

# A TERRIBLE EXPLOSIVE.

## THE WORK OF NITRO-GLYCERINE IN THE OIL REGIONS.

### Almost Total Disappearance of Men Who Have Been Blown Up by the Compound—Curious Facts.

"If there is anything that is well-known in the oil country," said a well-known oil operator, "it is the terribly mysterious feature of nitro-glycerine explosions—the almost complete annihilation of matter, especially of the human body, which in a majority of cases results from a fatal explosion of this deadly compound. There is not an operator in the whole region that cannot recall more than one illustration of it. I had a teamster named Franco once in my employ. Like all men of his class in the oil country, there was nothing either above, below, or on the earth that he feared. He was in the habit of carrying nitro-glycerine to any well he wanted. Another employe of mine who helped Franco was quite as reckless as the teamster was. They became so careless in handling the explosive that other workmen would not stay in the place if they knew Franco was coming there with glycerine. These two men actually used to unload the stuff as they would unload a lot of bricks, Franco standing on the wagon and throwing a can to his companion some feet away, and the latter catching it and placing it on the ground in time to catch the next can. As it takes a man with a good set of nerves even to ride in a wagon where he knows there is nitro-glycerine under the seat, this manner of handling a compound that frequently explodes under the slightest jar will give an idea of what sort of nerves those two men had. Each one knew that if Franco's helper missed catching a can there would be enough left of them to cover the bottom of a snuff box, but they had the daring to take the chance.

"No one ever knew what caused it, and no one would have ever known who it was that wiped out of existence except for the fact that we all knew who it was that was coming that way with nitro-glycerine just at that time. When we heard the explosion down the road that day there was only one remark made.

"That's Franco's last trip!"

"The glycerine had exploded about a quarter of a mile from the well. We walked there, and found the usual hole that a few cans of the stuff always dig when it goes off and the usual lot of splintered timbers. Three hundred feet off to the right of the road, in the woods, we found a wagon tire. It was found on the tail end of the small portions of the body of the other. In another part of the woods a man's kneecap was picked up, and although we searched over an area that it would have been impossible for any of the wreck to be thrown, that was all we found, except Franco's greasy cap lying by the side of a stump and his watch hanging on the limb of a tree.

"All who have had anything to do with it in the oil regions have had similar illustrations of the power of nitro-glycerine time after time. Look at that poor, reckless George Dolser, I think his name, who disappeared at Red Hook, in the Bradford field a few years ago. He was walking along through the town with two or three cans of glycerine slung over his shoulder in a bag. He had been drinking too much, and in staggering along he fell head foremost and the bag flew over his head and the nitro-glycerine cans struck heavily on a rock. Not a building for half a block around was left standing. Dolan was a man that weighed over 200 pounds, and all that the most thorough search was able to recover of that 200 pounds of flesh and bones was part of one of Dolan's feet—less than one pound.

"The almost total disappearance of bodies is accounted for by some of the theory of spontaneous combustion. That is something like the theory that a well known scientific man once advanced to explain this mysterious characteristic of nitro-glycerine. He said it was instantaneous vaporization of matter. That theory we all admitted was plausible as to flesh, but we could not believe that the great masses of bones in the human body, nor heavy pieces of iron and wood, could be reduced to vapor in the twinkling of an eye. Another theory that met with great favor for some time was that of atomization by exploding nitro-glycerine. But this theory was disproved in a most frightful way in the Allegheny oil field about three years ago. This case was not characterized, by the way, by such a great degree of annihilation as others. Charles Berridge, a well known oil man, was blown up by nitro-glycerine. The ground around was covered with spotted, new fallen snow. On each side was a high and abrupt hill, only a few rods intervening. Berridge was a large man, of probably 180 pounds weight. The remains of the poor man were nearly as carefully and long for he was a good man and popular one. The coffin in which they were borne to the grave contents and all, weighed less than ten pounds. The greatest force of a nitro-glycerine explosion is always upward. If the matter had been reduced to atoms, however infinitesimal, in falling back upon that spotless snow some trace of them might have been seen. It, but it remained spotless as before.

"This singular feature about nitro-glycerine explosions has been commented upon and puzzled over every time a fatal one occurred in the oil region, from the earliest day the explosive was introduced among the wells."—New York Times.

### The Eastern Shore of Maryland.

It is the oldest section of Talbot County, and many would say the least progressive. As yet the locomotive has not penetrated there, the steamboat comes but three times a week, and the farmer looks to the slow returns of wheat and corn for his income, but it is a land of beautiful situations, of comfortable, well-kept homes and generous living. Many of the people still live in the houses which their fathers or grandfathers built, and a race of fine old-time country gentlemen, who are still abundant life and generous hospitality made the bayside of their day famous. As yet there has been but little immigration. The people are most of them descended from ancestors who established themselves in the early days of the colony: the Lowes and the Lambdons, the Camps and the Daniels, the Wightsons and the Camps still live down there, and grow up and marry their cousins and their neighbors' daughters, as their fathers and grandfathers did and great-grandfathers before did. The sturdy complexions, the round, compact figures, still bespeak the English blood. A people nourished on oysters and terrapin, who have known how to entertain their friends and to enjoy themselves.—Baltimore American.

It is said that women have discharged the greatest part in the commercial business of France. Parisian trade in particular owes much of its reputation to the enterprise of business women.

# FARM AND GARDEN.

## Cattle Stalls.

An excellent arrangement for cattle stalls, says a New York Tribune correspondent, consists in a feeding-rack for coarse fodder raised about three feet from the floor and the top pitching toward the animal. Under the rack at one end is a feed-box for fine feed. The animal, of course, must be fastened with a tie. When it is eating from the rack mark on the floor where the toes of the hind hoofs rest; then spike to the floor just even with and forward of the mark a round stick, flattened on one side and about four inches thick. When eating, the animal's hind feet will stand outside the stick, and the droppings will fall there, and when it desires to lie down it will step over the stick and put its head down under the rack, as the stick is so thick it will not rest its hips on that. This style of stall obviates the necessity of a drop in the floor, and the animal keeps cleaner and healthier, but each stall is only suitable for cattle of the same length of body.

## Warming Water for Farm Animals.

The question, Does it pay? has been propounded to several dairymen who have warmed the drink for their cows in cold weather, and every one has answered, Yes. How could the answer be otherwise? If the water is not warmed for the animal, it must warm it itself. In the stomach the water is brought to a temperature of nearly one hundred degrees. When the animal warms the water, it uses its food for fuel. If corn, hay, etc., were burned by the stock-man to warm the water, then there might be no gain; but he uses much cheaper fuel. It is hardly more trouble to put fuel under the tank heater than to heat the extra food required for the heating of the food in the stomach. Tank heaters, are now manufactured, and by using them the water can be heated easily and economically. Heating the water pays for the further reason that cold water taken into the stomach arrests digestion and then causes a loss of food, whereas warm water stimulates the digestive organs to vigorous action. The animal that drinks water at the freezing point is chilled and enervated.—American Agriculturist.

## Preparing Bees for Winter.

One of the many problems for the bee keeper to solve is: "How to winter bees successfully?" There are a number of ways, each of which their advocates claim to be the best. The most successful in preparing the bees in a cellar, in burying them in a cave and in wintering them on their summer stands. It is of this last method of which I intend to write, as it is one that is generally used by the average farmer and is as practical and gives as good results as any.

The qualifications for successful wintering are: first, plenty of bees. Second, a sufficient amount of food in the hive. Third, proper protection from the cold.

There are generally plenty of bees in a healthy colony as long as the honey is being gathered freely. In this section the honey flow lasts till the first frost. About this time it is well to examine each colony, and if a weak one is found, strengthen it with one that is stronger. One strong colony will winter half a dozen weak ones for wintering.

If any of the colonies have at least thirty pounds of good honey in their hive they should be fed honey, or sugar syrup enough to make up the deficiency. A good syrup for feeding bees is made by dissolving five pounds of granulated sugar in one quart of water, heat until it forms a smooth syrup, feed to the bees while warm.

The matter of protection is a harder one to deal with. If your bees are not in chaff hives they must be protected from the piercing winds, and cold storms of winter. If there is a thick hedge or tight board fence to the north and west of the apiary the chances of wintering are much better. Extremes of temperature should be guarded against. This can be done by covering the hives with straw and covering with leaves, leaving the entrance open so the bees can fly should there be a continuous spell of warm weather during the winter. Or the farmer can use such protection as his ingenuity suggests only that the result be the same. He who cannot think and invent for himself will never make a successful bee keeper.

## Farmer's Feet.

Comparatively few farmers employ anything but wood as a fuel for family use. There is every reason why this should be so; upon most farms where there is much excess of timber or wood land, there is generally enough dead wood to furnish all the light fuel for necessary use, and the cutting of timber for necessary use will go far toward affording the supply for winter, when the demand is more severe. In any event, the farmer who has wood growing upon his farm, which he can by turning on his labor convert into fuel, and so secure a supply without any cash outlay, will be likely to resort to that means in preference to any other.

A wood fire requires considerable attention in order to secure the best results, but for general use both summer and winter, for family purposes there is nothing better.

And yet, counting the value of the wood standing, the time required in cutting, hauling, and time required to prepare for use at regular wages, the cash value would prove an obstacle to its use.

As before stated, because it can be secured wholly without any cash expenditure, and because it can be cut and prepared for use when there is no other work of the farm pressing, renders it the best fuel among farmers.

But in fuel among farmers, the best results should be thoroughly secured before it is used. In burning green wood that is filled with sap or moisture, there must be a certain amount of evaporation carried on before the fuel will burn, and a certain amount of heat must be employed in the process; how much of that heat can be utilized during the process it is difficult to determine, but it is reasonable to suppose that but a small amount of it can be made available. There is a loss in burning green wood just as much heat as is required to expel the moisture from the green wood.

When there is a year's supply in advance no trouble in this line need arise, and if it is desirable to occasionally use a little of the green wood to regulate the heat a little better, or to prevent a too rapid combustion of the dry, it can be used.

It is always best to perform the labor required in the woods to get ready for

# W. C. T. U. COLUMN.

## Conducted by the Tennessean Union.

The W. C. T. U. meets the 21 and 24th Tuesday of each month at 3 p. m.

President—Mrs. E. H. Holmes.  
Vice Presidents—Mrs. J. G. Dale, Mrs. W. J. Roberts.  
Recording Sec'y—Mrs. L. A. Howe.  
Corr. Sec. and Treas.—Mrs. S. D. Irwin.

Who wins him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle in him, and maketh him drunken also.—Hab. II, 15.

The wicked worketh a deceitful work; but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a true reward.—Rev. II, 18.

## Women and Wine in Washington.

The story published in the Star a few days ago, that a woman had been arrested in Washington, "driving to my mind several sad cases that have come to my knowledge where the wives of officers of the army and navy have been addicted to the excessive use of liquor. In some instances the habit has been cured while in others the appetite became so good that the women were able to do their duty as well as the men, and in some cases the women died from the effects of the habit. I know one who, when she was in the habit of drinking, went to her dressing case and drank the cologne that she used as a perfume.

"Why should officers' wives acquire this bad habit?" asked the Star man.

"The cases are not confined to army and naval circles, by a good deal," was the reply; "but I happen to know more about it. I remember a sad case that happened in this city some years ago. The wife of an army officer and a lady friend of mine were in the city one morning to witness the guard mount. After this was over they were entertained by a champagne lunch, at which the officer's wife drank a little more than she should do, and she did not realize it at the time, nor until she got ready to go home. Then she found that though her head was comparatively clear she was very drunk. Her limbs, she could not walk straight. She called one of the officers to her and plainly told him her condition, relying, of course, upon his honor as a gentleman not to betray her secret. He called a carriage and took the lady and her friend home. 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