ELEVEN RESCUED FROM FIRE TRAP IN TENEMENT

Six Carried Unconscious From Burning Basement to the Street.

OVERCOME BY SMOKE.

Reserves Battle With 30 Panic Stricken Families; Firemen Work as Rescuers.

The swift action of firemen and policemen saved eleven persons from death to-day in the burning basement of the big double tenement at No. 170 Henry street. Of six children and five adults who believed themselves cut off from every avenue of escape, four of the children and two of the adults were carried up to the street unconscious.

There are three apartments in the basement of the Henry street tenement, two on the east side of a narrow hallway and one on the west side. The west side flat is occupied by Henry Bolinsky, a widower, and May Hoffman, a young woman, rents one of the three rooms from him. Across the hall live George Wolinsky, his wife, Sarah, and four children, while the adjoining three rooms shelter Abraham Kiel, his wife, Jennie, and two children.

The fire started in the kitchen of Bolinsky's flat. He was awakened about dawn by the stifling smoke. Jumping out of bed he discovered that the kitchen was in flames.

Forgot About Woman.

Instantly losing his head, he forgot all about his young woman boarder, and fled out into the hallway screaming incoherently.

His cries awoke the Wolinskies and the Kiels and they could have easily made their way upstairs by a front staircase had not the smoke deceived them into the belief that the staircase was on fire.

Women and children turned blindly to the rear staircase, which they found actually in possession of the flames. Driven back into their apartments, they turned to the windows, only to realize that they were heavily barred. Believing that they were doomed, they gave themselves up to agonized shrieks and lamentations until some of them succumbed to the smoke.

Lieut. Mott, who arrived with Engine Company No. 15, headed the rescue work to the cellar, while a squad of reserves handled the panic that had broken out among the thirty families in the upstairs apartments. Mott, Fireman Freman, Policeman Morrison and two other patrolmen plunged down the front staircase, which had not yet been reached by the flames.

Found Children Insensible.

Half a dozen feet from the front of the stairs the firemen stumbled over two of the Wolinsky children, who were unconscious. In the Wolinsky flat they found the mother overcome and the father passing off into a swoon, the two older children being still conscious enough to guide the rescuers by their shrieks.

All were carried out safely and so were the Kiel children, who had been dropped by their frantic parents within half a dozen feet of the advancing flames. Parents and children were hustled up to the street, and the firemen were going down into the basement with their hose when Bolinsky, who had never stopped shrieking on the pavement outside, suddenly thought of his boarder.

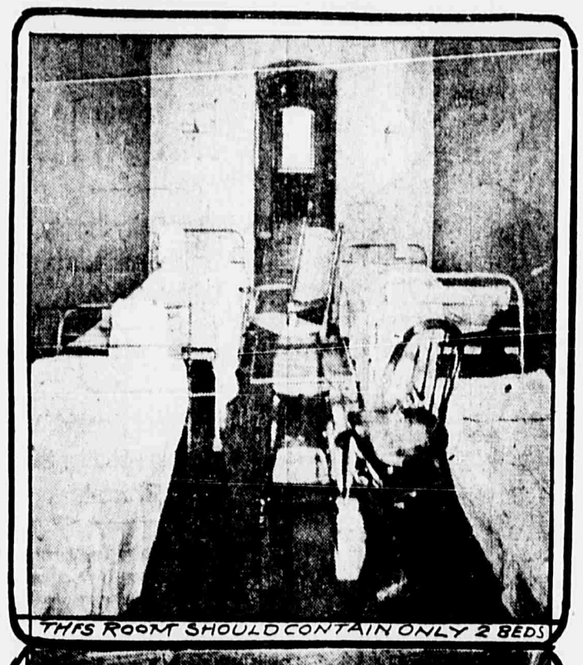
Policeman Morrison went down for her and arrived just in time to save her life. She was found unconscious in bed, but revived quickly when carried to a drug store. All three basement flats were gutted by the flames, but the fire did not reach the floors above. The damage was estimated at about $1,200. Bolinsky could not explain how the fire started.

Full of Essential Knowledge.

Mahanoy City (Pa.) American.

A review of the 1909 edition of The World Almanac and Encyclopaedia, a copy of which recently reached the desk of the Daily American, shows it to be one of the most useful books ever printed—chock full of valuable facts and figures, political and governmental data, secret-society statistics, records of sporting events, as well as other essential knowledge covering a wide range of interesting subjects. In short, it is a veritable thesaurus of information for ready reference— a book that should be the vade mecum of every student, lawyer, editor, merchant and professional man.

Overcrowding of Consumptive Patients on Blackwell's Island



ALCOVE SITTING ROOM INTO WHICH 20 BEDS HAVE BEEN CROWDED.

WHITE PLAGUE VICTIMS CROWD THE HOSPITALS

All Institutions Treating Tuberculosis Have Long Waiting Lists.

The necessity for the extension of the campaign against tuberculosis is very evident from the results of an investigation made some time ago by the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis of the Charity Organization Society. The campaign of education conducted by the committee for the past six or seven years has resulted in an increased willingness on the part of patients to receive hospital treatment.

Nearly all of the institutions treating tuberculosis have long waiting lists. There is hardly a hospital in the city taking tuberculosis patients that has not always more patients than it has accommodations for. Intolerable overcrowding in the Tuberculosis Infirmary of the Metropolitan Hospital on Blackwell's Island is now conspicuously apparent. For example, a reasonable estimate made by Dr. Walter Sands Mills, attending physician at the Tuberculosis Infirmary, places the normal capacity of the male ward of this infirmary at 180 beds. Dr. Mills, when seen to-day, said that last night 445 patients were housed in this single ward.

Amazed at Conditions.

The secretary of the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis, when seen to-day, said that he had been amazed at the conditions which he found existing in the Tuberculosis Infirmary on Blackwell's Island. "They are using at present as their male ward an old building that was formerly constructed for and used as an insane asylum," he said. It consists of a corridor some forty yards in length, lined on both sides by a series of small cells. The walls are thick and take up a lot of the space that should be used for beds and other purposes. The cells are fairly well lighted, but the halls are dark and unsuitable for any other purpose than passageways.

"I found that nearly all of the cells which were just large enough for one patient were crowded with two beds, and that the cells that were designed to accommodate two patients in many instances were crowded with four beds.

Even Tents Overcrowded.

"In the women's ward conditions are somewhat better, but they are not any too good. There are anywhere from 20 to 25 per cent. more beds in these wards than they were designed to accommodate. The tents are similarly overcrowded."

It was learned to-day that there is slight overcrowding even in the private hospitals subsidized by the city to care for its tuberculous sick. These hospitals have a limted number of beds set aside for public patients, and when they are filled others, as a rule, are not admitted.

At the present time the sisters in charge of these subsidized hospitals are simply beseeching the Department of Public Charities not to send any more tuberculous patients to them, as they have already exceeded the number for which they can conveniently and satisfactorily care. Patients have been known to wait anywhere from one to three months in order to get into one of those subsidized hospitals rather than go to the already overcrowded Infirmary on Blackwell's Island.

Need Five Thousand Beds.

It is the opinion of those who are most familiar with the city's needs in this connection that there should be no less than five thousand beds available for persons suffering with tuberculosis.

The Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis, through its organized campaign of education, and the seventeen tuberculosis clinics, with their score or more of visiting nurses, have done much to dispel from the minds of those who suffer from tuberculosis the dread of hospital treatment.

An adequate and aggressive campaign looking toward the supplying of this great need is a task which the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis of the Charity Organization Society has set for itself. And this is one of the many features in the campaign in which they ask the support of the thousands of gas consumers, who will in a short while receive an unexpected $12,000,000. The Charity Organization will gladly accept contributions of any sum. The gas rebates offer the public a means of helping without the slightest inconvenience.

POPE TO ARCHBISHOP RYAN.

Pontiff Congratulates Prelate on Seventy-Eighth Birthday.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 20.—"Blessings and felicitations." This was the cable message which Pope Pius sent to Archbishop Ryan to-day, congratulating His Grace upon his seventy-eighth birthday. The Archbishop received a large number of letters and telegrams of congratulation, but none o fthe kindly greetings he read from friends all over the country gave him more pleasure than that received from the Pontiff.

Love and Gold Hunting in the Klondike

The Barrier

By Rex Beach

Author of "The Spoilers"

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Lieut. Meade Burrell, stationed at the mining camp of Flambeau, is engaged to Necia Gale, who is secretly loved by a young Frenchman, Poleon Doret. A professional "bad man," Runnion, also loves her. Years before John Gale, a miner, had loved Necia's mother, who had been married to Bennett, a gambler. Bennett ill-treated her, so she gave Necia (then a baby) to Gale to care for and promised to join them later. Then the woman had been found murdered, Bennett accused Gale of the crime. Gale became a fugitive, finally marrying a squaw, Aluna, and bringing up Necia as their own child. Bennett turns up at Flambeau under the name of Stark. Necia, hearing that Burrell will be disgraced if he marries a half-breed Indian (which she believes she is), goes to Stark for advice. Stark sends her away in a boat, with Runnion as an escort. Stark returns to his own cabin and there is confronted by Gale. Stark confesses to the murder of Necia's mother, and he and Gale fight. Stark is wounded. Poleon and Burrell have heard his confession. He now tells them he has spirited Necia away. Poleon starts in search of her. Runnion during the voyage down the river again asks Necia to marry him. She refuses. He beaches their boat on a sandbar.

CHAPTER XVII.

(Continued.)

The Love of Poleon Doret.

He laid it carefully in the whispering current, then stripped himself with feverish haste, for the driving call of a hot pursuit was on him, and although it was the cold, raw hours of late night, he whipped off his garments until he was bare to the middle. He seized his paddle, stepped in, then knelt amidships and pushed away. The birch-bark answered him like a living thing, leaping and dancing beneath the strokes which sprung the spruce blade and boiled the water to a foam, while ripping, rising ridges stood out upon his back and arms as they rose and fell, stretched and bent and straightened.

Runnion drove his Peterborough toward the shore with powerful strokes, and ran its nose up on the gravel, rose, stretched himself, and dragged it further out, then looked down at Necia.

"Well, what is it, yes or no? Do you want me for a husband or for a master?" She cowered in the stern, a pale, fearful creature, finally murmuring:

"You—you must give me time."

"Not another hour. Here's where you declare yourself; and remember, I don't care which you choose, only you'd better be sensible."

She cast her despairing eyes up and down the river, then at the wilderness on either shore; but it was as silent and unpeopled as if it had been created that morning. She must have time; she would temporize, pretending to yield, and then betray him to the first comer; a promise exacted under duress would not be binding.

"I'll go quietly," she said in a faint voice.

"I knew you'd see that I'm acting square. Come! Get the cramp out of yourself while I make a pot of coffee." He held out his hand to assist her, and she accepted it, but stumbled as she rose, for she had been crouched in one position for several hours, and her limbs were stiff. He caught her and swung her ashore; then, instead of putting her feet to the ground, he pressed her to himself roughly and kissed her. She gave a stifled cry and fought him off, but he laughed and held her the closer.

"Ain't I good for one kiss? Say, this is the deuce of an engagement. Come, now"—

"No, no, no!" she gasped, writhing like a wild thing; but he crushed his lips to hers again, and then let her go, whereupon she drew away from him panting, dishevelled, her eyes wide and filled with horror. She scrubbed her lips with the back of her hand, as if to erase his mark, while he reached into the canoe and brought forth an axe, a bundle of food and a coffee pot; then, still chuckling, he gathered a few sticks of driftwood and built a fire.

At sight of the canoe a thought struck her, but her face must have shown some sign of it, for the man chanced to look at the moment, and, seeing her expression, straightened himself, then gazed about searchingly. Without a word he stepped to the boat, and, seizing it, dragged it entirely out upon the bar, where her strength would not be equal to shoving it off quickly, and, not content with this, he made the painter fast, then went back to his fire. The eagerness died out of her face, but an instant later, when he turned to the clearer water of the eddy to fill the coffee-pot, she seized her chance and sped up the bar toward the bank. The shingle under foot and her noisy skirts betrayed her, and with an oath he followed. It was an unequal race, and he handled her with rough, strong hands when he overtook her.

He led her back to the fire, which had begun to crackle. She was so weak now that she sank upon the stones shivering.

"That's right! Sit down and behave while I make you something hot to drink. You're all in." After a time he continued, as he busied himself about his task: "Say, you ought to be glad to get me; I've got a lot of money, or I will have, and once you're Mrs. Runnion nobody 'll ever know about this or think of you as a squaw."

He was still talking when the girl sprang to her feet and sent a shrill cry out over the river, but instantly he was up and upon her, his hand over her mouth, while she tore at it, screaming the name of Poleon Doret. He silenced her to a smothered, sobbing mumble, and turned to see, far out on the bosom of the great solled river, a man in a bark canoe. The craft had just swung past the bend above and was still a long way off—so far away, in fact, that Necia's signal had not reached it, for its occupant held unwaveringly to the swiftest channel, his body rising and falling in the smooth, unending rhythm of a master boatman under great haste, his arms upflung now and then, as the paddle glinted and flashed across to the opposite side.

Runnion glanced about hurriedly, then cursed as he saw no place of concealment. The Petersborough stood out upon the bar conspicuously, as did he and the girl; but the chance remained that this man, whoever he was, would pass by, for his speed was great, the river a mile in width and the bend sharp. Necia had cried Poleon's name, but her companion saw no resemblance to the Frenchman in this strange-looking voyager; in fact, he could not quite make out what was peculiar about the man—perhaps his eyes were not as sharp as hers—and then he saw that the boatman was naked to the waist.

By now he was drawing opposite them with the speed of a hound. The girl, gagged and held by her captor's hands, struggled and moaned despairingly, and, crouching back of the boat, they might have escaped discovery in the gray morning light had it not been for the telltale fire—a tiny, cracking blaze no larger than a man's hat. It betrayed them. The dancing craft upon which their eyes were fixed whipped about, almost leaping from the water at one stroke, then came toward them, now nothing but a narrow thing, half again the width of a man's body.

The current carried it down abreast of them, then past, and Runnion rose, releasing the girl, who cried out with all her might to the boatman. He made no sound in reply, but drove his canoe shoreward with quicker strokes. It was evident he would effect his landing near the lower end of the spit, for now he was within hearing distance and driving closer every instant.

Necia heard the gambler call;

"Sheer off, Doret! You can't land here!"

She saw a gun in Runnion's hand, and a terrible, sickening fear swept over her, for he was slowly walking down the spit, keeping abreast of the canoe as it drifted. She could see exactly what would happen; no man could disembark against the will of an armed marksman, and if Poleon slackened his stroke, or stopped it to exchange his paddle for a weapon, the current would carry him past; in addition, he would have to fire from a rocking paper shell harried by a boiling current, whereas the other man stood flat upon his feet.

"Keep away or I'll fire!" threatened Runnion again, and she screamed, "Don't try it, Poleon, he'll kill you!"

At her words Runnion raised his weapon and fired. She heard the woods behind reverberate with the echoes like a sounding board, saw the white spurt of smoke and the skitter of the bullet as it went wide. It was a long shot, and had been fired as a final warning; but Doret made no outcry, nor did he cease coming; instead, his paddle clove the water with the same steady strokes that took every ounce of effort in his body.

Runnion threw open his gun and replaced the spent shell. On came the careening, crazy craft in a sidewise drift, and with it the girl saw coming a terrible tragedy. She started to run down the gravelled ridge behind her enemy, not realizing the value or moment of her action, nor knowing clearly what she would do; but as she drew near she saw Runnion raise his gun again, and, without thought of her own safety, threw herself upon him. Again his shot went wide as he strove to hurl her off, but his former taste of her strength was nothing to this, now that she fought for Poleon's life. Runnion snarled angrily and thrust her away, for he had waited till the canoe was close.

"Let me go, you devil!" he cried, and aimed again; but again she ran at him. This time, however, she did not pit her strength against his, but paused, and as he undertook to fire she thrust at his elbow, then dodged out of his way. Her blow was crafty and well-timed, and his shot went wild. Again he took aim, and again she destroyed it with a touch and danced out of his reach. She was nimble and light, and quickened now by a cold calculation of all that depended upon her.

Three times in all she thwarted Runnion, while the canoe drove closer every instant. On the fourth, as she dashed at him, he struck to be rid of her, cursing wickedly—struck as he would have struck at a man. Silently she crumpled up and fell, a pitiful, draggled, awkward little figure sprawled upon the rocks; but the delay proved fatal to him, for, though the canoe was close against the bank, and the huge man in it seemed to offer a mark too plain to be missed, he was too close to permit careful aim.

Runnion heard him giving utterance to a strange, feral, whining sound, as if he were crying like a fighting boy; then, as the gambler raised his arm, the Canadian lifted himself up on the bottom of the canoe until he stood stretched to his full height and leaped. As Runnion fired he sprang out and was into the water to his knees, his backward kick whirling the craft from underneath him out into the current, where the river seized it. He had risen and jumped all in one moment, launching himself at the shore like a panther. The gun roared again, but Poleon came up and on with the rush of the great brown grizzly that no missile can stop.

Runnion's weapon blazed in his face, but he neither felt nor heeded it, for his bare hands were upon his quarry, the impact of his body hurling the other from his feet, and neither of them knew whether any or all of the last bullets had taken effect. Poleon had come like an arrow, straight for his mark the instant he glimpsed it, an insensate, unreasoning, raging thing that no weight of lead nor length of blade could stop. In his haste he had left Flambeau without weapon of any kind, for in his mind such things were superfluous, and he had never fought with any but those God gave him, nor found any living thing that his hands could not master.

Therefore, he had rushed headlong against this armed and waiting man, reaching for him ever closer and closer till the burning powder stung his eyes. They grappled and fought, alone and unseen, and yet it was no fight, for Runnion, though a vigorous, heavy-muscled man, was beaten down, smothered, and crushed beneath the onslaught of this great naked fellow, who all the time sobbed and whined and mewed in a panting fury.

They swung half across the spit to the farther side, where they fell in a fantastic convulsion, slipping and sliding and rolling among the rocks that smote and gouged and bruised them. The gambler fought for his life against the naked flesh of the other, against the distorted face that snapped and bit like the muzzle of a wolf, while all the time he heard that fearful, inarticulate note of blood-hunger at his ear. The Canadian's clenched hands crushed whatever they fell upon as if mailed with metal; the fingers were like tearing tongs that could not be loosed.

It was a frightful combat, hideous from its inequality, like the battle of a man against a maddened beast whose teeth tore and whose claws ripped, whose every move was irresistible. And so it was over shortly.

Poleon rose and ran to the fallen girl, leaving behind him a huddled and twisted likeness of a man. He picked her up tenderly, moaning and crooning, but as her limp head lolled back, throwing her pale, blind features up to the heavens, he began to cry, this time like a woman. Tears fell from his eyes, burning tears, the agony of which seared his soul.

He laid her carefully beside the water's edge, and, holding her head and shoulders in the crook of his left arm, he wet his right hand and bathed her face, crouching over her, half nude, dripping with the sweat of his great labors, a tender, palpitating figure of bronzed muscle and sinew, with all his fury and hate replaced by apprehension and pity. The short moments that he worked with her were ages to him, but she revived beneath his ministrations, and her first frightened look of consciousness was changed to a melting smile.

"W-what happened, Poleon?" she said. "I was afraid!"

He stood up to his full height, shaking, and weak as the water that dripped from him, the very bones in him dissolved. For the first time he uttered words.

"T'ank God, ba gosh!" and ran his hand up over his wet face.

"Where is he?" She started to her knees affrightedly; then, seeing the twisted, sprawling figure beyond, began to shudder. "He—he's dead?"

"I don' know," said Poleon, carelessly. "You feel it purty good now, eh, w'at?"

"Yes—I—he struck me!" The remembrance of what had occurred surged over her, and she buried her face in her hands. "Oh, Poleon! Poleon! He was a dreadful man."

"He don' trouble you no more."

"He tried—he— Ugh! I—Im glad you did it!" She broke down, trembling at her escape, until her selfishness smote her, and she was up and beside him on the instant. "Are you hurt? Oh, I never thought of that.. You must be wounded!"

The Frenchman felt himself over, and looked down at his limbs for the first time. "No! I guess not," he said, at which Necia noticed his meagre attire, and simultaneously he became conscious of it. He fell away a pace, casting his eyes over the river for his canoe, which was now a speck in the distance.

"Ba gosh! I'm hell of a t'ing for lookin' at," he said. "I'm paddle hard—dat's w'y. Sacre! how I sweat!" He hitched nervously at the band of his overalls, while Necia answered:

"That's all right, Poleon." Then, without warning, her face froze with mingled repulsion and wonder. "Look! Look!" she whispered, pointing past him.

(To Be Continued.)