

ACRES OF FLAMES.

A Tremendous Fire Along New York's River Front. Five Immense Buildings and Other Property Destroyed.

One of the biggest fires known in New York city for many years broke out in the Wilcox Lard Refinery, at the foot of West Fifty-ninth street at about 4 P. M. It destroyed the refinery, Rosset's stores and two immense grain elevators, with their covered wharves and connecting buildings and nearly half a million bushels of grain, besides a great quantity of flour, rosin, oil, lard and other commodities on storage. The loss was estimated to be \$4,000,000, partly covered by insurance.

It was the biggest fire, measured according to the standard of the insurance companies, upon which will fall the whole of the loss that New York has known of recent years.

Far into the night the flames raged with fury, throwing a lurid glare over the whole city and for miles into the surrounding country.

A spectacle of more appalling grandeur was never witnessed. The cries of fright of thousands of animals imprisoned in the pens of the great Union Stock Yards added to the horror of the scene.

The flames started in the Wilcox Lard Refining Company's massive five-story brick factory, at the foot of Fifty-ninth street.

Nearly one hundred laborers and a dozen clerks were at work in the factory at the time. In spite of their utmost exertions the flames gained rapidly, and after ten precious minutes had been wasted the men became panic stricken and fled from the building.

With a roar like an explosion the flames burst up from the cellar and rushed along the oil-soaked floor of the first story.

The police had turned in a second and third alarm, and the sound of engine bells was heard on every hand. Four trucks arrived just as the crowd discovered a man in one of the third-story windows. He screamed for help, and the crowd screamed and shouted. The firemen pulled a ladder off the truck and raised it to the window.

"Come down," yelled the fireman. The man made a feint of clambering on to the ladder, but he was filled with fear or his strength had left him.

"Come down!" shrieked the crowd. The man threw his leg over the sill, and, with each hand clasping the frame work, looked down at the crowd with staring eyes.

A tongue of flame in a heavy cloud of thick smoke burst out. The man would be burnt to death if he remained there much longer. A fireman ran up the ladder and gained his leg. He pulled as hard as he could, but the man hung back and the fireman retreated slowly, urging the man to follow him. Suddenly the man threw his hands in the air and leaped out. He fell on the sidewalk, and was smashed so badly that he died in a few minutes. He was Henry Benning, a laborer employed in the factory.

Within fifteen minutes after the fire started the flames reached a lot of wooden fences and shanties between the factory and the river and flashed across them to the New York Central pier at the foot of the street, known as Dock C. It was crammed with lard and oil awaiting shipment and the flames swept it from end to end with a rush.

At five o'clock the flames had gained full sway in Rosset's warehouse, and all eyes were turned anxiously on the big elevator.

At five minutes past five a little wreath of smoke curled up from the apex of the south-eastmost gable, and from 1000 throats went up the cry: "She's going!"

A moment later a red glow appeared within the topmost window beneath the gable end and it was evident that the elevator had caught fire in the timbers of the roof. No spark of flame communicated with it, but it simply became ignited upon the heat of the raging furnace a hundred feet away.

Like wildfire the flames crept along in the timbers behind the slated walk, peeping out here and there and breaking forth fiercely at the upper windows.

For three hours the firemen succeeded in keeping the flames from spreading further, but when the great walls of the storage house fell and left a mountain of burning ruins nearly as high as the flames had been, the heat was so intense that grain elevator "A," of the New York Central Railroad, 300 feet north, was so heated that it was impossible to keep it from catching fire. The building was 225 feet and 125 feet high.

While Elevator A was wrapped in flames from end to end, Chief Shay looked anxiously at Elevator B, near by, and sadly exclaimed: "I've done all I could do, but I'm afraid she'll have to go too!"

All the windows left his lips a huge blazing brand whirled through the air and fell on the roof near a skylight. Elevator B blazed, if possible, more rapidly than its companion.

Within six hours after the fire broke out the building in which it started, a freight pier at the foot of Fifty-ninth street, and a smaller storage pier, two great elevators, with the contents of all of them, had been absolutely destroyed, involving a loss in money of over \$4,000,000, and at least one life was lost.

The area of the fire is greater than that of any other fire that has occurred in New York for many years. The space burned over measures 300 feet along the river front from Fifty-ninth street to Sixty-fifth street, a quarter of a mile. Nothing in the course of the fire escaped. Piers, sheds and outhouses between the larger buildings were burned up so rapidly that people who saw them disappear were astonished.

All the buildings destroyed were the property of the New York Central Railroad Company. Chief of them was the huge building, 200 feet high and covering almost a full block of land, known as Grain Elevator A, but often referred to as "The Pride of the New York Central."

Each elevator was 125 feet high, 375 feet long and about 50 feet wide. They were twelve years old and stored with nearly half a million bushels of grain as dry as powder. The immense surface they presented to the heat induced a degree of temperature inside of them which made the spontaneous combustion of their contents certain.

Over five hundred thousand persons, according to the estimates made by veteran police officers, visited the scene of what is now known as the great North River fire between the hours of four o'clock in the afternoon and ten o'clock at night.

A DEADLY MELEE.

Four Men Killed in a Fight Between Guards and Boomers.

A dispatch from Fort Smith, Ark., says: The rush for Oklahoma is diminishing rapidly. Great destitution is sure to follow, and it is not unlikely that governmental relief will be invoked to provide for sufferers.

Word has been received of a conflict between parties of boomers, cattle men and Chickasaw police at the ford at Chisholm's cattle trail, forty miles west of Oklahoma City. The cattle men were taking several hundred animals from Frank Colbert's ranch, in the Chickasaw Nation, to Kansas, but the mounted police guarding the southern border of Oklahoma refused to permit them to use the Chisholm trail leading through the new territory.

A fight ensued in which the cattle men were reinforced by a party of boomers from Cooke and Panning Counties, Texas. One of the guards, two cattle men and one boomer, named Gots, were killed in the melee.

DENNIS T. ELYN is the name of the man who will enjoy the honor of being the first bona fide white settler in the new Territory of Oklahoma. Mr. Elyn is a former resident of Buffalo, N. Y. He is a young Irish American, twenty-eight or thirty years of age, who drifted West a decade ago to grow up with the country.

LATER NEWS.

By the will of William J. Syms, a wealthy New York wholesale gun dealer, \$550,000 was left to Roosevelt Hospital to build and endow an operating theatre.

THERE were two cases of sunstroke in Pittsburg, Penn. Thermometer registered 82 degrees.

THREE children of Nathan Powell, of Miners' Mills, Penn., died of typhoid fever within a few hours of each other.

THE 114th anniversary of the battle of Lexington, Mass., was celebrated. About two hundred persons partook of an old-fashioned breakfast served in Massachusetts Hall.

SYLVESTER GRUBB, the murderer of Gertie Downey, has been hanged in the jail yard at Vincennes, Ind.

ABRAHAM W. MARSHALL, a leading citizen and office holder of Lumberton County, W. Va., formerly one of the richest men in his section, blew out his brains with a shotgun in the presence of his wife.

THE steambot Everet, a lumber raft boat, was sunk at the head of Otter Island, Iowa, and five of the sixteen persons on board were drowned.

FIVE Mormon missionaries who had formed a colony in Dale County, Ala., to go to Utah, were severely whipped by indignant citizens and driven from the county.

MALACHI ALLEN, a one-eyed colored man, and James Mills, half Indian and half colored, were hanged at Fort Smith, Ark. Allen was convicted of murdering Shadrach Peters and Silas Love in the Chickasaw Nation, and Mills killed John Windom, in the Seminole reservation.

FURTHER appointments by President Harrison are: Selon W. Stocking, of Onondaga, N. Y., to be an Examiner-in-Chief in the Patent Office; Ralph W. Wheelock, of Mitchell, Dakota, to be Receiver of Public Moneys at Mitchell, Dakota; Harrison Kelley, of Jacksonville, Oregon, Receiver of Public Moneys at Drewsey, Oregon; James R. Hayden, of Olympia, Washington Territory, Receiver of Public Moneys at Seattle, Washington Territory; Morris B. Wickersham, of Alabama, to be Attorney of the United States for the Southern District of Alabama.

ROBERT McCORMICK, of Chicago, has been appointed Second Secretary of Legation at London. Mr. McCormick is a son-in-law of Joseph Medill, editor of the Chicago Tribune.

THE annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington has ended.

At an auction sale of Secretary of the Navy Tracy's trotters in New York ninety-nine horses brought \$112,969, an average of \$1141.

JOHN AND MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM, aged nine and five years respectively, sons of a Spratt Hill (Penn.) miner, ate wild parsnips and died an hour or two later.

AFTER a lingering illness Henry George Pearson, Postmaster of New York city, died at Highland, N. J., at the home of his father-in-law, ex-Postmaster-General Thomas L. James. He was born in 1842 and had been Postmaster of New York for eight years.

DON SEBASTIAN LERDO DE TEJADA, ex-President of Mexico, has died in New York city of bronchitis and pleurisy. Ex-President Lerdo had lived there in retirement since 1876, when he left Mexico on account of political troubles. He was born in Jalapa April 25, 1825.

SEVERAL heavy veins of copper have just been discovered on farms in Wayne County, Penn., and farmers in that section of the State are greatly excited.

THE New Jersey Legislature adjourned sine die.

TWO men were killed and three injured in the wreck of a mixed train near Berwick, Ill.

FIREST fires in the interior of Wisconsin destroyed East Deperé and Buckabe, both lumbering towns, and did considerable damage to Marion. Loss about \$1,000,000.

A FIRE at Denn's Hotel, a cheap lodging house at Detroit, Mich., caused the death of three men and serious injury to a fourth.

MRS. A. H. LUCAS, her two daughters and a hired man were attempting to ford a swollen creek two miles below Carthage, Mo., in a wagon, when the rushing water carried them down stream, drowning the horses and whole party.

THE trouble between the Minneapolis Street Railway Company and its 600 and odd striking employes culminated in a bloody riot, in which upwards of fifty persons, including thirty policemen, were more or less injured, two fatally. The rioters were clubbed into submission.

SIR JULIAN PAUNCEFOOT, the new British Minister to the United States, has arrived in Washington.

DR. HAMILTON, Surgeon General of the Marine Hospital Service, says there will be another general yellow fever scourge in Florida this season, and that there are evidences of it already at Jacksonville and Tampa.

WITH the application of the Civil Service rules to the railway mail service there will be a total of 37,300 offices of the Government; under these rules, the list including the departmental, customs, postal and railway mail service.

GENERAL BOULANGER was warned that he must leave Belgium of his own accord or the Government would expel him. He decided to go to London.

A PARTY of Soudanese attacked and defeated some Egyptians who were building a fort at Port Halaib, Egypt. The Egyptians lost ten killed and wounded.

LORD BROMLOW will succeed Lord Londonderry as Viceroy of Ireland.

THE FATTEST WOMAN DEAD.

Death of Hannah Battersby, the Freak Weighing 800 Pounds.

Mrs. Hannah Battersby, said to be the largest woman in the world, died a few days ago at her home in Frankford, a suburb of Philadelphia. She had been ailing for several weeks. Mrs. Battersby was born in Vermont in 1843, and was of normal size until her twelfth year.

Then she began to develop, and at seventeen years of age she weighed 500 pounds. She married John Battersby, who traveled with her, exhibiting himself "as the greatest living skeleton." Mrs. Battersby, at the time of her marriage, weighed 685 pounds, and of late years her managers have claimed that she weighed 800 pounds.

A BOGUS KING.

How a Californian Governs One of the Aleutian Islands.

A Washington special says: A very pretty little story, which promises to develop an interesting trial, comes to Washington from Alaska. It is to the effect that about three years ago a man named McPherson sailed from San Francisco, and eventually landed on one of the Aleutian Islands, off the coast of Alaska.

Mr. McPherson's entire outfit consisted of a suit of clothes, an American flag, together with a paper purporting to have been signed by Attorney-General Garland, appointing him United States Commissioner. As soon as he landed on the island he raised the American flag with a great deal of ceremony, took command of 600 natives and compelled them to address him as King McPherson. Each season he exacted heavy tribute.

Things went along very smoothly until a few months ago, when reports states that he had some difficulty with three of his subjects, and, fearing that there might be a mutiny, he determined to dispose of all those who did not bow to his authority.

He arrested three recalcitrant Aleuts, tried them by court martial, and sentenced them to be hanged. He carried out the sentence, Somehow or other, a report of McPherson's rule reached the Treasury Department, and a special agent was sent to his island to investigate the matter.

The agent recently reported the facts to Secretary Windom substantially as they are given above. Now it is said that a revenue cutter will be sent to the island for the purpose of arresting McPherson. It is the intention of the authorities to bring him to San Francisco and try him for murder.

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SERGEANT JASPER.

Ships of England roll at anchor, stately ships from o'er the sea, Bode at anchor in the sunshine, two by two and three by three.

From Fort Moultrie came an answer to the summons they had sent; "No surrender; we await you for the battle well content."

Old Fort Moultrie, dark and gloomy, with its ramparts low and low, Over which the patriot banner flapped defiance to the foe.

Admiral Sir Peter Barker looked toward the fort and laughed; "We can break down their defenses with the weakest of our craft."

What care I for wooden breastworks of palmetto, or of pine? Bid the ships prepare for action; let the Bristol lead the line!"

And from noonday until sunset smoke of battle sought the sky; From the land and from the water groans and curses rose on high;

While in Charleston, stricken Charleston, queenly town beside the sea, For their loved ones, their defenders, wives and mothers bent the knee.

'Mid the fiercest of the conflict, crash of shot and shriek of shell, Suddenly the flagstaff parted and Fort Moultrie's banner fell.

Who will raise the fallen banner? In the trenches there it lies— And the man who ventures thither for his daring surely dies.

Sergeant Jasper, child of glory, whom the world will not forget, Caught the rammer of his cannon, sprang upon the parapet;

Raised the soiled and ragged banner, 'mid the tumult and the strife, With as careful touch and tender as it were a thing of life;

Lashed it to the cannon rammer, proudly sought his post again; While above him and around him flew the shower of iron rain;

From that staff the flag of Jasper floated till the fight was done; Till the gallant Carolinians had the battle bravely won.

Then his comrades gathered round him, caught their hero by the hand— "We will follow at your bidding, we will give you chief command!"

In the name of God and justice, where the flags of battle wave, Who so worthy to be leader as the bravest of the brave?"

Said the hero of the fight: "Can I read? or can I write? Give the leadership to me! One who knows not A from C? My good friends, it shall not be. As I am I keep my stand. Till these English leave the land."

And the man who served so well When the flagstaff snapped and fell, In the glorious days of yore Died a Sergeant, nothing more.

—John E. Tyler, in *Atlanta Constitution*.

AN ADVENTURE IN MEXICO.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

Twelve thousand dollars was a big sum to carry on one's person in such a lawless country as Mexico, at the time of which I speak—when they were running the first railway through from Pas del Norte to the capital.

For then the country was overrun with desperadoes of every description, of which horse thieves and desperate adventurers of all kinds were only the milder types. The diligencia was "held up" about once a month, and quite frequently the driver was in collusion with the road agents, or "banditti," as they called them.

It was this latter fact, in part, which led me to make my journey from Orvieto to Pachuca—then the temporary terminus of the railway—on horseback, though a desire to see something of this most romantic part of the beautiful country had some influence upon my decision.

I was then the paymaster for this division, and was conveying the amount of which I told you to the general superintendent at the terminus, with instructions to get it there as soon as possible—a strike having been threatened among the Mexican laborers. And so, mounted on a tough little horse of the mustang breed, I set out with my money in a small valise strapped to the saddle and hidden from view by an old-fashioned cloak it was my fancy to wear while traveling.

Well, if you have ever been in Mexico, you can readily understand how delightful a horseback journey must be at the pleasant time of the year through some of the most charming scenery in the world.

The road wound through fertile valleys and between lofty mountain ridges, past coffee and sugar plantations and beautiful haciendas belonging to the wealthier residents. Here and there were picturesque villages nestled at the base of the lofty hills, while far away against the clear blue sky were the twin peaks of Popocatepetl and Iztacchualt, covered with perpetual snow.

Nothing of special interest happened till the third day, when I reached the little hamlet of Tampasca, some thirty miles from Pachuca, my destination. My horse was beginning to flag a bit, and, desirous of giving him a rest, I resolved to lay by for the rest of the day, if I could find proper accommodations, and finish my journey upon the morrow.

But a wretched pulqueria, or drinking house of the lowest order, was the only stopping place I could find. And the sinister appearance of the half dozen brigandish looking vaqueros and caballeros lounging about the entrance decided me that this at least was no safe place for an American with twelve thousand dollars in gold in his possession to stay—even long enough to bait his horse.

As I sat in my saddle debating what was best to do under the circumstances, a mounted horseman rode slowly past. He exchanged quick glances. I saw at once that he was a European born—a dark, smooth, keen visaged man, with a pair of intensely black and glittering eyes, which seemed to bore one through like a gimlet.

Reining up his horse, he lifted his wide brimmed hat courteously. "I beg your pardon," he said, "but I see you are an American and a stranger as well. Else" —lowering his voice—"you would hardly be seeking refreshments for man and beast" in this hole, where the brigand Manuel Sperros makes his headquarters whenever he happens this way."

Now, I had heard of this Manuel since coming to Mexico, and as you may be assured, had no desire to meet him, particularly with such a sum of money in my possession. And, as briefly as possible, I explained the situation, giving my new acquaintance, who introduced himself as John Gordon, to understand that I was taking an equestrian trip through this particular section simply from a freak of my own.

"You will come home with me," he said at once. "My hacienda is small, but I can at least make you comfortable, and a countryman of my own is a perfect godsend."

Overruling my protestations, which I confess were rather faint, Gordon, with gentle insistence, led the way; and as we rode slowly through the outskirts of the village, he told me by snatches something of his personal history, which I found extremely interesting, though of course far too long to give in anything like detail.

It is sufficient for the purposes of this story to say that after a decidedly checkered existence he had drifted to Mexico, where he wooed and won a Spanish lady of impoverished family, owning a small estate in the suburbs of Tampasca, which he had inherited at her death.

By the time Mr. Gordon had concluded what he had to say concerning himself we had reached his home—a small adobe building, completely embowered in the foliage of a tropical climate. A ragged half-breed took charge of our horses, and after the usual meal of frioles, with a salad, and a peppery stew prepared by the old crone, who acted as Gordon's housekeeper, we repaired to the veranda with our cigars.

Without any exaggeration, I think my host was one of the most entertaining men I have ever met before or since. He would seem to have been everywhere and seen everything during a decidedly varied life. And he told story after story of wild adventure, which might or might not have been true. I believed them implicitly, for I was comparatively young then, and had not the lack of faith in human veracity which has come with advancing years. Gradually he changed the conversation to myself and my own personal concerns. And so skillfully did he do this, that before I knew it he drew out of me not only my real business, but the nature of my errand to Pachuca, as well as what were the contents of the small valise I was so jealously guarding.

"Twelve thousand dollars is more money than I should care to travel with in these parts, especially when Manuel Sperros is in the vicinity," he said, shrugging his shoulders. "But of course you go armed. It is a duty you owe to both yourself and those whose money you have in your keeping."

With what I now fancy was something of a flourish, I pulled out a serviceable double-barreled pistol.

"I keep this always within reach by day and night," was my reply, with the lofty manner peculiar to youth.

Gordon nodded approvingly, and I went on: "What sort of a—a person, in looks more particularly, is this bold highwayman?" I asked, half scoffingly. For, to tell the truth, I regarded the stories I had heard of the exploits of the then celebrated bandit as being highly colored after the true Mexican fashion. And, in fact, I had no great amount of faith in the courage of the Mexican highwayman any way.

Gordon tossed away the stump of his cigar and lighted another before replying: "Well," he said slowly, "I suppose I have seen him in disguise hanging about the pulqueria in town—in fact, I am perfectly sure I have. He is a man about my size and build, with a heavy beard and mustache and rather sharp black eyes. He speaks both Spanish and English fluently, and I believe prides himself on never having shed human blood during a rather remarkable career, in which he has set the Mexican authorities completely at defiance, despite the price they have put on his head. There is a story," Gordon went on after a momentary hesitation