

SOUTH JACKSONVILLE WAS BADLY SCORCHED

SEVERAL HOUSES WERE ABLAZE AT THE SAME TIME.

Timely Arrival of Aid Saved Town From Total Destruction by Fire Fiend.

Fire which threatened to destroy the entire town of South Jacksonville, says The Metropolis of July 14th, started from a defective flue in the residence of Capt. Frank Stephens, shortly before 11 o'clock this morning, and it was only the arrival of the big steamer from the Jacksonville fire department which prevented great damage.

Five or six houses were on fire at the same time, and the heroic efforts of the many citizens who formed the volunteer fire brigade alone saved many of them from total destruction. The loss will reach a figure of between \$5,000 and \$6,000.

A call for aid sent to this city brought out the big steamer of the central station, which was hurried across the ferry and pumping water from the river at the old ferry slip at the foot of Catherine street, South Jacksonville, the spread of the flames was soon stopped.

Where Fire Started.

The fire started in the home of Captain Stephens from a defective flue, and completely destroyed this residence with most of its contents. There was no insurance either upon the house or the household goods. Part of the goods were carried into the street and saved from destruction, but all of it was more or less damaged. This loss will reach a figure of possibly \$2,500.

The barn of Henry Hudnall, county commissioner, which stood between the residence of Captain Stephens and that of Commissioner Hudnall, caught fire from the Stephens residence, and was totally destroyed. There was no live stock in the barn at the time, but the carriages and harness were saved. No considerable amount of food was lost. The loss to Mr. Hudnall will not exceed \$300 or \$400.

Besides this loss in the destruction of the barn, the residence of Mr. Hudnall was damaged on the roof, which caught fire in several places.



This loss will possibly reach \$150 or \$200. The household effects were also damaged.

The residence owned by S. M. Scruggs, and occupied by Mrs. J. N. Whitney, adjoining the residence of Capt. Stephens, was damaged by the flames to the extent of \$500. Here also the household goods were damaged by fire and water. The entire roof was burned off this house.

Several Houses on Fire.

The residence of H. M. Reed, near by, was blistered by the heat. Sparks from the fire carried by the wind set many other houses in different parts of the town on fire. Three houses owned by W. W. Swain were afire at different times from sparks, although two of them are 200 yards away from the residence of Capt. Stephens, which was destroyed. Houses owned by Gerry Hendricks were also slightly damaged.

Those who viewed the scene of the fire estimate the loss will reach at least \$5,000. Without the aid of the fire engine and the fire ladders from Jacksonville, it is believed that the entire town would have been reduced to ashes.

Tragic Tale of a Tragedian.

"The awfullest and the funniest stage wait I ever lived through," said a sprightly English actress, "was when a certain well known London actor manager, whose name I dare not divulge, was doing a tremendous curse scene on a darkened stage. He had the audience spellbound with his sonorous declamation, which, of course, they didn't know depended largely upon his ample mouthful of false teeth. At the very climax of his blood-curdling maledictions the entire dental collection dropped out suddenly in the excitement of the moment and bounded into some obscure hiding place. The tragedian's mighty voice died down to an unintelligible mumble as he groped about frantically in search of the missing masticators. We were all too helpless from laughter to be of much help in this critical situation. At last, after what seemed like half an hour of the most hysterical suspense, the stage manager located the teeth with the aid of a dark lantern and restored them to the frantic star, who clapped them into his mouth and began cursing again with redoubled earnestness. I never knew what the audience thought, and no one ever dared to ask the actor manager."—New York World.

Quicksilver.

The ore from which quicksilver is obtained is a brilliant red rock known as cinnabar. When of high purity it is actually vermilion in color. Cinnabar is the original source of the pigment known commercially as vermilion. It is a compound of sulphur and quicksilver, and in order to separate the latter from the sulphur the rock is roasted. Passing off in the form of a gas, the mercury is afterward condensed and flows out in a fine stream, like a continuous pencil of molten silver. Like gold and silver, mercury is occasionally found in a native or pure state. Sometimes the miner's pick penetrates a cavity that contains a cupful or more of the elusive and beautiful fluid. Miners suffer much from the poisonous effects of the quicksilver fumes. Extreme cleanliness is the best safeguard for workers in this dangerous occupation. Use is also made of a sort of lemonade which serves to a certain extent as an antidote, a strong acid taking the place of lemon juice in the composition of the drink.

A Millionaire's Baby

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Keep your eye on the want ads. There may be something advertised which is of interest to you.

Nature as a Designer.

Not the least mysterious of all the wonders of the earth is the extraordinary cleverness of Dame Nature as a carver and designer. Her tools are air, rain, rivers, springs and frost. Any one who has ever seen the marvelous Queen Bess rock on the north Cornish coast, that wonderful presentment of Queen Elizabeth, who is seated so grandly upon the sands, must have asked himself the question as to how much a thing could have been accomplished. Continuous trickling of water wears away the face of the rock. Haphazard it was until at last a weird pattern is formed that sometimes resembles a man's face, sometimes an animal. All over the world Nature has placed her picture gallery and her collection of statuary, the biggest free show in the world.

Another work of Nature's that very often results in extraordinary changes being effected is a landslide. And landslips have arisen from the tiniest possible causes. A little underground flow of water had gradually undermined a hill or cliff until at last the earth became like a hollow nut. Then the soil became top heavy. The sea beat against its foundations, and millions of tons of earth were flung into the sea, which proves the axiom that the tiniest beginnings often produce the mightiest ends.—London Standard.

English Luggage Lifters.

English railway companies suffer severely through the purloining of passengers' baggage and other articles by platform thieves, and in some cases it is a difficult matter to find out the miscreant. One of these luggage lifters was on an occasion some time ago seen keeping vigil over a barrow of luggage, and in his hand he carried apparently a good sized portmanteau. He walked up and down the platform several times and at last stopped opposite the luggage. Placing his bag on the barrow for a moment, he then picked it up and walked off. But the lynx eye of one of the railway officials had also been watching the barrow, and, going up to the man, had him arrested and searched. It was found that his apparent portmanteau was only a skeleton and inside had a set of springs, etc., which, when placed over a smaller bag, held the latter in position. But for the smartness of the official another traveler's bag would have been missing.—London Answers.

The Hollow Bones of Birds.

The hollow bones of birds are frequently cited as beautiful instances of providential mechanics in building the strongest and largest possible limb with the least expenditure of material, and this is largely true, and yet birds, like ducks, which cleave the air with the speed of an express train, have the long bones filled with marrow or saturated with fat, while the lumbering hornbill, that fairly hurtles over the treetops, has one of the most completely pneumatic skeletons imaginable, permeated with air to the very toe tips, and the ungainly pelican is nearly as well off. Still, it is but fair to say that the frigate bird and turkey buzzards, creatures which are most at ease when on the wing, have extremely light and hollow bones; but, comparing one bird with another, the paramount importance of a pneumatic skeleton to a bird is not as evident as that of a pneumatic tire to a bicycle.—Exchange.

An Earl's Duel With a Butler.

About the middle of the last century the Lord Rosebery of that time was in Paris, and in paying a call one day he was received so rudely by the butler that he complained to his friend of the servant's conduct. But the butler had been a noncommissioned officer in the French army, and as such he challenged Lord Rosebery to a duel. The earl accepted, and two shots were exchanged without result. But Lord Rosebery was angered at his own condescension and afraid his antagonist might lay aside his military rank and resume his duties as a servant, thus exposing an earl to the reproach of having fought with a butler. So he settled an annuity of £250 on the man on condition he did not return to domestic service. The condition was faithfully observed on both sides.

Lord Russell's Retort.

Lord Russell once presided at a dinner given for Sir Henry Irving on his return from America. While the dinner was in progress Lord Russell suggested to Comyns Carr that he propose Sir Henry's health. "I can't make speeches, you know," he said.

Sir Henry gently replied, "I heard you make a fine speech before the Parnell commission."

To which the pungent Irishman answered, "Oh, yes, but then I had something to talk about!"

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The Gorgons.

The Gorgons were creatures of Greek mythology, mentioned by Homer and Euripides as being of peculiarly abhorrent aspect. Their hair was composed of serpents, their bodies covered with scales and girdled with reptiles with heads erect, vibrating their tongues threateningly, while the hands of the Gorgons, adorned with sharp talons, were of brass. The gaze of the monsters was deadly, all upon whom they fixed their eyes being turned to stone. One of the three terrible sisters was conquered and beheaded by Perseus, and as he took flight in the air en route for Ethiopia, holding the severed head in his hands, the drops of blood which fell from it became serpents, which ever after infested the sands of Lybia.—New York Telegram.

Avoided the Conventional.

"It is a wonderful story," says the publisher to the new author, whose manuscript has just been accepted, "but you have failed in one important feature. You do not describe the way the heroine was dressed when the hero first met her. You'd better write in a paragraph about her clothes, but try to avoid the conventional."

The ingenious author, knowing the sameness of costume descriptions in the best sellers and also knowing how to make an appeal to the feminine heart, wrote:

"Heloise floated toward him garbed in a \$600 dress, a \$250 hat, with a \$98.75 mantilla over a \$375 lace coat."—Chicago Post.

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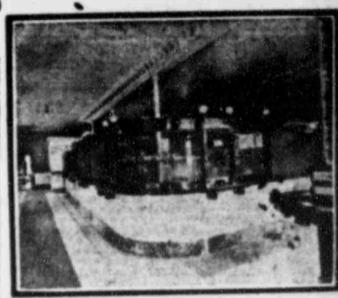


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