# The Sickle Of Fire.

By CHARLES KELSEY GAINES.

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It is a fact not generally known, outside strictly scientific circles at least, that there exists an element (jechni-cally called hydropyrogen, kymbol Hp) possessing qualities of such a nature that its more abundant produc-tion, or any recklessness in use, might imperil the human race. Happily, in its pure state, in which alone it is dan-gerous, this substance is very rare; indeed, only one specimen is now known to exist, and that is kept hermetically scaled in thick class. scaled in thick glass. Its name never appears in the ordinary text books— for prudential reasons. There are more of these formidable

secrets in the laboratories of our biol-ogists and chemists that most people ogists and chemists that most people suspect. Few, until very recently, were aware that in a frail glass tube, not too scrupulously guarded, in the very heart of the great American me-tropolis, there are living, malignant germs of Asiatic cholera, which, if set free, might cause an epidemic that would cost millions of lives. And there are other things in that lockless cab-inct quite as bad. There exist, also, poisons, the formulae for which are poisons, the formulae for which are never published, and explosives that no chemist dare compound save in the minitest quantities. Many of these things are altogether unknown to the ordinary student; only the well tried specialist has knowledge of them. But to return to hydropyrogen. It

is obtained, but only with the greatest difficulty, from the smoke products of a certain kind of sen-weed. Even in this the element is not always present. Out of a hundred specimens incinerated and analyzed, ninety-nine would prob-ably show no trace of it; and when it does occur, few are the chemists able to detect, much less separate it—a most

fortunate circumstance. Hydropyrogen, as developed from this sea-weed when burned under the action of an electric current (Tesla's) of the highest tension, is an almost impulpable gas—the lightest yet dis-covered. It diffuses rapidly, and easily permeates every known substance ex-cent indurated glass. When subjected to a process similar to that by which to a process similar to that by which other gases are liquefied—a combination of tremendous pressure with extreme cold—it suddenly solidities, falling in a heap of stender, needle-like crystals of a vivid ruby color. This experiment has been successfully problem there is the content of the carried through only three times, crystals thus obtained may be served for almost any length of time served for almost any length of time, provided they are kept absolutely free from moisture; hence they are scaled in heavy tubes of indurated glass. In the darkness these crystals gleam with a fiery, quivering phosphorescence, comparable only to the shifting colors sometimes seen in the aurora borealis. Indeed, it is probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature below as a probably of the same essential vature.

sential nature, being caused by induced currents streaming through the vacu-um tubes in which this unstable and intensely energetic agent is eneased.

I have said that hydropyrogen is dangerous to the safety of the world. This is due to its extraordinary effect in de-compasing and inflaming water. Not that it is difficult to decompose water-that is done every day by familiar processes; but there is no other agent which exhibits so terrible a notency-no other which so defies control.

Its action may be explained by a familiar illustration. A child sets on end a line of dominoes, separated by spaces of about an inch. He pushes over the nearest, and the whole line goes down with a swift crash, each unbalancing fessor. And we ran as if hell had the next till all are failen. Just so with a series of molecules; the dissolution of one breaks up those next adjacent. when once the action is started. Such is the operation of all explosives, and of many poisons—e. g., snake venous. There seems to be scarcely any limit to the effect which may be produced



CRAZY WITH PAIN AND TERROR WE PLUNGED DOWN THE SLOPE.

by an infinitesimal portion of the disturbing agent, providing it has a con-tinuous field of suitable material on

which to act.

How fearful may be the effect of hydropyrogen if indiscreetly used, no living man can testify as I can. Why do I tell the story? Because some vague hints have already reached the public through certain Canadian parage. If perspired under the raining spray: it seemed to me that the floor on which I lay was growing warmer. I vague hints have already reached the it seemed to me that the floor on public through certain Canadian pawhich I lay was growing warmer. I pers; and if the matter is to be agitated laved my hand in the running water. read in full.

It occurred only a few months ago.

# A WORD IN YOUR EAR

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I had been studying for several years under Prof. O. D. McKazy, the discover-er of hydropyrogen, and the only man who has ever succeeded in producing the crystals. I had asisted him in his the crystals. I had asisted him in his experiments—often a trying ordeal—and was deep in his confidence. We had already used the crystals on the contents of a large tank in an enclosed court, with startling results. The professor now wished to experiment on a much larger scale — which could be done with safety only in an uninhabited region. He had heard of a small lake suitable for the purpose, in British America, among the mountains near the Pacific coast; and thither we proceeded.

Our journey, though not without hardship, was accomplished without mis-chance. We encamped, with our Indian guides, about two miles from the lake. guides, about two miles from the take, which we first visited by day to make sure of the trail. Then at night, leaving our Indians—whom we never saw afterward — we stole with feverish eagerness through the black darkness of the evergreen, and at last emerged on the ledges that overhung the lake.

It hay at some depths below, banked with cliffs on every side, reflecting the black sky and the sparkling stars. Nearly opposite a little white cascade drew a broad chalk-mark down the dusky wall, and we could faintly hear its chilly dashings. The place was like a well, and it was said to have no out-bat.

Dropping upon our hands and knees we crept out on a jutting bluff, and the professor tossed down a pebble. The splash shattered the reflected sky; then its stars returned, but waved and blinked as the ripples circled outward.
With great precaution the professor
now broke the tube containing the crystals, and hastily cast it down after
the pebble. As it reached the surface,
along with the solash a faint hiss was
and talk. For an instant fiery worms audible. For an instant fiery worms wriggled and darted about. Then a little ruby cloud appeared in the water. It grew till it glowed like the sunset.

A seething sound was heard, and we perceived that the hue was caused by an infinitude of little fiery bubbles; and as they rose and burst, a pale blue



STRANGE APE-LIKE FIGURE WAS THERE BESIDE ME.

flame began to play above the water, Pale, but hot-horribly hot. feel its withering blast even where we stood. It mounted higher; it towered

opened at our feet. Even so, our delay had well-nigh cost our lives. Breathless, scorched, shuddering, we reached the brow of

the mountain. Here we lay flat, and shielding our faces peered back over shot wine; the whole lake was seething

like a caldron. The rocky walls shone ruddy with the reflection—or, was it possible that they were growing red with the heat? The blue flames united from all parts of the zurface, and rose to the sky in a tall, faint, wavering col-umn, much like the flame of an algohol lamp—but half a mile high. And the heat—oh! the heat was blinding. Our flesh was blistered; the

very hair upon our heads was crinkling. burning. Crazy with pain and terror we rolled down the slope, leaped, ran, plunged, fell, and at last brought up in a deep ravine near the foot of the mountain, where a considerable stream gushed from a cavern. How cool and comforting its plashing seemed! We now lay in the shadow of the

hill; but just over our heads streamed the blue light and consuming ardor of that flery column from which we had fled, glinting upon the rocks and with-ering the scanty vegetation for miles around. We saw acres of stunted evergreen below us, shrinking, crisp-ing to tinder in that inordinate glow: then the dry needles sparkled and here and there a tree spouted up a fountain of red flame. Soon the whole forest was ablaze beyond us, and our ravine

was in shadow no longer.

Then we crept back into the cavern of the roaring stream, far under the mountain, finding precarious foothold by the margin of the water, till at last only a faint glow showed the opening by which we had entered. Here the rugged roof vaulted higher, and was lost in darkness. We sunk prone on a shelf of rock beside the gurgling tor-

rent; the spray dashed over our aching limbs, and we found relief. But the place was full of noises, Not merely the voice of the pouring waters that mouned and echoed everywhere. More and more frequent came rumblings, followed by a sound like heavy thunder, and a tremor as if the mountain shuddered to its roots, Doubt-less the raging furnace above was

warning lesson should be but jerked it back with a cry; the stream was scalding hot. A ruddy stream was scalding hot. A ruddy sparkle seethed in its current; the vault above me was becoming faintly vis-ible; as I gazed, the fantastic cavern dome grew rosy as the morning sky.
With a scream of terror I sprang toward the entrance; a great light flamed behind me; a strong gust of fire and wind swept me onward, till I found myself fallen on the bank of the ra-vine outside. A pale blue blow-pipe flame went hissing past me. With it came shrieks of agony more terrible than all the groanings of the tormented hill—shrieks of human anguish—and a strange ape-like figure was flung beside me and lay writhing. It was the professor, my friend, but seared and branded almost beyond recognition. His clothing was burned away; of his straggling locks and black silky beard not a hair remained. His long arms twitched, and his slender fingers clutched the parched, crumbling moss

as he lay in pain inexpressible. Thus science had rewarded her most gifted

#### RAILROAD NOTES.

Paul Wadsworth has been appointed general freight agent of the Delaware and Hudson Canal road, vice James Calhoun, resigned.

Northern Central Railroad comnear Newark, Wayne county, and will open an extensive yard there. The car pany has bought thirty acres of land now at Canandaigua will be re-

Hereafter the Big Four transportation department will rate its engines by tons hauled, not by cars to the train, as heretofore. On the Chicago division. the company's standard engine will be rated to haul 900 tons.

Workmen in the shops of the Van-dalia company are now furnished cards on which to note the number of hours they are employed on any certain job. This is the preliminary step to the introduction of piece work.

The British Columbia legislature has decided to refuse to entertain the proposition of the British Pacific Railway company. The company agreed to construct a line on condition that the province granted a subsidy of \$6,000,000 and a land grant of 20,000 acres per mile. Premier Turner, in a letter to the company, states that, in view of the present financial position of the company's proposals, his government cannot accept the terms offered.

East bound all-rail shipments of dead Fast bound all-rail supplied to dead freight from Chicago last week were 87,563 tons, against 90,372 in the week preceding and 55,421 for the correspond-ing week in 1895. Of this the St. Paul carried 9,493 tons, Wabash, 6,690, Lake carried 3.485 tons, wabash, a.689, Landshore 11,450, Fort Worth 8,128, Pan Handle 7,789, Baltimore and Ohio 6,289, C. & G. T. 12,171, Nickel Plate 6,152, C. & E. 15,741, Big Four 2,650. Shipments of flour were 3,539 tons, against 3,911 in the preceding week; of wheat 10,733, against 16,897; of corn 15,952, against 13,586; affoat 20,241, against 17,022.

It is said the American Railway union has adopted an entirely new method of procedure. It is now a close corporation and communication is to be made from one member to another by signs and ciphers. Men are detailed to pass the word in each union. There will be no more public meetings. It is expected that by the new method information can be given while the members are on their way to or from work, or when at the bench, lathe or telegraph instru-ment. President Debs claims the order now has 158,000 members.

Railroad men in the west are strongly in favor of the recommendation made by the Illinois railroad and warehouse commissioners regarding legislation against the building of "wild-cat" roads in territory that is already gridroned. The commissioners advocate passage of a law that will prohibit it. This would tend to relieve the roads already in existence of unnecessary com-petition, and would also prevent speculators from building little lines for the sole purpose of unloading them on the larger ones, w.o. are forced to purchase them at a good price to save their busi-

The pooling agreement entered into by the western roads on freight traffic at the beginning of the year is not working as satisfactorily as it might, and the roads are in all sorts of trouble The chief difficulty is that there are so many roads that are not in the pooling agreement that the roads which are members of it are compelled continually to cut rates in order to get business. This practice is destroying the percentages or which the roads are working, diminishing their receipts and making it impossible generally for them to keep the strict letter of their agreement. It is likely that a meeting of all the roads will soon be called to see whether or not matters cannot be put on a more satisfactory basis.

It appears that a company has been Wilkes-Barre and tween Harvey's Lake, and that the line which Engineer Wright has been laying through this place is the location for the new road. The name of the company is the Wilkes-Barre and Northern Railroad company, and among the incorporators are Chas.
D. Foster, Andrew Hunlock, John B.
Reynolds, Alexander Farnham, E.
Troxel and H. W. Kalish, all of WilkesBarre. The line as located joins the Delaware, Lackawanna and Westerr end of Luzerne and extends to Harvey's Lake, but the terminal at the lake has not, it is said, been definitely determined upon. Whether it is intended to build the road from Wikes-Barre city or only from the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western on the West Side is not known, but it is thought the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western road will be depended upon for a freight connection, which will be a very good one, and that the street cars to Luzerne will provide the facilities for landing passengers at the Square in Wilkes-Barre,—Dallas

### INDUSTRIAL.

Pittston Gazette: Civil engineers have been at work laying out the grounds for a new breaker at No. 6 shaft of the Pennsylvania Coal company. Nos. 5 and 11 shafts, which now empty their coal into No. 6 breaker, have already been sunk to the lower yein, and as the coal is not as clean as formerly, it necessitates a more modern breaker. For this reason the proposed new breaker is to be erected. It will

## SMALLER THAN USUAL



-lilliputian, in fact, are Doctor Pierce's Pleasant Peliets. Dr. R. V. Pierce, Chief Consulting Surgical Institute, of Buffalo, N. Y., was the first to in-troduce a Little Pill American

thartic purposes these sugar-coated "Pellets" are superior in a great many ways to all mineral waters, sedlitz powders, ways to all inneral waters, seditiz powders, salts, castor oil, fruit syrups, laxative teas, and other purgative compounds. Made of concentrated vegetable, ingredients, they act in a mild, natural way. Their secondary effect is to keep the liver active and the bowels regular, not to further constipate, as is the case with other pills. They don't interfere in the least with the diet, habits or occupation, and produce no sain gring. or occupation, and produce no pain, grip-ing or shock to the system.

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of their superior excellence, it can be truthfully said, that they are always adopted as a household remedy after the first trial. Put up in glass vials, therefore always fresh and reliable.

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They are tiny, sugar coated granules; any child will readily take them. Once votery.
Yet even in that supreme moment he was not forgetful. "Twas the outlet!" he grasped. "The ferment has worked through. Oh, my God! Run! Cut off the stream or the world is lost."

(To be continued.)

any child will readily take them. Once used, always in fator.

Accept no substitute that may be recommended to be "just as good." It may be better for the dealer; because of paying him a better profit, but he is not the one who needs help.

he located in the field rear of the Rosencrance farm. Until the new breaker is completed, the coal will be run through the old one as usual. It is also the in-Superior Face Bleac tention in the near future to widen and sink No. 6 shaft to the lower vein

The Hall system to secure the safety of trains was put in operation on the Lenigh Valley railroad between Mauch Chunk and Allentown at noon on Sat-urday. It operates on the same plan as the block system of the Pennsylvania raliroad. After one train is out of the block another is allowed to go in, but must run slowly for a certaintime. The company spent thousands of dollars in the construction of the system, and it is believed collisions on the road will seldom be beard of the train of the system. will seldom be heard of. It is the in-tention of the company to extend the system over all divisions of the road from New York to Buffalo.

Canastota, N. Y., will, for a time at Canastota, N. Y.,will, for a time at least, be the distributing point for the eastern and northern coal trade of the Lehigh Valley railroad. The company is making arrangements for large shipments of coal over the Elmira. Cortland and Northern division. Several extra trains will be placed on the road for this purpose. They will be run nights, so as not to interfere with the regular traffic on the road.

the regular traffic on the road.

A reduction of 2½ cents has been made in the coal rate for the West Virginia district, making the present rate \$1.05.

#### ETHEL WAS BRIGHT.

She Discusses a Question Which Annoyed Her Big Sister Greatly.

From The Pittsburg Dispatch. She is an observing little mortal and she knows her own mind. She has been subjected to all the osculatory annov ances that pretty children have to put up with, and she is heartily sick of them as the average child usually is. Everyone seems to feel that he or she has a license to kiss a pretty child in This world without giving the least thought to the rights of the child in the

The little girl, however, has noticed that no such inflictions is imposed upon her older sister, and it has made her jealous. "Mamma," she said one day, "I wish

was big. "How big?" As big as Mamie," she replied, referring to her sister.

"Why?" inquired the mother.
"Cause Mamie has a lot better time than I do. Everybody doesn't want to

"How do you know they don't?" "Well, she don't have to let 'em, anyway, if she don't want to." "Are you sure about that?" asked the mother somewhat amused.

"Course I am. She can talk right back to anyone who kisses her and it ain't impolite at all, but if I did I'd be punished. "Ethel," broke in Mamie, with a

warning shake of her head.
"Well, you can," protested Ethel,
"and it ain't fair. All the old grannies don't even try to kiss you like they do me—only the nice-looking young men, and you can send them about their business if you want to. I guess I heard you tell that man with the black moustache, who was here last night, that he ought to be ashamed of himself and you know what would happen to me if I said anything like that just be-cause somebody kissed me."



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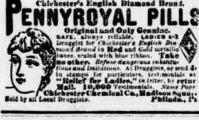
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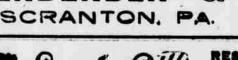
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