicted for the murder of Mrs. Kent at Mandan.