The Comique Fire

Friday morning last the Theater Comique, Butte's leading variety theater, was burned to the ground. The fire started at 9:30 o'clock in a room in the northwest corner of the building and spread so rapidly that it had enveloped the entire structure when the firemen succeeded in getting their first stream upon it.

THE BUILDING

The building was of frame, with a brick front. It was a three-story structure, with a 25-foot frontage, and extended back about 100 feet. The first floor was occupied by the auditorium, the stage and the bar. The second story was occupied by several wine rooms in front and a tier of boxes on each side extending to the stage. The third story was divided into rooms which were occupied by attaches of the theater, as sleeping apartments. The building was erected last May by J. E. Van Gundy, and was rented by Messrs. Gordon & Hamilton, under whose management it was conducted until a couple of weeks since, when Mr. Hamilton's interest was purchased by Mr. John Steinbreuner. The building was valued at $7,000, and insured for about $5,500.

THE BLAZE.

Many conflicting stories are afloat as to the origin of the fire. The theater was being renovated when the blaze occurred, and one of the apartments in the northwest corner was used as a store room for paints, paper etc. This room was on the second story, and immediately under the suite of rooms occupied by Mr. Harry Montague, stage manager of the house, his wife and his sister-in-law. These ladies say the fire started in the paint room, but the painters, Messrs. Kelsey and Hamlin, declare emphatically that it did not—that the first alarm was sounded from the room above and that when they responded the room was ablaze. Suffice it that the conflagration originated in the northwest corner of the building.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

was promptly on hand, and after experiencing the usual difficulties in obtaining an effective supply of water performed some good work. All efforts to save the Comique were unavailing, however. The flimsy structure burned like tinder, and the firemen wisely turned their attention to the adjoining buildings. These they succeeded in saving after the most superhuman efforts.

LOSS—INSURANCE.

The total loss on actual property will reach about $[illegible], divided as follows: Comique building, $7,000; John Gordon, personal loss, $3,000; John Steinbreuner, about $4,500; Mattie Cook, loss on furniture, clothes, etc., about $2,000; Harry Montague, wardrobe, jewelry, etc., $6,000; other losses by fire and water, about $1,500.

The insurance was as follows: Forbis Bros' agency on Comique building, Sun of California, Insurance Company of North America and Springfield, $400 each; on stock of McCarthy's Monarch saloon, slightly damaged, $1,100, on building $700.

Mantle & Warren's agency on Hamilton block, $10,000; on Valiton & Nichols' wholesale liquor stock and building, damaged by water and removal, $6,400.

F. E. W. Patten's agency on Fiske's restaurant, furniture and household goods, damaged slightly by removal, $400

George F. Marsh's agency on Comique building, Commercial of California $600; Firemen's Fund of California, $1,200; on Mattie A. Cook's furniture, Lion, $400; North British & Mercantile, $400; on Hamilton block, [illegible] damaged, $5,000.

AN UNPLEASANT INCIDENT.

While the fire was in progress an unpleasant incident occurred in front of the building occupied by Mr. C. H. Fiske. It seems that Mr. F. E. W. Patten had insured Mr. Fiske's furniture, and wante' to remove it, when he was stopped by Mr. Roberts, a member of the Fire Patrol. Some angry words passed between the men, and Roberts finally struck Patten. Mr. Patten claims that the parts had no right to place him under arrest, while Roberts triumphantly points to sections 16 and 17 of City Ordinance XXX., which authorizes members of the salvage corps to act as police officers at a fire if they find it necessary. Mr. Patten was released on bail, and the matter will be settled by the courts.

COMMENDABLE PLUCK.

The destruction of the Comique was hardly completed when John Gordon, with the enterprise that has ever characterized his career as an amusement manager in Montana, secured the Renshaw Opera House, and in an incredibly short space of time had the remnants of his scenery, etc., on the stage and his company rehearsing for the evening performance. Last night the hall company appeared before one of the largest audiences that ever assembled in the Renshaw. And circulating among the throng, as cool and collected as if nothing had occurred to disturb their equanimity, were Messrs. Gordon, Steinberger and Montague. It is only under circumstances like these which bring out the gentlemen named that the irrepressible pluck and "git-up" of the average theatrical person is afforded an opportunity to shine.

"Will you rebuild?" was the query addressed Mr. Gordon by a MINER representative.

"Yes, sir," was the prompt reply; "I will erect on the site of the Comique a theatre that shall be second in size and style to no vaudeville house in the West. But until it is completed I shall be compelled to struggle along best as I can and keep the show running."

HARRY MONTAGUE'S LOSSES.

Harry Montague, manager of the Comique, is one of the heaviest losers by the fire. In addition to the wardrobe and jewelry belonging to himself and wife (Miss Carrie Duncan) the flames consumed a large number of plays in manuscript which Mr. Montague had written, and which it will take years of labor to replace. These plays were his capital, and their destruction was a blow more severe to him than could have been caused by the loss of anything less precious than the life of himself and family. Mr. Montague receives the sympathy of all who know him, and they are legion in Butte. He is not of the stuff that quails before misfortune, however, and it is safe to predict that a week hence he will be fighting the battle over again as manfully and cheerfully as ever.

NOTES.

John Gordon says he will rebuild.

Mrs. Mattie Cook, who conducted the lodging department of the Comique, lost all her property.

Some of the girls occupying the rooms on the upper story of the Comique barely escaped with their lives and all of them lost more or less property. Among the residents of the third floor were Mr. and Mrs. Cook, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, the Duncan Sisters, Harry Montague, Aida the trapeze performer; Ollie Sutter, Lottie West, Dot Thompson and Monsieur de Lassomm.

The fire fiend is feeling kindly toward the [illegible] newspaper men.

A drunken man created a sensation by appearing on the Comique veranda and making an ass of himself until he was arrested.

Dennis Simpson, the colored fireman, performed gallant service. Dennis' color is the only impediment to his promotion in the department.

Fireman Bob Ennis distinguished himself by daring almost to recklessness. Bob is one of Butte's best firemen

"Curly Mack" was elected a member of Hose company No. 2 a few days ago, and his conduct at yesterday's blaze showed that he is worthy of a place in any corps of firefighters. "Curly's" face bears the marks of burns received while manfully fighting the flames that consumed the Comique.

The City Department, which has a cart in Owsley & Carr's stable, got the first stream on the fire, but the Brigade boys coupled a stream on the same hydrant, and there were three streams being drawn from the same plug. Another was taken from the corner of Main and Broadway and a fifth came from the corner of Granite, one playing on the front of the building, one on the south side, two on the north side and one on the rear.

The firemen all worked bravely, and to their noble efforts the residents of that neighborhood are greatly indebted for the saving of much valuable property.

It was just 10:00 o'clock when the brick front of the burning building fell down.

The chunky black dray horse did good service in pulling away the debris after the fire.

Upon receipt at the home offices of the news of the fire in Butte, Curtis & Majors' insurance companies wired them to adjust all losses, if any, at once, but luckily the firm had no policies on the property damaged, although they carried heavy risks on the adjoining premises. This firm has been remarkably fortunate in escaping all of the recent blazes.

Professor Mengrini de Lassomm is a very heavy loser by the fire, and while a portion of his paraphernalia was saved, he still loses about $3,400, much of his material being of a very costly character. He takes it very coolly, however, and says that he still has hands left, and that he can repair his lost fortunes.

Both McCarthy's, and Nichols & Valiton's saloons and Fiske's restaurant moved almost entirely out of their premises in anticipation of destruction by fire but they got off with only slight damages by water.

The Chinese residents in the vicinity of the fire were greatly excited, and the amount of wind they wasted in chattering would have run one of the Parrot blast furnaces for a whole week.

When the floor of the second story fell it made a bridge on the bar, and none of the bottled liquors were destroyed.

Election of Officers.

The Board of Directors of the Young Men's Christian Association held a meeting in the Methodist Church on Thursday Thursday evening, the 4th instant, and elected the following officers:

President—Prof. J. K. Davis.
Vice-President—Thomas T. Baker.
Recording Secretary—J. W. Kemper.
Treasurer—J. E. Rickards.

The Board adopted By Laws for its own government, and adjourned to meet at the call of its President.

Leiter Bailed Out.

Yesterday the friends of E. G. Leiter completed arrangements for his release upon bail, and the following gentlemen appeared before Justice Lippincott and qualified upon a new bond in the total sum of $1,000: Joseph Rosenthal, E. J. Schlessinger, H Barnett, George C. Fitzchen, H. Jonas, James H. Lynch, F. Geiss and Joseph Schuiger. The defendant was promptly discharged from custody, and was again upon the streets during the afternoon.

A Week's Shipment's.

The following bullion shipments were made the past week, through the Pacific Express office:

Lexington	14 bars	$28.368
Alice	30 "	45 792
Moulton	10 "	14 816
Clark & Larabie	4 "	456
Silver Bow	4 "	6.880
Total		$96,312

On to Butte.

Vice President Oakes, of the Northern Pacific was recently interviewed by the St. Paul *Pioneer Press*, and, among other things, said: "Among other branches talked of at the New York meeting were a line south from Drummond, on the main line, to Phillipsburg, a distance of 25 miles. The mining district of Phillipsburg is one of the most important of Western Montana. South from Ten Mile Creek another branch was talked of, as also was that proposed to run from Helena to Benton, Montana The proposed Butte branch was also a subject of discussion. No definite action was taken in the matter; but this you can say, that if arrangements are not made in the immediate future whereby the Northern Pacific can run its own cars into Butte, we will build our own line there, and that at no distant day."

A Severe Loss.

Andy McKee, the well-known comedian, was not the least heavy loser by the burning down of the Theater Comique. His face was as long and tightly drawn as a bass viol when he was met last night by a MINER representative.

"Did I lose anything," he repeated, in response to a reportorial query; "well, I should shiver. The pecuniary value of what I lost was not great, but its intrinsic worth was something crushing. Among the *debris* of the burned theater lies the ashes of something I prized as highly as life itself—something that neither money nor toil can replace."

"What was it?"

"The trombone part of my latest and greatest success—'A Slippery Day.'"

"Was that all?"

"All! Good heavens, man, what would you have me lose? I might add, however, that Flora lost one of her eyebrows."

Flora is Mrs Andy McKee.

The Police Court.

Judge French yesterday kept his mill grinding in good order.

Sil Hazelwood, was charged with petty larceny in taking a coat from a pawn shop without paying the $5 loaned upon it The prisoner had the coat in soak, and went there, after the keeper had retired, for the garment, carrying off the coat, while the latter was unable to follow him through the street, owing to the rather limited amount of his wearing apparel. Sil was fined $10 and costs and went to jail.

O. M. Lawrence, one of the recent run of vags., was fined $5 and costs after standing his trial.

Morris Raney and J. E. Walker, two more men arrested upon a charge of vagrancy, were discharged.

Miss Alice Wright was fined $5 and costs for creating a disturbance, and settled up.

White and Custer, two partially intoxicated individuals, had a "scrap" in a down-town saloon, and both were arrested. White took all of the blame and was fined $5 and costs, going to jail in default of funds while Custer was discharged.

Land Office Notice.

UNITED STATES LAND OFFICE, HELENA, M. T., Feb. 4, 1886.

To all officers authorized to take affidavits and proof in public land cases:

Your attention is especially called to the following instructions, in which entries will be suspended until they are obeyed.

1. In cases of final proofs and of entry applications the parties, whether applicants, claimants, or witnesses, must be *properly identified before you*. Attesting officers (including Registers and Receivers) must certify that the parties appearing are personally known to them or that their identity is satisfactorily established. The names of persons vouching to identity must be stated. Identifying affidavits should be required in all cases where necessary.

2. In answer to "Ques. 1," on the proof blank, "What is your occupation, and where is your residence?" you will hereafter require the witnesses to state their residences to be in the particular section, township and range in which they actually reside, or when residents of the town, that fact may be stated instead.

S. W. LANGHORNE, Register.

All papers in this land district are requested to copy.

A NOCTURNAL NUISANCE.

Why Many of Butte's Good People Held Their Noses.

It was anything but a fragrant odor that assailed the olfactors of those persons who ventured in the vicinity of Main street and Broadway last night. As early as 7 p. m. a smell not in the least akin to *Eau de Cologne*, Jockey Club, New-Mown Hay, or any of the other perfumes which have made the name of Rimmel a household word, ascended to heaven from the alley running parallel with Main street and from Broadway to Granite. It was a smell that made men and and women clasp their noses in a death like grip and hurry from the neighborhood. It was a smell that created nausea, and conveyed thoughts of cholera, typhoid fever, and other diseases that are the natural offspring of neglected sanitation. It was a smell that outrivaled in foulness anything in the ill-smelling line yet produced on this continent—not excepting the Chinese quarter of San Francisco—and would hold its own in a contest with unsewered Marseilles, putrid Constantinople or any other epidemic-creating city in effete Europe. It was a smell once inhaled never forgotten. It was a smell born of a cesspool which some scavengers were cleaning out, and it was and still is the opinion of everybody who inhaled the disgusting odor that the cleaning-out process should have been postponed until an hour when the streets were not thronged by two-thirds of Butte's population. Many persons also opined that the City Health Officer should prevent a recurrence of the nuisance.

Card of Thanks.

HANCOCK, Houghton County, Michigan, February 1, 1886.

To the Butte Daily Miner:

Permit me, through your columns, to express my great appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the Union Guard Company, of Butte City, for their extreme kindness in taking charge of the funeral of my deceased and unfortunate brother James Oxnam, and for the very excellent manner in which the funeral was conducted. I would also return my thanks to the "Alice and "Butte City bands" for their kindness. Respectfully, WILLIAM OXNAM.

A couple of printers had a small "scrap" over a pool game last evening, and both of them were arrested.

THEATRICAL CHIT-CHAT.

The burning of the Theater Comique was the great event, in a theatrical way, of the week. It was a very serious affair for many of the performers, who lost not only all their wardrobe, but in many instances their savings of many years. In the community there has been much sympathy expressed for the sufferers, and notable for Manager Gordon, who built not only an excellent business, but a first-class business reputation. He has managed the business of the house with consummate skill and intelligence. He has always given a good show and spared no efforts to please the public. The best vaudeville performers have appeared at the house and the newest productions were presented as they appeared in the East.

* * *

THE fire has not discouraged Mr. Gordon. Reverses do not affect him, apparently. On the very night of the day of the fire he reopened his show in the old Renshaw Hall, and everything moved as smoothly as though nothing unusual had occurred. The show will be continued at Renshaw's for an indefinite period.

* * *

THE show will be greatly strengthened to-morrow night, when Aida, the great trapeze performer and the famous Phoite, gonteuse acrobats, will open. The show will be a first-class one.

* * *

THE MINER is pleased to learn that the old Theater Comique will be rebuilt at once, upon a much more extensive and complete scale. The building will be much larger than the old, and much more substantial and complete as to detail. It will be erected with a special view of its uses as a theater and permanency. The work of erection will begin at once.

* * *

THE MINER is pleased to learn that Manager Maguire has tendered the use of his Grand Opera House to the performers who were rendered all but destitute by the fire. The offer has been most gratefully accepted and the benefit will probably take place on Friday night. It will be "a corker," sure. We expect to see, on this occasion, the largest audience ever assembled in the Grand.

* * *

HAPPY CAL WAGNER'S MINSTRELS played a very successful engagement at the Grand during the week. We have already spoken approvingly of this organization. It is a real old time minstrel troupe. It gives an entertaining and clean show, and we cordially commend it to press and people.

* * *

THE next attraction at the Grand will be Charles B Bishop, the famous comedian, in "Strictly Business" and "The Widow Bedott." We need say nothing in favor of Charlie Bishop. Everybody knows him Nearly everybody has roared at his funny antics and laughed at his sayings. He will do a large business here, sure.

* * *

MORRISON is making money on the Colorado Utah circuit.

* * *

ALICE HARRISON is doing an immense business on the coast in "Hot Water." Frank Girard, for many years Tony Pastor's factotum, is her manager. A great combination.

* * *

M. B. LEAVITT is lying seriously ill in San Francisco.

* * *

MME. MARIE GEISTINGER has written her memoirs, and the first volume is ready for publication. It is expected to be piquant.

* * *

THE San Francisco correspondent of the *Dramatic News* says: "It is a source of great pleasure to learn that Miss Charlotte Tittle, a native of California, is meeting very favorable recognition in her support of Jeffreys-Lewis. Miss Tittle is young, handsome and talented and is deserving of consideration by the press wherever she may appear." All of which is most true.

* * *

THERE died in poverty in Kansas City recently an old man named Conrad Freburthuvser, whom nobody seemed to remember as the original Swiss bell ringer in America. Barnum brought him and his family of eleven children out about forty years ago, and Joe Emmet was at one time a bell ringer in his troupe. The old man made and lost several fortunes in his time, and ended his days almost in want. The Berger family made a fortune at the same trade and kept it. It is curious enough that the Bergers also gave his start to a popular comedian, Sol Smith Russell, who traveled with them for several years.

* * *

NED BUCKLEY has found his "My Partner" venture anything but a financial success in California, and retires from the field from traveling stars. He intends leaving for the East soon with the hope of becoming leading man for some first-class attraction. A wise conclusion, E. J.

* * *

MISS SOPHIE EYRE has once again become connected with the Wallack Theater. A great *artiste* in a great temple of amusement.

* * *

J. H. DOLCHY, *alias* J. H. Laine, manager of Cal Wagner's Minstrels, was arrested a short time ago at St. Paul, Minnesota, at the instigation of his wife, for desertion and non-support of his family. He was held.

* * *

BILLY EMMERSON will return home from Australia in the spring

* * *

W. H. LYTELL'S COMBINATION will appear at the Grand Opera House during the present month, in an engagement of two weeks. During their stay a number of spectacular plays will be put on in a style of grandeur surpassing any previous effort in this city. In the production of each play entirely new scenery will grace the stage. The repertoire consists of "Lights o' London," "The World," "Siberia," "Around the World in Eighty Days," "Michael Strogoff," and "Romany Rye." The company numbers twenty-one people They carry two car-loads of scenery, wardrobe and stage properties.

* * *

THE next burnt cork show to visit Butte will be Baird's Minstrels.

* * *

JOSEPH B. POLK, in "Mixed Pickles," is one of the coming attractions at the Grand.

* * *

THE "RAG BABY," Annie Pixley and Fred Bock, in "Power of Money," are among the coming attractions under engagement to Manager Maguire.

Good Templar Installation.

The Independent Order of Good Templars installed their officers last evening with open doors. About 100 visiting friends were present to witness the beautiful ceremonies, after which all members and friends partook of an elegant repast, and everybody present appeared to enjoy the occasion hugely. The following officers were installed by F. W. Haynes, W. L. Deputy:

W. C. T.—John Astle.
W. V. T. Mrs. Lillie Smiley.
W. S.—Sample H. Orr.
W. Treas.—Mrs. L. A. Buzzard.
W. F. S.—C. A. Schwarm.
W. M.—J. A. Longstaff.
W. D. M.—Miss Hattie Seeley.
W. I. G.—Elmer Young.
W. O G.—Miss L. E. McLaran.
W. A. S—Miss E. Brennanan.
R. H. S.—Miss Belle Lindsay.
L. H. S.—Miss May Terrell.

He Took the Clothes.

John Doe ordered a suit of clothes from his tailor, and they were sent to the place where he was working on a sort of a "C. O. D." lay-out, but John put them on and was wearing them without paying the amount of the bill, and the tailor had him arrested for petty larceny. He gave bail last night and will be called up in the Police Court tomorrow.

THE SADDEST IN HISTORY.

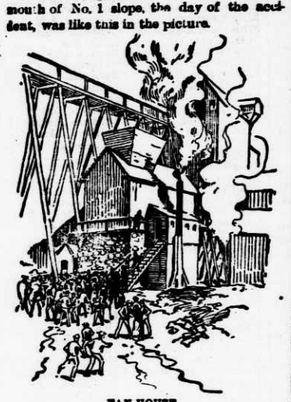
Details of the Nanticoke Coal Mine Disaster.

HEROIC RESCUERS

Seventeen Widows and Fifty-Two Orphans Made by the Latest Mine Horror.

WILKESBARRE, Pa., Feb. 6.—There were more heavy hearts in and about the town of Nanticoke, Pa., during the past holidays than perhaps in all the United States besides. A prosperous place it is, too. It is in the heart of the anthracite mining district of the Wyoming valley nine miles from here. The underground veins which furnish its industry are the property of the Pennsylvania Coal company. This company does not belong to the coal owners' combination but operates its shafts its own way. Consequently, when the general association orders mines to stop work on account of low prices, the Pennsylvania pay no heed, but continues to blast out and bring to light its black treasure the year around without stopping. It is a good company to work for. Cash circulates constantly in Nanticoke; trade is lively, and the people are happy, as only busy persons can be. They give work to 6,000 men and boys. These turn out daily 35,000 tons of coal.

The men employed are of all nationalities, but mostly of foreign birth, Irish, Welsh, Poles and Hungarians. The scene near the mouth of No. 1 slope, the day of the accident, was like this in the picture.



FAN HOUSE.

The illustration shows what is called the fan house. The great engine in the fan house worked away as though it was a matter of life and death, the steampipe outside puffed merrily, and the great pile of culm was added to hourly.

And it was culm that caused the accident. What is it? It is the dust and refuse from coal. It is piled high about all the mines. It is blown hither and thither by the winds the rain wets it, and it sogs down in a grimy mud, blackening like ink all that touches it. Day by day it accumulates the longer mines are worked, until mine owners are at their wits' end what to do with it. It becomes in time not only an inconvenience, but a danger. A man has invented late y, it is said, a process for making fuel very cheaply out of culm. It is made into a mixture and pressed, and in this state is said to give out just the steady, intense heat that is best adapted for heating the water in steamboat boilers. If this be true, then a great nuisance will be got rid of.

But the Pennsylvania company had found no way of disposing of their culm. They had dug coal and shipped it till their refuse pile was a hill 200 feet high and covered thirty acres. It was upon a fleecy swampy ground over an abandoned portion of the mine. The water stood in puddles under the culm, and made channels through it, and trickled into the ground beneath, till all became a slippery, treacherous mass.

At 10 o'clock the day of the accident a miner was blasting off rock in a vein of No. 1 slope. I made a tremendous crash, heavier than usual. Immediately thereafter water and earth began to pour upon the hapless miners.

"Save yourselves! Run for your lives!" was the word passed.

The miners sprang out in frantic haste, but the water poured in torrents. The main gangway is called the "slope," and it was this the miners aimed to reach. Most of them escaped and were drawn out, although the water was up the necks of the last.

When the terrified hundreds gathered above ground, twenty-six hapless souls were missing. Ten were Poles and Hungarians; the others mostly Welsh and Irish. One thought seized every human creature in Nanticoke. The lost men must be rescued. There were the Sugar Notch miners buried by a cave-in in 1880. They were prisoned in a mine six days, and yet every man of them was take out alive. To work, then, to work with desperate energy!

The company offered every inducement in its power. The workmen stopped in all the mines. They would not go on and labor as though no thing had happened, when twenty-six brave comrades might be dead or dying in agony under ground. One hundred of the strongest men went down to dig out a passageway. How they worked you see in the picture.

DIGGING THE PASSAGE.

They sought to make only a tunnel so large as a man might crawl through. More would waste precious time. They gathered up trowelfulls of the black mud and filled buckets with it, crouching upon their hands and knees. When a bucket was full it was passed from man to man till it was carried to the outer passage. Such work seemed puny child's play, for there were 250 feet of culm above them. But it was all that could be done.

Pumps were rigged at once, and set working to get the water out. When one squad of men were tired, a fresh relay took their places. Night and day they kept at it, iron-sinewed, determined miners. Bulletins were sent out constantly to the thousands who were gathered about the mouth of the mine.

"In twenty-four hours we shall reach them and we think they are alive."

Again: "By 7 to-morrow morning we shall have them dead or alive."

The days went on. Some mules that had been in one of the shafts were found, alive. That renewed flagging hope. But presently there was a trace of fire damp in the low, slimy tunnel. Experienced miners shook their heads. "They are choked to death, God have mercy on their souls! They might have lived on mule meat a good while, but if the air was cut off they died at once."

It was sad to look hopeless. The terrific anxiety told on the friends on side. A young woman, Maggie Sorper, had two brothers, strong young men, among the lost ones. She was nervous and excitable, and the shock killed her. The parents were very old. The white-haired father hovered like a ghost about the ill-fated mine, wringing his hands.

"I've got two as good boys as ever lived dead in that mine, and as good a girl as a father ever had lying dead at home, but the will of God be done," he said.

It was very pitiful. The accident occurred on Friday. Monday another tremendous culm slide took place. It fell into and filled completely the narrow, painful passage already cut out. Every way of communicating with the imprisoned men had been tried, if, perchance, they were yet alive. An iron pipe ran through the chambers. The rescuers tried knocking on this, knowing that the sound would penetrate to the farthest recesses. But it was never answered. When the second landslide took place all hope ended. The men were given up for surely dead. The rescuers made a rush to escape with their own lives.

Then they took thought how the bodies might be obtained. The coal company offered a reward of $100 for the first body [illegible]

Seventeen widows and fifty-two orphans were made by the disaster. A subscription has been started to send the helpless ones back to the old country. Since the conditions of life there will fare harder than here, this plan to a human person, looks tolerably tough. What will become of them then? One of the dead men was a young Pole who had only been married the Sunday before the disaster. He had saved $600 of his earnings. With this he bought a house and took his bride home to it.

This is one of the saddest mine disasters in history. Even hope of rescuing the bodies is about abandoned. They must probably lie buried at the culm bank till the end of time. Rather strangely the flow of culm and debris still continues, in a slow dull stream, like the current of lava on Mt Vesuvius. A one gallon pail has the appearance of a sink hole in the earth. The yawning opening represented in the illustration is 150 feet wide. It is in the center of the culm pile.

What next? The pile of debris is so great that they say it would take a year to excavate the hill, and then there would be no certainty of finding the remains. The men were known to be at work in a certain chamber when the vault fell. That chamber was reached later a few days digging, but their rescuers there. They must have tried to escape with the rest and been overwhelmed and strangled by the deluge of black mud in the passage ways.

The company propose to cease digging, wall in the dangerous mine, and erect a monument on the spot to the memory of the lost miners. Then they will divide $40,000 among the bereft families. To continue digging would certainly cost a year's work, and $200,000. The rest of the miners have returned to their other work in the slopes.

So the tragedy ends, and one of the darkest leaves of the year 1885 has been turned down.

A. J. BOTHWELL.

The Chess Match.

Since poor Paul Morphy lost his wits at chess America has had no great champion. Morphy is yet alive, residing at New Orleans, a mental wreck, at once a monument and a warning of what inordinate chess playing will make of a man.

The chess tournament now going on in New York is for the championship of the world. I began Wednesday, Jan. 6, and will continue until one or the other of the two player, who perhaps shall have won ten games. Mr. Steinitz is ostensibly the American champion but it is not necessary to spell out his name in order to discover that he is a German. His strong round face shows that. He claims to be quite five games ahead of his opponent on the total past record.

WILLIAM STEINITZ

The first four games are to be played in New York. Then the two chess giants will move to St. Louis, and play at the rooms of the St. Louis club, till several more games are won. The match will be finished in New Orleans.

Like everything else in these days, the tournament involves betting and gambling on the result. It is a money-making scheme. A stake of $2,000 a side has been put up. The winner will get $5,200. It is no hing like as much as a champion prize fighter can win, but chess being an intellectual game, that of course is not to be expected.

Mr. Zuckertort is the champion player of Great Britain. He is a pale, intellectual looking person, far more the ideal chess player in appearance than Steinitz; but he also looks like a man who would worry over chess nights and finally break down under nervous prostration. Mr. Steinitz has a deep chest and hearty an mal vitality. Zuckertort, too, is of German extraction, which is rather odd. Are Germans the best chess players?

J. H. ZUCKERTORT.

Here he has been what the lamented Artemus Ward would call a "late onpleasantness" between the two men, but it is over now, and they claim to be the best of friends. The sporting gentry are making betting books on the game as if it was a horse race. The champions play in public, and the "game money" is largely counted on. There is no brass band accompaniment as far as they have got, but one dont know what may happen before the game is ended.

This playing in public and being stared at like a fox at a prize show must have a soothing effect on the nerves, and tend to make them do their best.

They play on alternate days, four hours in the afternoon and four at night. In case a game is not finished at night it will be left over and concluded next day. If there is a tie of nine games the match is to be withdrawn. At the opening each player was required to make thirty moves in the first two hours, after that not less than fifteen moves an hour. After every move it is reproduced exactly out in the crowd upon a big chess board four feet square, so that spectators may watch the game.

The artist has on his easel a painting of a fish. A rich purchaser and his wife come in. "This won't do," said the purchaser, as he inspected the canvas closely. "There is no feeling of a fish about this."

"But, sir," suggested the artist, "the painting is not quite finished; it needs a few touches. If you will call in a few days it will give me great pleasure to show it to you completed."

On the rich purchaser's departure the artist goes out and buys a codfish, which he brings in and rubs over the painting.

The rich purchaser calls again, and rubs his features over the canvas as before: "Ah, now you have hit it. That is a splendid picture. So perfect! Why, I almost smell the fish."

Painting and purchaser are both sold.

BETTER TIMES IN STORE.

Fluctuations In Prices During the Year 1885.

FOOD AND STOCKS.

The Cost of the Former Declined and the Latter Increased in Value.

New York, Feb 7.—From the expensive list of stock quotations at the New York stock exchange for the year 1885 the following chart has been tabulated. It gives at a glance the highest and lowest quotations of the principal railroad stocks during the past year.

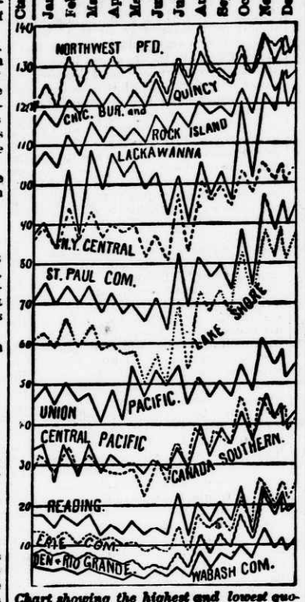
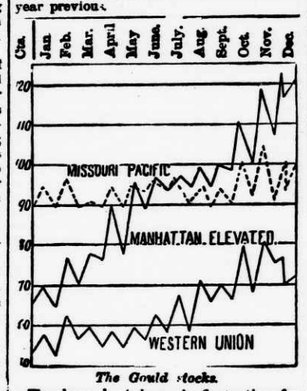


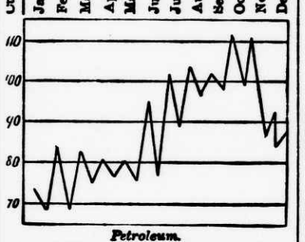
Chart showing the highest and lowest quotations of the principal railroad stocks for each month during the year 1885.

It has been an exceedingly busy year in stock speculation. The fluctuation for the first six months it will be seen by the chart were pretty regular. In July there came a spurt and stocks have advanced steadily since In the year just closed the tendency of the stock market has been upward just as in 1884 it was downward. Though the gain in 1885 was greater than the decrease of the year previous.



The Gould stocks.

The above chart shows the fluctuations for each month during 1885. In the quotations of what are known as the Gould stocks. Their increase in value has been notable and is due undoubtedly to the announcement that Mr. Gould retires from active speculation in Wall street at the close of the late year and intends devoting his attention solely to these three properties.



The decline in the cost of food.

This chart shows the fluctuation in the wholesale prices for the principal articles of food every second year for the past fifteen years. The grades and prices vary greatly. In this chart the medium grade and wholesale price is given per pound for butter, tea, coffee and sugar in the New York market. The price for peaches is per can. In flour the line merely shows the quantity purchased for 48 cents in 1870 cost 38 cents in 1872, and could at the close of 1885 be purchased for 16 cents. Pork in the same way; the quantity which cost 26 cents in 1870 could be purchased for one half that in 1872; in 1876 it rose to 19 cents only to fall below 10 cents in 1878. It rose had 19 cents again in 1882, only to close in 1885 at 11 cents. The cheapness of pork and other provisions is due to the tremendous crop of corn, which amounted to 2,000,000,000 bushels. Comparing the prices of the leading articles of food for 1884-1885, The American Grocer says:

The general drift has been toward a lower range of prices, sugar being the only exception of note. While the prices at the close of the year for wheat and flour are above those at the same time in 1884, there has not been a time in thirty years when the average price of breadstuffs has been as low at the seaboard as during the one just closed. Throughout the year dairy products have been very cheap, the export prices ruling lower than for any other year in the history of the trade, with the exception of 1879. Potatoes are higher in consequence of the general prevalence of rot. Poultry is very cheap, so cheap in fact that fresh cod, proverbially called the poor man's turkey, is dear in comparison. In fact, fresh fish and salt mackerel are luxuries this year.

Coffee is decidedly lower, due to encouraging supplies and curtailment of speculation in the article. The importation of tea has been heavy, and prices throughout the year have averaged lower than in 1884. Rice commands the same price as one year before viz., 5 to 7 cents per pound. There has been a heavy consumption of foreign and domestic fruits, and that is a good test of the purchasing power of the masses.

When before has there been a period during which the laborer receiving $1, $2 or $3 per day could supply his table with such a variety of food of the best sort as now! Is there reason for complaining of the cost of living when at retail the best grades of flour are obtainable at a trifle over 2 cents per pound? good butter averaging the year through less than 25 cents per pound; cheese, 10 to 15 cents? Poultry finest brands of hams retailing at 12 cents per pound. The consumer may make choice of wholesome, palatable canned tomatoes, corn, beans or peas anywhere from 8 to 12 cents per can. The cost of food is by no means the greatest part of the year's expenses In fact food is a better equivalent for he money it costs than any other of the requisites of housekeeping. So far as it is concerned the poor of to-day can live as well as the wealthy classes of ten years ago In that respect it is the poor man's millennium.

S. H. HORGAN.

Dakota's Proposed Senators.

[Special Correspondence.]

WASHINGTON Jan 27.—Our young sister Dakota, who is seeking to make her debut and join the society of her sister states, does not trip up coyly and modestly and ask the assistance or forbearance of her full grown sisters in giving her the proper introductions and guiding her aright in the usages established on such occasions by precedent, but she swoops down on us like the blizzard for which she is famous and attempts to captivate us by her dash or "nerve." At any rate, she is the talk of the town here, as young ladies possessing her boldness are likely to be. Whether she will be able to win the heart of congress remains to be seen.

GIDEON C. MOODY.

On Dec. 16 last was the first notice received by the country that a legislature was in session at Huron, where Judges Edgerton and Moody were elected United States senators. Judge Gideon L. Moody, of Deadwood, was born in Cortland, N. Y., in 1833 He entered the Union army at the outbreak of the war, enlisting as a private from Jasper county, Indiana, and gradually rising in the service until he was made a colonel. Removing to Dakota he was made speaker of the assembly in 1868, and was re-elected to the same position in 1874. In the years intervening he served as a member of the house. He was sent as a delegate to the constitutional convention of 1883 and served as chairman of the committee appointed to prepare the memorial to the president and congress, setting forth Dakota's claim to sisterhood in the family of the United States.

ALONZO G. EDGERTON.

Alonzo J. Edgerton was born in Rome, N. Y., and is 57 years of age. He was graduated from Wesleyan university at Middletown, Conn., in 1851. When still a young man he removed to Minnesota, and has been intimately and prominently identified with the history of that state. He was a member of its legislature in 1858 59 and in 1877-78, and in 1876 was chosen a presidential elector. From 1871 to 1874 he occupied the position of railroad commissioner, and in 1881 was appointed as United States senator, succeeding Mr. Windom when the latter became secretary of the treasury in President Garfield's cabinet. Dec. 20, 1881, he was made chief justice of the supreme court of Dakota. Both men have been in Washington some time, and attract considerable attention.

PERRY BARTON.

A Founder of the Atlantic Steamship Lines.

[Special Correspondence.]

NEW YORK, Jan. 6.—It was a surprise to many who deplore the lack of American ownership in ocean steamers to find that Stephen Barker Guion, who died recently, was not only a native of this city, but descended from one of the oldest Knickerbocker families, his ancestors having settled here in 1660. Mr. Guion was born in New York sixty-five years ago. In 1842 he joined with John S. Williams, the son of an old sea captain, in forming the Williams and Guion line of fast sailing packets between New York and Liverpool. The line was known as the "Black Star line," and became celebrated for the speed of its clipper ships. In fact, it was the pride of the shipping interests. When steam was introduced the firm still clung to their sailing vessels until 1866, when they built their first steamship, the Manhattan, which cost $400,000. This was followed by a fleet of seven vessels, bearing the names of states. In 1850 Mr. Guion took charge of the Liverpool branch of the firm. He became a British subject, and so popular that he was offered the mayoralty or a seat in parliament, both of which he declined. He was a bachelor, and noted for his charity, particularly to needy Americans, none of whom, if worthy, he ever turned away. He died comparatively poor.