

GIRLS RUSHING FOR LIFE

The Panic Caused by a Bursting Steam Heating Pipe.

Three Hundred Cigarette Makers Frantic With Excitement—Two Young Girls Almost Trampled to Death by Their Companions.

NEW YORK, Dec. 29.—In a narrow five-story brick building at No. 6 Rivington street, are W. Duke, Son & Co., manufacturers of cigarettes. Upon the first floor the tobacco is moistened; the second is a vast packing room, and in the third, fourth and fifth stories the cigarettes are made by about 300 girls. At 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon the steam heating pipe on the third floor burst. One of the girls hearing the noise and seeing the white steam puffing out, supposed that the building was on fire. She rushed toward the door screaming, "Get out, girls, the factory is on fire." The other girls followed her, also screaming, and in half a minute the girls on the fourth and fifth floors abandoned their work, and rushed toward the narrow staircase. Among the first to reach the stairs were Rachel Goldsmith, of 230 Division street, and Annie Phillips, of 154 West Eighteenth street. They grasped the balustrade and started to descend, when the pressure of the frightened crowd behind made them lose their balance. Carried off their feet by the rush, the two foremost girls fell to the second floor and lay helpless, while their screaming, panic-stricken comrades literally trampled them under foot. Vainly Foreman Wright and the clerk from the office assured the girls that there was no danger. The uncontrollable young women choked up the stairs and tumbled over each other tearing their clothes in their efforts to escape. Many of them who had been stationed in the rear of the building ran upon the little iron balconies of the fire escapes and reached the ground by the narrow ladders. Bareheaded and barearmed—for not one of them had stopped for hat or shawl—the girls ran into the street, or grouped themselves in the rear yard, so glad to have escaped an imaginary danger, that they did not regard the cold. In a few minutes the building was emptied. Every one left except Annie Phillips and Rachel Goldsmith, who lay moaning where they had fallen. They were assisted down stairs and immediately taken home. Both were severely bruised, and Annie's left arm was so injured that she will not be able to work for some time. Rachel's injuries were mostly in the back, although her head is also badly hurt. She seemed dazed when a reporter saw her at her home.

"I can not tell just how it happened," she said. "There was no cry of fire that I heard, but I saw the other girls running toward the door, and I supposed that something terrible must be the matter and I ran. After I got into the street I heard that one of the steam pipes burst, and that really there had been nothing for us to be afraid of. This is the first day I worked in the factory."

Several other girls were more or less bruised, but they did not report themselves to the police. Surprise was expressed by the neighbors that considering the excitement and the crush, no one was killed or ever seriously injured. The shrieks of the frightened girls sounded shrill through the street and soon a multitude blocked up the doorway. Women were in the majority, and they joined their cries to those of their friends on the stairs, making a din that was heard several blocks away. The panic would have been greatly increased had it not been for the presence of mind of a workman on the sidewalk. Several men thought that a fire was really under way and made a dash for the fire alarm box. Undoubtedly the noise of rattling engines would have completed the panic and caused several girls to be trampled to death. The workman stopped the men who would have unwittingly added to the confusion. When the first scare was over and the girls who thronged the lower hallways, street and yard, were undecided whether to flee or go to work, the question was settled by a brave girl who stood half way down the stairs. She called to her working sisters to return to their duties and made all efforts to turn the tide upwards. In this she was successful and the panic was stopped before further injury was done.

COUNTY SEAT WARS.

Wilmot Triumphant Over Travers

WILMOT, Dak., Dec. 29.—Colonel Free, of the Governor's staff, visited Wilmot and Travers (not Traverse) yesterday. His report is understood to be in favor of Wilmot. Writs are out for the arrest of members of the Canvassing Board. Cummings, of Travers, claiming to be Sheriff, was chased three miles and escaped across the river. Interviews with parties in Fargo, from Roberts County, are as conflicting as the first reports received from the scene of trouble. An examination is now in progress before a United States Commissioner in this city. It is thought the prisoners will be bound over to the United States Court of the Second District at Sioux Falls, as the offense was committed in the Fifth District where the Judge has no cognizance of United States cases, and the district is attached to the Second for the purposes of such business.

PIERRE, D. T., Dec. 29.—Potter County is now in a whirl of excitement over the county seat location. One year ago the seat of Government was located at Forest City, on the Mississippi River. Gettysburg claims that at the late election it was chosen as the county seat. Threats have been made to take the records by force from Forest City, and over 200 Indians are now entered at that place ready to meet all invaders from Gettysburg. Judge Smith is hearing the case at Pierre while the Indians are guarding the records.

Railroad Accident.

ARCHISON, Kan., Dec. 29.—On the Central Branch Road, yesterday morning, an extra freight train encountered a broken rail near Netawaka, and the caboose and five cars were thrown from the track, the caboose rolling over several times before landing in the ditch. Several persons were in the last car of whom J. C. Stewart, a brakeman, was instantly killed, and James J. Kelley, the conductor, badly injured. Stewart was probably killed by the stove falling upon him. Kelley had his thigh fractured and received a severe cut in the head. He was brought to Atchison. The doctors pronounced his case a very serious one. None of the other persons on the train were injured.

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