

FOREST FIRES

TOWNS WIPED OUT.—FOUR HUNDRED KILLED.

Appalling Loss of Life and Enormous Damage to Property Caused by Forest Fires Raging.

The town of Hinckley seventy-five miles from St. Paul on the St. Paul and Duluth road, with a population of 1,000 to 1,200, was wiped out of existence on Sunday night by a raging forest fire, which swept down on the doomed village. The smaller towns of Mission Creek and Pokegans, near Hinckley, were also wiped out.

The loss of life is variously estimated at from 100 to 400 and it is almost certain that the loss will equal 200. The death list increases every hour.

The vast valley between the Kettle river and Cross lake is laid waste, including several villages and settlements. Besides the towns that were reduced to ashes, farms were swept clean by the flames.

Whole families have been cremated. In some instances only one or two persons escaped from a neighborhood to tell of the destruction. The dead are being picked up by the score.

A passenger train was caught by the fires. Mrs. Lawrence, an escaped passenger says: The first evidence of the fire was noticeable about ten miles north of Hinckley when the air became almost suffocating. One mile north of Hinckley a number of persons, Mrs. Lawrence estimates the number at fifty, rushed toward the train screaming frantically. The engine, seeing the danger they were in if they remained, stopped the train to let them aboard. The heat became intense and the whole volcano of fire seemed to burst out in a mighty effort to wipe the train and its occupants off the face of the earth. Mrs. Lawrence, describing the scene said:

"At the first rush of the flames toward the cars the window panes went out with a crash and the train began to return toward Skunk Lake. People screamed and men jumped through the car windows. The wild panic was horrible. There was no humanity in it. Every fear-crazed person was for himself and they did not care how they got out of the swirling, rushing avalanche of flame. My dress caught fire but I extinguished the flames.

"I saw two Chinamen. They were paralyzed by fright and made no effort to get away but simply hid their heads under the seat and were burned to death. I stood it as long as I could and then I rushed out of the car, jumping over one or two persons who were lying on the ground injured. Some of the people jumped into Skunk lake, but I simply ran along the ties. The fire had burned away and after running until my strength gave out I fell down between the rails. I expected every moment that my dress would be burned from my body. I put out flames on my dress half a dozen times, and I had to hold my hands over the baby's face in order to keep it from suffocating."

Monday Mrs. Lawrence was picked up in the middle of the track about two miles north of Hinckley by a relief party from Duluth, which made the trip on a hand car.

Bulletins from the fire district show that damage by fire has not been exaggerated. Duluth reports that millions of dollars worth of property has been destroyed and that 300 lives were lost.

In Wisconsin the towns of Barabets, Granite Lake, Cumberland, Pineville, Comstock and Forest City have been burned. Seventy-five houses were destroyed at Shell Lake and Spooners is threatened.

The rain was pouring down in sheets at Hinckley. At the cemetery, a mile and a half from town, a half dozen men were digging a trench. A heap of bodies lay on a knoll in the middle of the cemetery. There were ninety-six naked bodies, men, women and children, scorched, blackened, distorted, bowels and brains protruding, heads clutched in their final agonies, hair singed from heads. Old, young, middle-aged, male and female, all in a promiscuous heap. In another corner of the cemetery were forty-five more bodies, covered with quilts. All were interred late that afternoon.

Never in the history of Minnesota and not at all in the life of the Northwest except at the time of the fires in the Michigan pineries in October, 1871, twenty-three years ago, has there been such a terrible loss of life and such suffering as has been caused by the forest fires of Sunday and Monday in northern Minnesota. While the property loss has not been so great in the aggregate, reaching at this time not over \$200,000 at the outside, the loss of life has been fearful. At a late hour Monday it was estimated that between 800 and 1,500 people had been burned to death or suffocated, and the wide discrepancy in these figures is but a proof of the utter impossibility of getting reliable information.

Saturday afternoon all wires went down and it was Sunday night before they were even partially replaced. Both telegraph companies had twenty-five miles of main lines destroyed. Soon after noon Saturday there sprung up a fierce wind that blew vast volumes of smoke into Duluth, while travelers against the wind soon had

their eyes filled with ashes and cinders. The air was as from a furnace even at the distance, seventy miles, from the nearest blazes of magnitude and the light of day was long before four o'clock completely obscured so that lights were turned on all over the city. Electricity, however, gave but a feeble blue glimmer.

Late Monday night news of the most startling character came in from the line of the eastern Minnesota road. The towns of Sandstone, Partridge and Mansfield, with a combined population of 1,600 people, were wiped out and the inhabitants were not to be found. The reports of fatalities in the towns on the Eastern are so fearful that the railroad officials refuse to announce them, believing them exaggerated.

Up to noon Monday the known dead were about 400. The full facts cannot be known until a thorough search has been made in the forty miles square of fire-swept forest. The loss of stock, horses, cattle and hogs will be total and the district was a famous dairy region. In many miles square every vestige of vegetable matter was entirely burned away, leaving broken rock covered by a few inches of ashes and dust.

It is now the generally accepted belief that many more people would have been saved at Hinckley had they gone to the river or stayed in the gravel pits, but every one was panic-stricken. Many who started for the gravel pit lost heart when they got there and pressed onward to the river and then many of the latter pressed on beyond the river to a neighboring swamp. All these latter lost their lives.

At one o'clock Monday afternoon a baggage car came up from Pine City loaded with provisions. The car was guarded by soldiers of the First regiment. The men who had been working since Sunday in the cemetery without food were first attended to. Then the crowd of homeless refugees who surged around the car were fed. Many of them had not eaten since noon last Saturday.

It is difficult to portray the situation at Hinckley. A few refugees, a half score of searchers, a team or two transporting boxes containing dead bodies, the place where a town had been—that is the picture.

The gravity of the situation from the forest fires continues to increase every hour. The long continued drought displays no signs of abatement while every morass adjacent to the city is aglow with flames. A dense cloud of smoke envelopes the country for many miles, obstructing business and offering constant menace to travel at Ishpeming, Mich. Dirt and ashes are falling in showers. The volunteer fire brigade is divided into convenient squads which are doing effective work.

Much credit is due to the railroad for its service to the suffering. Box cars are furnished and into them the household goods of the homeless are being taken. No one is yet reported missing from Ishpeming, but the rapid approach of the destructive element and the inflammable condition of vegetation covering the immediate surroundings, together with a vitiated atmosphere and a temperature registering at blood heat, cause the most profound solicitude.

While in Chicago, Mr. Charles L. Kahler, a prominent shoe merchant of Des Moines, Iowa, had quite a serious time of it. He took such a severe cold that he could hardly talk or navigate, but the prompt use of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy cured him of his cold so quickly that others at the hotel who had bad colds followed example and half a dozen persons ordered it from the nearest drug store. They were profuse in their thanks to Mr. Kahler for telling them how to cure a bad cold so quickly. For sale by W. M. Pealer, of Spring Mills and S. M. Swartz Tussayville.

A Prisoner's Daring Escape.

E. E. Buck, of Lewistown, who married the prettiest woman in Selinsgrove ten years ago and who in last May eloped with a seamstress, Miss Applebee, was arrested on Saturday. When the officer was en route with his prisoner to Lewistown, Buck, although handcuffed, jumped from the train while it was in motion at Adamsburg, and made good his escape in the mountains.

Buck was wanted on more than one serious charge. His wife and two small children are supporting themselves.

Union Co. Deaths.
In New Berlin, on the 20th of Aug., John Moyer, aged about 76 years.
In White Deer township, on the 15 of Aug., John L. Ranck, aged 71 years.
At Mazeppa, on the 19th of Aug., Simon Snyder, aged 85 years.
In East Buffalo township, on the 25th of Aug., John Wertz, aged 84 years.
In Lewisburg, on the 25th of Aug., Mary A., wife of Mr. Joseph L. Hawn, aged 71 years.

Resumed Work at Milton.

Several departments of the Milton car works resumed work Wednesday, giving employment to about 300 men. They are working on a contract of 600 gondolas for the New York, Susquehanna and Western railroad.

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A YOUNG GIRL'S FORTUNE.

AN INTERESTING SKETCH.

Nothing appeals so strongly to a mother's affection as her daughter just budding into womanhood. Following is an instance: "Our daughter, Blanche, now 15 years of age, had been terribly afflicted with nervousness, and had lost the entire use of her right arm. She was in such a condition that we had to keep her from school and abandon her music lessons. In fact, we feared St. Vitus dance, and are positive but for an invaluable remedy she would have had that terrible affliction. We had employed physicians, but she received no benefit from them. The first of last August she weighed but 75 pounds, and although she has taken only three bottles of Nervine she now weighs 104 pounds; her nervousness and symptoms of St. Vitus dance are entirely gone, she attends school regularly, and studies with comfort and ease. She has recovered complete use of her arm, her appetite is splendid, and no money could procure for our daughter the health Dr. Miles' Nervine has brought her.

When my brother recommended the remedy I had no faith in patent medicines and would not listen to him, but as a last resort, he sent us a bottle, we began giving it to Blanche, and the effect was almost immediate."—Mrs. R. R. Bullock, Brighton, N. Y.

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