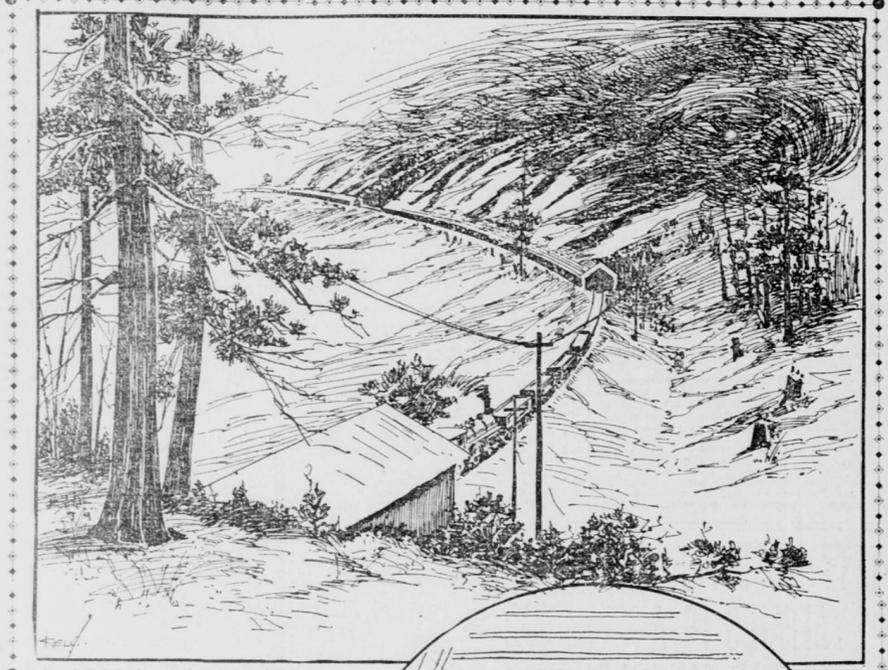




## BLAZING SNOWSHEDS ILLUMINE THE SIERRAS

### Southern Pacific Property Valued at Thousands of Dollars Ruthlessly Destroyed by Incendiaries.



SACRAMENTO, Oct. 4.—A terrific fire raged in the Sierra Nevada Mountains this morning, and when it had spent its fury a mile and one-half of snowsheds were charred and smoking embers and over a mile of steel rails were bent and twisted by the fierce heat.

Two passenger trains, one eastbound and the other west, were stalled, and the road was practically under blockade all day. There is no question as to the origin of the fire. It was plainly the work of an incendiary. The Placer County officials are at work on the case, aided by the shrewdest of the Southern Pacific detectives, and no means will be spared to apprehend the miscreants.

Almost every year the railroad company suffers from fires in the snowsheds, and they are generally of a serious character. There are long stretches in the mountains where the sheds are absolutely needed to protect the track from avalanches of snow which, were it not for the sheds, would roll down upon it. The rotary snowsheds invented as a substitute for the sheds do not avail in these steep passes in the high Sierras, and the railroad company has been obliged to maintain the long system of sheds in the face of the fact that it costs an enormous sum yearly to preserve and rebuild them. Naturally, being constructed of pine and subjected to the drying process of the rainless summers in the high altitude of the mountains, the sheds become very inflammable and it takes but an application of the incendiary's torch to convert them into a sinuous serpent of fire.

Profiting by its costly experience, the railroad company has established fire trains at the Summit and Blue Canyon, on which steam is kept constantly and a crew of firemen ready night and day to respond at a moment's call. For the fire train every piece of rolling stock must turn aside at the nearest switch. No train thunders through the hills at such speed, and the work of the crew is as exciting as it is perilous. To complete the system of precautionary measures a lookout station is located on the crest of Red Mountain, near Cisco. Here a man and his wife live, and here every ten minutes of the twenty-four hours, one or the other, with a glass in hand, sweep the entire stretch of snowsheds from Blue Canyon to the Summit. Besides these lookouts fire watchmen traverse the sheds constantly. A telephone line runs through the sheds, up to Red Mountain and down again to the fire train. When the Red Mountain sentinel sees a fire, or is informed of one through the telephone, he sends a message to the fire trains to rush to the scene.

Last night at 9 o'clock the Red Mountain sentinel sent in word to railroad headquarters that the telephone line had evidently been cut or broken somewhere in the sheds. The Western Union Telegraph wires, which are enclosed in a cable running under the roof of the sheds, about 2 1/2 m. refused to work, and it was at once realized that the cable had been cut. About this time the Red Mountain lookout saw a fire on the shed line near Butte bridge.

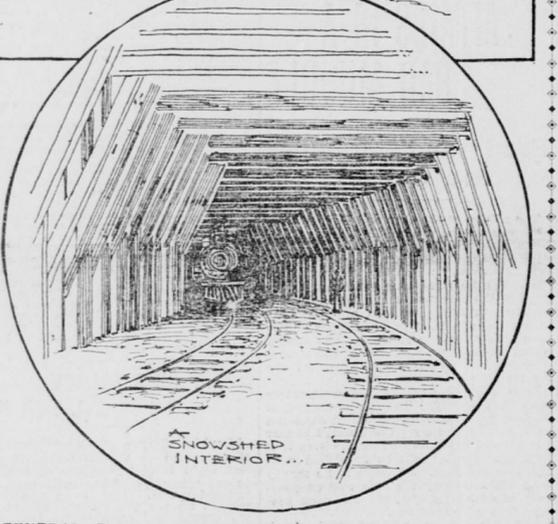
The agent at Cisco wired to Sacramento that the sheds were on fire. Division Superintendent Wright dispatched the fire train at Blue Canyon to the scene. When the fire-fighters arrived they discovered the incendiary character of the blaze. The sheds run along continuously until they come to butte near a bridge which is 430 feet long. There the shed system stops, to

be resumed when the bridge is crossed. Yet at both ends of the bridge the sheds had been started, and, though a stretch of iron 430 feet long intervened, the sheds on both sides were madly aflame. A strong south wind was blowing at the time, and passengers describe the scene as magnificent. The flames illuminated the heavens and placed the towering pines of the surrounding hills in bold relief against the reddened sky.

Up to a late hour to-night no arrests have been reported here in connection with the fire. A short time ago the lookout at Red Mountain detected some men in the act of setting fire to the pine forests on the other side of the American River fork. Although a search was made for them the men could not be caught. The loss of the railroad company by the present fire will probably reach \$75,000. It will be necessary to rebuild the sheds before the heavy snows set in, and a large force of men will at once be put to work. The track is rapidly being rebuilt and new rails laid, and trains will soon be running on schedule time.

Senator Aldrich, who, as chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate, has taken a prominent part in the framing of the bill, said yesterday that the measure had been prepared, but that it would not be made public until it had been shown to a number of Republican Senators. It is the present intention of the Finance Committee to ask a speedy consideration of the bill in the Senate, in order that it may be disposed of as early in the session as possible.

CANAL COMMISSION. The Entire Body Shortly to Hold a Meeting in Washington. WASHINGTON, Oct. 4.—Admiral John G. Walker, chairman of the Isthmian



CENTRAL PACIFIC SNOWSHEDS, VISITED BY AN INCENDIARY FIRE.

Canal Commission, has returned to the city and was at his desk this morning. The entire commission will meet here in a few days, when the time at which they will go south will likely be determined. It is not probable, however, that the commission will be ready to sail before late in November. Meanwhile, an expedition party will be sent to Panama and another to Greytown.

### SALE OF HAWAIIAN LANDS IS STOPPED

President McKinley Issues the Order to Solve Difficulties at Pearl Harbor.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4.—The Navy Department as well as the War Department have been obstructed in the acquisition of the lands in Hawaii actually needed for their purposes, particularly in the execution of the Pearl harbor improvements, the President has issued the following executive order to meet the case: "The President of the United States hereby directs that all proceedings taken or pending for the sale or disposition of the public lands in the Hawaiian Islands shall be discontinued, and that if any sales or agreements for sale of said public lands have been made since the adoption of the resolution of annexation the purchasers shall be notified that the same are null and void, and any consideration paid to the local authorities on account thereof shall be refunded."

### SENATE WILL STAND FOR GOLD STANDARD

Financial Bill, It Is Said, Will Be Introduced the First Day the Senators Meet.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4.—The Post-mortem will say: On the first day of the approaching session of Congress the Senate financial bill will be introduced in the latter body. It will not be on the same lines as the House, but it will declare without equivocation for the gold standard. Senator Aldrich, who, as chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate, has taken a prominent part in the framing of the bill, said yesterday that the measure had been prepared, but that it would not be made public until it had been shown to a number of Republican Senators. It is the present intention of the Finance Committee to ask a speedy consideration of the bill in the Senate, in order that it may be disposed of as early in the session as possible.

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## ACHIEVEMENTS IN WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

### Marconi's Reports of the Race Will Be Sent to The Call To-Day.

### NATIONS INTERESTED

#### Germany and Japan Also Send Representatives to Witness and Report on the Results.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

NEW YORK, Oct. 4.—The Mail and Express says: "All accounts agree that the thorough test made yesterday in connection with the yacht race of the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy resulted in eminent satisfaction. Not only were complete bulletins sent from the sea by Signor Marconi and his assistants to the highlands of Navesink, being transmitted thence to the city by wire, but return messages were received on shipboard containing the leading news of the day. The average time of the transmission of yacht news from the steamer far out upon the water to the waiting crowd in New York is said to have been sixty seconds. It was a significant, even startling demonstration of a new departure in scientific achievement, the eventual value of which may be illimitable. As a journalistic feat of great and lasting merit this has never been surpassed."

NEW YORK, Oct. 4.—From all parts of the country, east, west, north and south, queries and congratulations poured in to-day upon Signor Marconi as a result of the splendid results achieved on Tuesday in reporting by wireless telegraphy the first contest between the Columbia and the Shamrock for the Herald and The Call.

In San Francisco the interest in Signor Marconi's work was greater than that in the yacht race. From that city came a request that the Herald telegraph whether Marconi met all expectations. From Atlanta, Ga., and from New Orleans, La., came similar requests for information. To all of these there could be made only one reply. Signor Marconi had exceeded every reasonable expectation.

One result of wireless telegraphy with stations aboard the Grande Duchesse and the Ponce is the greatly increased demand for tickets for these ships. Excursionists desire to have the double satisfaction of witnessing the contest between the two greatest yachts ever constructed and at the same time watching the operations of the latest marvel in the field of practical science. Each of the two excursion boats thus favored will tomorrow carry the limit in the matter of passenger list.

The work of sending bulletins will tomorrow be divided between the Ponce and the Grande Duchesse.

Signor Marconi, as usual, will be on the Ponce, guiding from the chart-room of that steamship the operations of the four stations. From the Ponce he will bulletin the start of the race and describe the contest until 12:30 o'clock, when the operators on the Grande Duchesse will take up the work and follow the challenger and cup defender around the first stake boat. There Signor Marconi will again open communication from the Ponce, the work on the run home being divided the same as in the run for the first mark. A red flag flying from the tall spar above the mast of the Ponce will indicate that Signor Marconi is flashing bulletins to the shore. If no flag flies at the masthead of the Ponce the operators on the Grande Duchesse will flash bulletins by those mysterious currents which have just been controlled for the service of man. Bulletins will be sent from that ship to the receiving stations at Navesink Highlands and on the cable ship Mackay-Bennett.

In addition to four representatives of the United States Government, who have been detailed to give a careful study to the Marconi system, there will be on the Ponce a lieutenant attached to the German embassy in Washington and a Japanese naval officer. These gentlemen have been detailed by their governments to profit by the work being done by Signor Marconi. They will report upon the results accomplished. The work done Tuesday, important as it was, will no doubt be far surpassed to-morrow.

A call representative in the Herald's telegraph room forwards Marconi's bulletins by special overland wire direct to The Call's business office. He is seated between two operators, on his left the Marconi reports are received from the Navesink Highlands wireless telegraph station and at his right hand is an operator working the San Francisco wire. By "reading copy" over the shoulder of operator No. 1 and dictating orally to No. 2, the messages reach The Call's bulletin board on Market street only a word or two behind their receipt in the Herald office, and only one or two minutes after they are filed by Signor Marconi on the steamer Ponce, which follows the racers.

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH A HEAP OF CHARRED RUINS

### Sacred Edifice and Contents Totally Destroyed by Fire and Other Properties Damaged.

#### When the Supports of the East Steeple Burned Away It Plunged a Fiery Mass Into the Street, Severely Injuring Five Men.



WHEN THE STEEPLE TOPPLED.

INGURED. LEO COSTELLO, engine 14, severe laceration of the scalp, with concussion. EDWARD MCGONIGLE, 31 engine, severe laceration of the scalp, with concussion. WILLIAM J. KENEALEY, foreman engine 14, severe injury to right hand.

Two other firemen, whose names and the extent of whose injuries are unknown. FLAMES have licked their way through the First Baptist Church from altar to the big steeple that have kept vigil over the righteous for many decades and the house of worship is now a heap of blackened ruins. Fire broke out in this tabernacle, located on Eddy street, between Jones and Leavenworth, shortly before 5 o'clock last evening. The crumbling roof and time-dried timbers cracked as the flame tongue crept through and within five minutes the building was an inferno. Up the tall corner steeples the flames crept, cut away the supports and with the grace of divers the weighty spires plunged into the street. Men were carried away injured and bleeding from the scene; firemen, without regard for life, worked up beneath the tottering walls and guided powerful streams into the flames while on every side tangled wires were spitting death-dealing electric fluid in fiery flashes. Now the smoke belches forth from the burning church in suffocating clouds and again the flames reach toward the outer supports and envelop them in their fiery embrace. It was as though the arms of Halemamau were wrapped around the doomed structure and had finally reached out and drawn adjoining buildings with the burn-

ing circle. Out from the rear of the church the flames reached and left a charred path across the buildings near, and across the street in front the new-placed paint withered from the heat. Just how the fire started is a mystery. Although adjoining buildings were somewhat damaged there is no doubt but that it first kindled in the church. Mrs. E. Jewel was perhaps the first to see the flames. She occupied a suite of rooms in the Normandie, 229 Eddy street, and looking out of the window saw the flames reaching out from the church toward the hotel. She shouted an alarm through the corridors of the hotel, whence it was taken up and carried down the street. Officer Harry Hook heard the shout and rang in the alarm. A few minutes later Chief Sullivan arrived and ordered a second and a third alarm turned in. This brought the engines from outlying districts, and within fifteen minutes after the flames were first seen a siamese nozzle, fed by three engines, was turning a stream into the burning steeple. The supports were too nearly eaten away, however, and slowly the one on the west bent over and plunged into the street. Firemen, citizens and police scurried to places of safety, and then the stream was turned to the remaining steeple. In a minute later it was seen to waver, and just as the voices of half a thousand people echoed an alarm it seemed that the confined gases within the walls exploded beneath this steeple and it went hurtling into the street. It was too late for the firemen to flee, and borne down by the fiery mass five of them lay bleeding on the pavement. Willing hands released nozzle and hose and hurried to their rescue. Leo Costello of engine 14 was among the first placed on his feet, and although suffering from a severe laceration of the scalp and concussion he retained his consciousness and assisted by a fireman and Mayor Phelan was taken outside the lines, placed in a carriage and driven to the hospital. Edward McGonigle of engine 31 was practically unconscious. He was taken by four firemen to the Ellis-street Clinic. Dr. Herford took twelve stitches in a laceration extending almost from ear to ear. Later he was removed to the Receiving Hospital and thence to his home, 12 Florence street. William J. Kenealey, foreman of engine 14, who resides at 901 Bu-

chanan street, suffered a severe injury of the right hand. As soon as the wound was dressed, however, he refused to go to his home, but returned to continue the battle with the flames. Two other firemen were injured by the falling steeples, but they were quickly removed to their homes and up to a late hour their names had not been given out. All are resting well and it is not thought that a fatality will result from the injuries received at the fire, although the escape of the injured firemen from instant death was miraculous. After the injured had been removed the work of extinguishing the flames was renewed with increasing vigor. The Hotel Normandie, which caught fire shortly after flames were seen bursting from the roof of the church was occupied by Mrs. Alice M. Marshall as a lodging house. There are fifty rooms in the house, which were all occupied. The moment fire was discovered next door the guests grabbed their valuables and rushed to places of safety. Many of the inmates of the house were out at the time and their effects still remain in the rooms, broken and spoiled by falling plaster, water and smoke. Mrs. Marshall stated that the house had been furnished at a cost of \$4000, and that the furniture was insured for \$2000. The building, which is owned by a Mrs. Botsford, was badly damaged in the rear and on the east side. Police Officer Frank Riley and his wife were both confined to their room in the hotel by illness. They had just managed to crawl from the hotel when the fire started. The first information he received that the building was on fire was imparted to him by a stranger who rushed into the church and yelled to him that the roof was on fire. It was Immel's opinion that the fire was caused by sparks from the Hotel Normandie chimney. Immel bases his opinion on the fact that the kitchen of the hotel is on the side of the building where the fire broke. Immel was alone in the church when the fire was discovered. Policemen guarded the adjacent houses from thieves during the fire. In the flurry of excitement caused by the impression that the flames could not be

Continued on Second Page.

Columbia-Shamrock Yacht Race To-Day BY WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY. SEE THE CALL'S BULLETIN BOARD TO-DAY.

Readers of The Call's Bulletins To-Day Will Get Reports of the Yachts' Movements TWO MINUTES After They Occur, by SPECIAL WIRELESS TELEGRAPH.

## WATCH THE CALL'S BULLETIN BOARD TO-DAY.