Explosions in Powder Mills.

Some Narrow Escapes-Why One Man Left the Business.

A writer in the New York Tribune, who began life as an employe in a pow-

der mill, says: Oue who has never looked upon the scene after a heavy mill has exploded cannot imagine the destruction involved in the immense force exerted by a ton or two of first-class powder. The first explosion after my connection with the works occurred in the packing house where the powder was being put in kegs for delivery to the government. It took place about 7 o'clock on a short December morning, just as I was eating my breakfast. A pane of glass from the window six feet away suddenly slapped the side of my head, and at the same time I heard and felt a tremendous report and heavy jar which made me think the world was coming to an end. Running out of doors 1 saw a heavy column of smoke shooting up in the air; all the tree tops in the vicinity of the building were full of burning powder bags which gave the scene a strangely weird look in the twilight of a dismal winter's morning. The only occupant of the mill was mind. The next morning just as I sat blown into a thousand pieces, the largest bit found being his left arm. These relics of poor humanity were scattered around in the woods for fully half a mile from the mill. At night when the coroner arrived to hold an inquest he asked for the corpse. Some one silently pointed to a peach basket placed on the stone wall; it was full of small pieces of flesh and bones, all that was left of a stalwart man. The victim's wife and daughter were in the house he had occupied not over 200 feet from the mill; the house was racked to pieces, but neither received a scratch, and the horse in the stable beside the house was found roaming around the yard unharmed.

The next explosion that I witnessed took place at noon of a July day. The hay in the yard about the mills had been cut and eight or ten men had been working around the corner mill all the forenoon drawing the hay away to the barn. At noon they went to dinner, and while they were eating the mill exploded, killing only its regular attendant. If it had occurred either an hour earlier or later eight or ten lives would have been lost. The mill stood on the bank of a pond about two acres in extent. The explosion forced the water completely out of the pond and over the dam, leaving nothing but the creek

running through the centre. Where the building had stood a pit was dug large enough to hold a two-story house. At one time a man was discharged from the works for neglect of duty. A fortnight after he met one of the employes in the village near and questioned him as to whether the men who worked at night were changed at the same hour as formerly. He was answered in the affirmative. That night about 11 o'clock I was awakened by a violent pounding on the door and a voice proclaiming that the office was on fire.' This building stood on a rather steep hill near. It was a combination house, picking up a pail of water on my Store. way. At the gate I met the foreman,a tall lank Yankee. 'That's right,' said be, 'hurry up and follow me!' He threw himself against the door and burst it open. There was the fire flaming in one corner of the carpenter shop. up and set on fire apparently with a slow match. As we entered the fire began to gather headway and burned up brightly. At that moment I hap- anywhere. pened to think that there were about two hundred kegs of powder stored in the room directly over the carpenter shop and that the floor between consisted only of loose boards laid down on the beams! My courage came near leaving me and I shouted to the foreman, who was before me: 'For God's sake, come back! There's powder overhead !' 'I know that,' said he coolly, 'but we must put out the fire. 'Taking off his coat, he threw it over the shavings and threw himself full length on top of it. At the same time he called out to me: 'Now throw on the water !' and I did it, thoroughly drenching him and checking the flames materially. By the time the other workmen came running up the fire was out. Turning and grasping me by the hand the brave Yankee exclaimed : 'I would not have entered this building in the face of such danger as threatened us for all the company is worth if I hadn't thought it was my duty.' Examination showed that the office had been robbed of several costly rifles and other things, and then the fire was started to hide the crime. Several days after the employe who had met the discharged workman on the day of the fire happened to remember about his interview with him and reported it. Two or three other suspicious circumstances were recalled. he was arrested, and all the stolen goods

prison for seven years. The last explosion I witnessed, and A PRI75 the one which finally led me to leave the hills, has a little ghost story connected with it which makes the incredulous laugh, but which nevertheless free a costly box of goods which will help you to more money right away than anything else in this world. All, of either sex, succeed from first hour. The broad road to fortune opens before the workers, absolutely sure. At once address, TRUE & Co., Augusta, Maine.

found in his room. He had robbed the

office and set fire to the building in 1e-

venge for his dismissal, little thinking

and perhaps little caring how many

lives might have been lost in conse-

quence. If the fire had not been dis-

covered at its start and had communi-

cated with the powder, the result would

have been terrible to the whole settle-

occurred just as I tell it. One evening in June I started for home about 10 o'clock. It was a bright moonlight night a uarrow causeway and over a bridge \$10.00 between two large ponds. The water looked inviting, and I concluded to take a swim all by myself; so I undressedeand plunged in. I had fihished my bath and was dressing to go home when I happened to look in the direction of Model '73, Central Fire one of the mills, only a part of the roof of which was visible from where I stood. As I looked at the mill I saw resting on the peak of the roof and facing directly toward me something that looked exactly like a human skull that had been coated with phosphorus and was all aflame. The empty eye sockets and the grinning jaws gave it a decidedly "hair raising" appearance, and I felt my heart going down toward my shoes in a decidedly lively manner. I stood and looked at it for fully ten minutes, not knowing whether to run or to stand my ground; I dared not go into the yard if I had felt inclined, as it was against the rules for those not on duty to enter. I finally went home, leaving the hideous object still glaring at me in the bright moonlight, and needless to say in a very unsettled state of down to breakfast there came a fearful explosion which shook the plaster all off the walls of the room and jammed one of the window sashes behind me over my head, breaking the glass all out of the sash and nearly stunning me. I jumped to my feet and started toward the door when there came another shock from another mill which had caught fire from the first. The mill where I had seen my "ghost" and to which I was going as soon as I had fin-

ADVICE TO MOTHERS.

ger on that occasion.

ished my breakfast had exploded and

ignited the second mill. The occupant

of the first mill was torn limb from

limb. I had been working with him

the day before in another part of the

yard and had said to him: 'I wouldn't

work in your mill for all the company

is worth,' 'Oh, pshaw!' he answered,

I would rather work there than any-

where else.' That was the last I saw

of him until I found his disfigured re-

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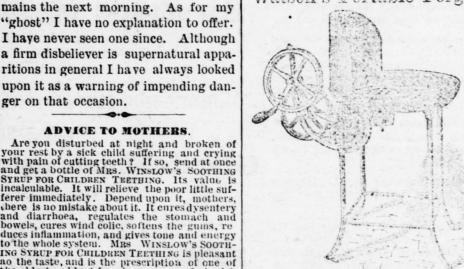
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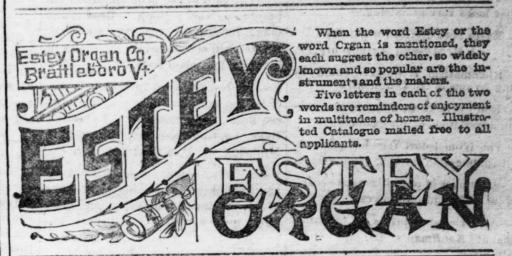


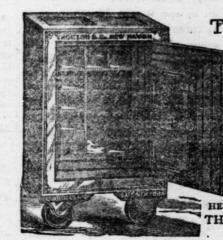
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