

JACKSONVILLE IN ASHES.

Property Damage is Estimated at \$15,000,000.

FLAMES RAGED TEN HOURS.

One Hundred and Thirty Blocks Burned, Many of Them in the Heart of the Business and Residence District—City's Handsomest Structures Destroyed.

Jacksonville, Fla., May 4.—The most disastrous fire in the history of this city began yesterday shortly after noon in a small factory, started by a defective wire, according to the best belief, and burned for nearly ten hours. In that time property damage estimated from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000 was caused.

According to the city map one hundred and thirty blocks were burned, many of them in the heart of the business and residence section. The estimate of houses to the block is ten. Thirteen hundred of them went up in smoke. Many of the finest public and private buildings were destroyed, including hotels, theaters, churches and residences.

The casualties cannot be accurately estimated. That there were several seems to be well authenticated. Among them was that of the fire chief, who sustained a bad fall. The mayor ordered all saloons closed, and has impressed help to clear the wreckage. The mayor stated that he estimated the loss at \$15,000,000 and that 10,000 to 15,000 people were homeless.

Origin of the Fire.

The fire started in the American Fibre factory between the hours of 12 and 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and owing to this fact the loss of life will be comparatively small. The fibre factory was a wooden shell, full of inflammable material, and in a few moments it was a mass of flames. The wind, which was already blowing strong from the southwest, seemed to be possessed with a sudden fury and soon was carrying destructive embers all through the city, the fastest portion of which lay right in the course of the wind. Some delay was experienced in sounding an alarm, and to add to the tragedy of fearful accidents the engine at the waterworks suffered a mishap and nothing more than ordinary pressure could be obtained.

By this time the flames had swept to the Boston store. It leaped across Davis street and took a course right through a section where block after block of frame buildings, many occupied by negroes, had been erected. Here is where the fire department lost control, as simultaneously in half a dozen places, some of them six blocks from the main fire, roofs were seen to burst out in flames. It took just four hours for that restless sea of flame to consume every building in its wake for a space of six to eight blocks wide, from Davis street, near where it started, to the Hogan street viaduct, a distance of over one and a half miles, and then, not satisfied with eating the heart of the residential portion of the city out, it doubled back and came roaring up the principal thoroughfare of trade, destroying everything in what was the original incorporation of Jacksonville.

Into Heart of City.

Right into the heart of the town the flames swept. The Windsor hotel, the St. James, both fine winter hotels, were consumed in an incredibly short time. The opera house followed and then row upon row of elegant residences went up. As the viaduct leading over the marshes of Hogan's creek to East Jacksonville was reached it was plain that the limit of the progress of the flames westward had come. Just as the material for the flames was apparently consumed, a shift in the wind sent a roaring sea of flames southward toward the river.

Then came the most thrilling scene of the entire day. The flames caught the freight warehouse of the Western railroad and began from there on their march backward in the teeth of the wind. Slowly, but surely, the fire ate its way against the wind, taking either side of Bay street until it reached Jones' boat yard. The flames swept down in the rear of the United States hotel and that, with the Law exchange, was doomed. Meantime the county court house caught fire and another splendid edifice was soon a total wreck. From the United States hotel the flames again jumped across the street and the work of destruction continued, only to be checked when the last building near McCoy's and Hogan's creek had been destroyed.

Double Killing at Denver.

Denver, May 4.—Hugh Masterson, a private of company M, Twenty-third infantry, stationed at Fort Logan, shot and probably fatally wounded William True, a bar tender, and was a few minutes later shot and instantly killed by a policeman, from whom he was trying to escape.

Fire Wipes Out Iowa Town.

Ewart, Ia., May 4.—Fire last night practically destroyed the entire town including a big grain elevator of the Iowa Central, the postoffice, all of the business houses and a number of residences. The loss is estimated at \$100,000.

Transport Supplies Free.

Portsmouth, Va., May 7.—It was announced at the general offices of the Seaboard Air line that that road will transport free supplies for the Jacksonville sufferers.

Railroad Officials in Chicago have received information that an attempt is being made to revive the American Railway union under the name of the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees. The telegraphers are pushing it.

CONSOLIDATION RUMOR.

Wall Street Report of Possible Merger of Country's Whole Railroad System.

New York, May 7.—Consolidation continued to be the magic word to influence the speculation in stocks yesterday. There was even a wild rumor that all the great railroad interests whose supposed contest for control have caused the recent violent movements in prices, had come to a compromise and there were about to consolidate all the principal railroad systems of the whole country. This narrowed down somewhat to more specific reports of progress in the southwestern merger, and of further steps towards the adjustment of relations in the northwestern railroad deal.

The last named rumor was the only thing to account for the sensational movement in Northern Pacific, which exceeded that of any individual stocks which have been singled out at different times recently as centers of attention. Northern Pacific made an extreme advance of 23 points.

FIND FIVE BODIES.

Victims Burned to Death or Drowned in Efforts to Escape the Flames at Jacksonville.

Jacksonville, Fla., May 7.—The work of relief in Jacksonville is progressing systematically. The following are the dead so far as recovered: Harry D. Bontheau, William Clark, both white; unknown negro, found in the river at the foot of Market street; Mrs. Cornelia Thompson, widow of the late General Waddy Thompson, bones found in ruins of old ladies' home, Union and Laura streets; Martha Hagen, a negro woman, found at Ocean and State streets.

Six thousand destitute were fed yesterday by the relief association. Governor Jennings has perfected the military government of the city by a general order placing Colonel Lovell in command and making Major Maxwell provost marshal.

The receipts by the relief association and other agencies approximate \$50,000.

Perfect order prevails. The work of rebuilding has commenced.

War Not Ended in Samar.

Manila, May 7.—The island of Samar, one of the Visayan group, has been transferred from the department commanded by General Wade to that commanded by General Hughes. General Hughes has been ordered personally to Samar and if he is unsuccessful in negotiating the surrender of the insurgent general, Lukban, the force of American troops in Samar will be largely increased and a vigorous offensive campaign will be inaugurated.

Third Trial of Dr. Kennedy.

New York, May 7.—The third trial of Dr. Samuel J. Kennedy on the charge of murdering Dolly Reynolds in the Grand hotel in this city on Aug. 16, 1898, began yesterday before Judge Newburger. Convicted on his first trial and sentenced to death, the dentist obtained a second trial, largely through the persistent efforts of his wife and the jury disagreed. When court adjourned for the day five jurors had been secured.

Sultan Kills Physician.

London, May 7.—"It is rumored," says the correspondent at Constantinople of the Daily Express, "that the sultan shot dead a physician who, while attending him for ear complaint and massaging him, unwittingly caused his majesty intense pain. The chamberlain rushed into the room and the sultan, who supposed there was an attempt on his life, fired again, wounding the chamberlain."

Says Nothing About Kruger.

Washington, May 7.—It is learned at the state department that the president has made no statement through any of the usual channels to the effect that he would refuse to receive Kruger officially or unofficially. The government has made no promise as to the character of his reception if he should decide to come here.

Youngers May Be Paroled.

St. Paul, May 7.—The board of state prison managers meets today and it is believed that Cole and James Younger, serving life sentences in connection with the Northfield bank robbery and murder, committed 25 years ago, will be granted paroles under the terms of the law just enacted by the legislature.

Flood From Cloudburst.

Fort Madison, May 7.—A cloudburst here flooded the streets to a depth of five feet. Mrs. Mary Carter, an aged woman, was drowned in her cellar. The city is in darkness, the gas mains being filled with water.

TELEGRAMS TERSELY TOLD.

Mariano Ignacio Prado, ex-president of Peru, is dead.

A Deal is in Progress to Consolidate all the Oil Cloth and Lineoleum Plants of the Country into one Combine.

"Kid" Carter of Brooklyn was given the decision over Jack Bonner at Louisville Monday. The fight went the 20-round limit.

Jamieson & Co., one of the largest stock brokerage firms in Chicago, have suspended. They were unable to meet their obligations on the New York Stock exchange.

The national woman's board of missions of the Cumberland Presbyterian church convened in Marshall, Mich., Monday, with 184 delegates and many visitors present.

Mrs. Caroline Harchner died Monday at Pana, Ill., from a peculiar disease. Two years ago she began using pain killer, continuing its use until she used a bottle daily. All efforts to overcome the habit failed and death resulted.

BRITISH TAX THEIR COAL.

House of Commons Passes Government Measure.

GENERAL STRIKE PROBABLE

Labor Members Intimate That Great Struggle May Be Precipitated Between Their Organization and Parliament. Lambton Speaks in Behalf of Miners.

London, May 7.—There was unusual animation and attendance in the house of commons yesterday when the last installment of the coal tax resolution debate was opened by Sir Edward Grey, Liberal, who defined the measure as harsh and oppressive. The house adopted the coal tax by a vote of 333 to 227.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the debate was the speech of Hon. Frederick Lambton, who denounced the government as a "pack of riotous hounds after a ewe lamb," by which he referred to the coal industry. The sleepy people who had come in to hear the final stages of the debate blinked vigorously as they heard the right of miners to strike proclaimed by an aristocrat, who declared that the miners were "as good as many a man who has won the Victoria cross."

Another supporter of the government, John Wilson, bitterly objected to the tax, bringing up the question of American competition and contending that the duty would give the United States a chance to cut out British coal.

What the Miners' Federation will do remains to be seen. Judging from the speeches of the labor members during the last stages of the debate, the Federation is quite likely to declare a general strike, thus precipitating a struggle between organized labor and parliament. Such a collision, as was said frequently during the discussion, might prove ruinous to the coal industry and highly injurious to the country.

Cup Defender Launched.

Bristol, R. I., May 7.—With her hull gaily decorated with flags and her deck well filled with sailors, the yacht Constitution was christened last evening by Mrs. W. Butler Duncan, who broke the traditional bottle of wine on her glistening bow just as she started slowly down the ways into the sea. The scene was a brilliant one as the Constitution was slowly lowered into the water, the cheering from the boats outside being loud and vigorous, while the searchlight from the steam yacht Colonia, just outside the dock, illuminated the stern of the Constitution. Rockets and other fireworks added not a little to the gaiety of the occasion.

Body of Murderer Found.

Brunswick, Mo., May 7.—The body of Horace Williams, who escaped from a mob at this place on March 18, was found in the Grand river near here yesterday. His identity was easily established by articles found in his pockets, including a well preserved picture of his wife. The crime for which Williams was pursued was the murder of his wife, Emma Swain Williams, at their home near Forest Green March 14. At the time of Williams' escape the river was very high. The fugitive was twice traced by bloodhounds to the stream, where it is supposed he plunged in, hoping to swim across and perished in the attempt.

Boers Threaten Railway.

London, May 7.—The Pretoria correspondent of the Times, in a letter dated April 6, describes the insecurity of the Delagoa Bay railroad and constant delays and stoppages due to systematic attempts by Boer commandoes to wreck the lines and trains with mines. Like the Times' Kronstadt correspondent, the Pretoria correspondent of the Times also insists upon the imperative necessity of replacing the stale British troops by fresh drafts, declaring that "unless the war is finished before September we must resign ourselves to a continuance for another year."

Author of "The Bread Winners."

Chicago, May 7.—The Tribune claims it to be an established fact that the author of "The Bread Winners," the sensational novel published anonymously in 1883, was Miss Ida Harris of Champaign, Ill., daughter of B. F. Harris, president of the First National bank of that city. At the time the book was published many of the reviewers asserted that John Hay wrote the book. Miss Harris died about ten days ago.

Valut Jones Ill.

New York, May 7.—Charles F. Jones, valet of the late Millionaire William Marsh Rice, and who with Attorney Patrick is charged with the murder of Mr. Rice, is ill at the house of detention. It is the intention of the district attorney to have him removed to a hospital today. Jones is suffering from an attack of acute dyspepsia.

British Death List in Boer War.

London, May 7.—The war office yesterday officially gave out the total number of deaths in the South African war at 714 officers and 14,264 men. Four officers and 314 men have been invalided home and subsequently died, and 2,493 non-commissioned officers and men have left the service unfit for duty.

Canal Commission Ready to Report.

Washington, May 7.—The extensive work of the Isthmian canal commission is nearing completion and Admiral Walker, chairman of the commission, said that the final report probably will be ready for submission to the president in about six weeks.

RECEIVE A ROYAL WELCOME

Elaborate Reception of Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York at Melbourne.

Melbourne, May 7.—The duke and duchess of Cornwall and York landed from the steamer Ophir yesterday. They were received at the pier head by Lord Hopetoun, governor general, and the state and federal ministers. After the ministers had been presented the party passed down a quarter of a mile of carpeted pier and entered carriages surrounded by a guard of honor composed of Victoria troops just returned from South Africa and proceeded a distance of seven miles through brilliantly decorated streets bordered by almost continuous lines of people. The entire route was lined with demonstrative crowds and the decorations, arches, venetian masts and columns along the line of march were very effective. Opposite the town hall the procession passed beneath the queen's arch, canopied with the royal colors and sheltering a golden statue of Queen Victoria. Twelve thousand troops were in line. There are 80,000 visitors in Melbourne. The drive terminated at Government house.

INCENDIARY GANG.

Six Men and One Woman Charged With Complicity in Fires in Macon County, Missouri.

Macon, Mo., May 7.—Six men and one woman are charged with direct complicity in the recent series of fires in the southern portion of Macon county, with the object of swindling insurance companies.

Five arrests have been made and Deputy Sheriff Turner left Macon yesterday with warrants for John Province and wife, whose home was burned on March 22. Among those arrested are: Grant Gipson, a well known farmer of the Ardmore neighborhood; Leroy Summers, son of a farmer; Milton Summers, a relative, and W. D. Donovan, a coal miner.

In the possession of Prosecuting Attorney White are confessions signed by Donovan, John Province and the latter's wife, which, it is alleged, prove the existence of a conspiracy to defraud the insurance companies. At least half a dozen others are under suspicion. Joseph Heifner, agent of the Iowa State Insurance company, estimates that their depredations have already cost the insurance companies \$40,000.

They have so terrorized the neighborhood of Ardmore, a coal mining town in the southern part of the county, that the honest farmers dare not appear against them or even refuse to sign their bonds for fear their own barns, haystacks or even homes may be reduced to ashes.

Practically all of the insurance companies have retired from the field in that locality.

A piece of villainy which is laid at the door of the gang is the burning of ten school houses for no other reason than dissatisfaction with the locations selected by the directors.

William Heifner, the insurance agent, said: "A member of the gang told me that it included 15 or 20 members, who were sworn to stand by each other. Their plan was to meet the insurance adjuster on the ground after the fire and if they refused to pay the claim, force him to do so at the point of a revolver."

Sheriff Gillstrom says of the alleged conspiracy: "The extent of the conspiracy is not yet revealed. It may be much greater than we have any idea of. People may be connected with it who have not even been suspected."

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