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P. A. STOKES

HEPPNER FLOODED HUNDREDS DROWNED

County Seat of Morrow County Obliterated by Veritable Ocean of Water, Resulting From Cloud-burst Sunday Evening--Survivors Without Homes--Great Suffering.

CIVILIZATION DESOLATES. Minister Claims That the Cutting Down of Trees Is Factor in Retrogression.

New York, June 15.--Rev. Dr. Oliver Hall, preaching in the Church of the Divine Paternity upon "God's Revelation Through the Trees" has declared that the desolation now apparent everywhere in Palestine, Asia Minor and other countries, is due to the destruction of the trees. He said: "There is the same story all the way round the Mediterranean and we may trace the path of civilization by the desolation it has left. If we could know the full truth about the garden of Eden, I suspect we should find that the man was cast out of the garden, not because he ate of the fruit of the tree, but because he cut the tree down. "Here in America we are doing the same thing. We send out our portable sawmills and each year a territory equal to that of Maryland is stripped clean of trees. We can already see the barrenness in New England and now we are carrying out the same policy in Michigan, Wisconsin, and elsewhere. The evils of flood and drought follow."

People Taken Without Warning While At Their Evening Meal Buildings Were Thrown From Foundations And Crushed Together In Awful Confusion.

When The Waters Had Subsided Bodies Of The Drowned Were Placed In Bank And The Scenes Were Heart Breaking--People In Neighboring Villages Saved By Heroic Ride Of Young Man.

Portland, June 15.--An appalling disaster befell the town of Heppner, county seat of Morrow county, about 6 P. M. last evening when a cloudburst swept away two-thirds of the town and drowned 500 people. Heppner, a town of about 1200 people, is situated in a gulch on Willow creek, and a wall of water 15 or 20 feet high rushed down upon the inhabitants without warning. At 2 P. M. 300 bodies had been recovered. Assistance has been sent by special trains from this city. The Dalles, Arlington and smaller towns nearby.

NEWS IN ASTORIA.

When the first intimation of the disaster at Heppner was received here in a dispatch to The Astorian, people could scarcely credit the telegram. It seemed impossible that such a thing should have happened in Oregon, and there were many expressions of belief that the extent of the catastrophe had been overestimated. Friends of those in the stricken city were in a terrible state of suspense, and there were many inquiries at the newspaper offices for fuller particulars. Gradually it became apparent from the tone of further dispatches that there had been no exaggeration in the original estimates, and the full horror of the occurrence grew clear. Many people awaited the arrival of the train last night, and there was a demand for all the papers that had anything with reference to the tragedy. Large numbers of the Portland evening papers were sold, but the meager news that could be obtained from the scene of the flood proved disappointing to those that had hoped for full particulars by yesterday evening.

and nothing could be done to save those who were caught in the rushing water. Homes, stores and all buildings in the principal portion of the town were torn loose and driven onward, one jam causing the water to pile into another and this swept away again, causing more buildings to go. A low estimate places the dead at 200. The town had a population of about 1500 but this morning only about one-half of the people of the town could be located. We do not know where they have gone unless they have gone down stream. They may have gone to the hills, but this is doubtful. The whole affair was one of the most horrible, sickening scenes, with death and destruction being spread on every side. "From the time the flood came until it went into the regular channel of the creek flowing through the town, was about two hours. The cloudburst struck fairly in the canyon of Willow creek, six miles above town. There was no warning until the mighty wall of water had reached the town. As it came rushing down the creek bed it tore everything before it, consisting of trees, large boulders, sand and earth. When it reached town, the water was piled over 15 feet high, as a perpendicular wall, splashing, foaming, leaping, and creating a mighty roaring sound. People did not have time to get from their buildings. Those who were on the streets shouted a warning to others as they rushed madly to the hills for their lives. "Those who had reached the banks in safety immediately formed themselves into small rescuing parties and at once started in to save those that could be reached. Ropes were the only means that we had. Those who were in mid-stream could be easily seen. Their pitiful cries for help could be heard, but nothing could be done. We could only stand and see them go to their death. The rescuing work was still going on when I came away at 9 o'clock this morning. When I was leaving, 50 bodies had been placed in the Heppner bank, where the doors had been thrown open and which was used as a morgue. "We placed a guard over the bank all night, when we allowed the public in at daybreak. The scene was something awful. Women came to identify their little babies; their grown children

and their husbands. Fathers came to see their dead wives and children when the people came in no control could be kept over them at all. Mothers fainted, wives tore their hair, and men cried like little children. Women fainted, at the same time tearing their clothes nearly from their bodies. As it was impossible to keep order, all had to be excluded and a committee formed to identify all that was possible. The worst could not be seen until this morning. One poor woman was found pinned between two heavy timbers; another woman was found with her little baby in her arms. In some of the houses which had been washed down stream and which had not been shattered, there were found dead brothers and sisters, some in each other's arms. "It is estimated that damage done to property alone was \$500,000. Some of the brick and stone buildings were not torn away, but there were some of them moved from their foundations. Buildings on the high flat were all saved although the water reached some of them. "Leslie Matlock, a young man there, was the hero of the day. When the flood first came he strided a horse and rode at breakneck speed down the canyon in front of the rushing water to notify the people of Lexington, a small town nine miles below. He had to go over a stony road. The night was dark and stormy. His horse leaped over boulders, sometimes nearly throwing the rider, but yet not once losing his feet. He arrived at Lexington just a few minutes ahead of the flood. The people were warned and immediately left for the hillside, not having time to take anything with them. Every person escaped, but when the flood had passed only two houses were standing. Lexington has a population of about 500. Lone was the next town down the line. People there were warned by Matlock by telephone. They left their homes, but as the town is built on a wide flat very little damage was done. No buildings were washed away, but some were moved from their foundations. "The dead are being buried as rapidly as they can be identified. They are simply wrapped in clean sheets, placed in a rough pine box and carried away to the burying ground."

Partial List of Dead: Thomas Howard and family, Bert Cabots and family, Mrs. E. A. Rhea, Guy Boyd and family, George Tinsley and family, Mrs. Tadbreg, Harold Jones and family, Chris. M. Ashbaugh. Continued on Second Page.

COMMUNICATION CUT OFF.

The Dalles, June 15.--The latest reports received here at 5 P. M. by telephone from Lone, 17 miles northwest of Heppner, on Willow creek, give the number of bodies recovered 300 and the total number, estimated loss, over 500. Telephonic connection is cut off in every direction by the severest electric disturbance ever experienced in the history of the region, two distinct storms having passed over the town between 5 and 7 o'clock tonight, one bearing to the northwest toward Golden-dale, Wash., and the other to the southwest. No report has been had of the progress of the two relief trains which left here, The Dalles train at 1:30 P. M. and the Portland train which passed through at 5 P. M.

DEATH FROM BURNING OIL.

Brother and Sister Meet Awful Fate in New York Apartment. New York, June 15.--Enveloped in flames from head to foot, Josephine Alonde, 19 years old, and her brother, Alphonse, 17 years old, were rescued from their apartments in Brooklyn. Josephine died a few hours later at a hospital and the brother cannot recover. The accident was caused by the explosion of an oil stove which young Alonde tried to fill while it was burning. The blazing oil instantly enveloped the brother and sister. The former carried Josephine to a window and succeeded in summoning aid, before he fell, unconscious. The explosion caused a panic among the other tenants who fled to the street, but the fire was confined to the Alonde apartment.

BUILT IN A FUNNEL.

Heppner is situated on the banks of Willow creek, at a point where the valley narrows in such a manner as to give the down-coming flood the force it might acquire from being forced through a funnel. In places the width between the high hills that shut in the town is not more than 1000 feet, and as the majority of the houses and business buildings are on low ground to the west of the creek the effects of the flood would be doubled. Balm creek, Hinton creek, and two deep gulches that drain a large area of hilly country converging into Willow creek in a short distance of Heppner. With a heavy rainfall over the great drainage basins of these creeks it will be seen that the babbling brook which usually runs past Heppner could become in a few minutes the roaring torrent that dealt death and devastation.

THUNDER STORM HERE.

The storms of Sunday were not lacking in Astoria, one of the severest thunder storms in years occurring that day, the lightning striking the chimney of Fisher's house and also burning out many fuses. Last night a heavy electrical storm was reported to be raging over the desolated Willow creek valley and Eastern Oregon in general, interrupting communication. In Astoria Sunday's storm was quite eclipsed by that of yesterday, the thunder and lightning continuing for a considerable time. Heavy rain fell also, and if the conditions were the same to the east of the state there will be much damage done through floods. The river in Portland should have passed the 24-foot stage by this time, and great inconvenience, if no loss, is sure to be caused in that city.

ASTORIA GIRL IN HEPPNER.

Miss Mary Jones of this city, who went to Eastern Oregon some time ago in the hope of benefiting her health, is said to have been in Heppner at the time of the disaster, and her friends are apprehensive concerning her safety.

FROM AN EYE WITNESS.

Spokane, June 15.--A special to the Spokesman-Review from Echo, Ore., says: N. T. Tooker, of Fairbanks, Morse Co., Portland, who was at Heppner when the awful disaster happened last evening by the bursting of an immense cloud, arrived here this afternoon, being the first to bring the news out. He was there when the disaster came and remained until 9 o'clock this morning. He gives a graphic description of the terrible affair. He said: "The rushing torrent came at 5:20 last evening when most of the inhabitants were at their evening meal. All were taken suddenly without warning

SEIZED A FLOTILLA.

Nationalist General Used Revolutionary Vessels to Transfer Men. New York, June 15.--General Sylvester has seized the revolutionary flotilla at Acre and used one of the boats to send his ill soldiers to Manos, says a Herald dispatch from Rio Janeiro. Several officers and men died during the voyage. General Placido Castro will soon sail for Rio Janeiro to explain his actions. The government ministers of war and foreign relations recently held a conference on this subject. Word has been received from Amata, the territory in dispute between France and England, that the inhabitants of the Brazilian region attempted to cause a revolution and proclaim their independence as a state. The authorities frustrated the plot.

STRIKERS GIVE UP.

Abandon Their Demands and Ask for Re-Instatement. New York, June 15.--Official announcement has been made at the weekly meeting of the Central Federated union of the abandonment of the strike by the subway excavators. This means that over 20,000 men will apply for work unconditionally. "The letter stated that the union would be built up and intimated that at some future time its demands, which it failed to enforce this time, will be submitted again. The strike has been in force several weeks and greatly delayed work in the uncompleted portions of the rapid transit tunnel.

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