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## Words Can't Describe

The Extent of the Disaster at Johnstown.

SIGHTS NEVER BEFORE SEEN.

Impossible to Describe the Ruin and Desolation of the Recent Flood—Rescuing Parties Still Hard at Work Recovering the Dead Bodies of the Victims.

JOHNSTOWN, Pa., June 6.—From Johnstown up the valley easy communication has been opened as far as Conemaugh, two miles, and it is possible for any one here to readily see a sight never before seen in this world, and which no one who does not see it himself will ever believe did really exist. It is described here as well as words can describe it, but merely as a duty to history, and not with the idea that any one who cannot look at it will ever think it true.

Everyone has seen the light iron beam shafts and rods in a factory lying in twisted, broken and criss-cross shape after a fire has destroyed the factory. In the gap above Johnstown the water has picked up a four-track railroad covered with trains, freight and passengers, and with machine shops, a round house and other heavy buildings with heavy contents, and it has torn the track to pieces, twisted, turned and crossed it as fire never could; it has tossed huge freight locomotives about like barrels, and cars like packing boxes, torn them to pieces and scattered them over miles of territory. It has in one place put a stream of water a city block wide between the railroad and the bluff, and in another place it has changed the course of the river as far in the other direction, and left a hundred yards inland, on which are the tracks that formerly skirted the bank.

Add to this that in the midst of this, fire, with the singular fatality that has made it everywhere the companion of the flood in this catastrophe, has destroyed a train of vestibule cars, and that the flood had wrecked, that the passengers who remained in the cars through the flood and until the fire, were saved, while their companions who attempted to flee were overwhelmed and drowned, and that through it all one locomotive stood and still stands, comparatively uninjured in the center of the wreckage, this disaster and the story of one of the most marvelous freaks of this marvelous flood is barely outlined. That locomotive stands there on its track now with its fires burning, smoke curling from the stack and steam from its safety valve, all ready to go ahead as soon as a track is built down to it. Its number 1309, a fifty-four ton, eight drivers, Class R, Pennsylvania railway locomotive. George Hudson was its engineer and Conductor Sheely had charge of the train. They, with all the rest of the crew, escaped by flight when they saw the flood.

The windows of the playground, where a great force played with the masses of iron, everything, scores of tons each, as a child might play with pebbles, began with a bridge or a piece of a bridge, about thirty feet long, that stands high and dry upon two ordinary abutments at Woodvale. The part of the bridge that remains spanned the Pennsylvania tracks. The tracks are gone, the bridge is gone on either side, the river is gone to a new channel, the very earth for a hundred yards around has been scraped off and swept away, but this little span remains perched up there twenty feet above everything in the midst of a desert of ruins, the only piece of a bridge that is standing from the railroad bridge to South Fork. It is a light iron structure and the abutments are not unusually heavy. That it should be kept there when everything else was twisted and torn to pieces is one of the queer freaks of this flood.

Near by are the wrecks of two freight trains that were standing side by side when the flood caught them. The lower ends of both trains were torn to pieces, the cars tossed around in every direction, and many of them carried away. The whole of the train on the track nearest the ruin was smashed into kindling wood. Its locomotive is gone entirely, perhaps because the other train acted as escort of buffer for the second one. The latter has twenty-five or thirty cars that are uninjured. Apparently they could move off as soon as that wonderful engine, 1309, that stands with steam up at their head, gets ready to pull out. A second look, however, shows that the track is in many places literally washed from beneath the cars. Some of the track also are turned half way around and standing with wheels running across the track. But the force that did this left the light wooden box cars themselves unharmed. They were loaded with dressed beef and provisions. They have been emptied to supply the hungry in Johnstown.

In front of engine 1309 and this train the water played some of its most fantastic tricks with the rails. The debris of trees, logs, planks and every description of wreckage is heaped up in front of the engine to the headlight, and is packed in so tightly that twenty men with ropes and axes worked all day without clearing all away. The track is absolutely gone from the front of the engine, clear up to beyond Conemaugh. Parts of it lie about everywhere, twisted into odd shapes, turned upside down, stacked crosswise, one piece above the other, and in one place a section of the left track has been lifted clear over the right track, runs along there for a ways, then twists into its proper place. Even stranger than the tracks the water has played with the rails where they have been torn loose from the ties. The rails are steel and of the heaviest weight used. They were twisted as easily as willow branches in a spring freshet in a country brook. One rail lies in the

sand in the shape of a letter "S;" more are broken squarely in two. Many times rails have been broken within a few feet of the fish plate coupling them to the next rail, and the fragments are still united by the comparatively weak plates. Every natural law would seem to show that the first place where they should have broken was at the joints. There is little to indicate the recent presence of a railroad in the stretch from this spot up to the upper part of the Conemaugh.

The little plain into which the gap widened here, and in which stood the bulk of the town, is wiped out. There is not the slightest indication that the central part of the plain was ever anything but a flood-washed gulch in some mountain region. At the upper end stands a fantastic collection of ruined railroad equipments. Three trains stood there when the flood swept down the valley. On the outside was a local passenger, with three cars and a locomotive. It stands there yet. The cars tilted by the washing of the track, but comparatively uninjured.

Scarcely a couple more locomotives have been run into the sand bank in front. A freight train stood on the track whereon a large collection of smashed cars has its place now. It was broken all to pieces. Inside of all was the day express, with its baggage and express cars, and at the end three vestibule cars. It was from this train that a number of passengers, fifteen certainly, and no one knows how many more, were lost. When the alarm came most of the passengers fled for the high ground. Many reached it; others hesitated on the way, tried to run back to the cars and were lost. Others stayed on the cars, and after the first rush of the flood were rescued alive. Some of the freight cars were loaded with lime, and thus leaped over the vestibule cars, and set on fire by the water, quickly had the cars blazing. All three of the vestibule cars were burned down to the trucks. These and the peculiar shaped iron frames of the vestibules are all that show where the cars stood.

The reason the flood did not wipe out these three trains entirely is supposed to be that just in front of them and between them and the flood was the round-house filled with engines. It was a large building, probably forty feet high to the top of the ventilator in the roof. The wave of wrath, eye-witnesses say, was so high that these ventilators were beneath it. The round-house was swept away to its very foundation, and the flood played jackstraws with the locomotives lodged in it, but it split the torrent and a part of it went down each side of the three trains, saving them from the worst of its force. Thirty-three locomotives were in and about the round-house and the repair shops' rear. Of these, twenty-six have been found, or at least traced, part of them being found scattered down into Johnstown, and one tender was found up in Stony creek. The other seven locomotives are gone; not a trace of them has been found up to this time. It is supposed that some of them are in the sixty acres of debris above the bridge at Johnstown. All the locomotives that remain anywhere within sight of the round-house, all except those attached to the trains, are thrown about in every direction, every side up, smashed, broken and useless, but for old iron. The tenders are all gone. Being lighter than the locomotives they floated more easily and were quickly torn off and carried away. The engines themselves were apparently rolled over and over in which ever direction ran the current which had hold of them, and occasionally were picked up bodily and slammed down again, wheels up, or which ever way chance to be most convenient to the flood. Most of them lie in five feet of sand and gravel, with only a part showing above the surface; some are out in the bed of the river. In the town of Conemaugh there are only thirty-eight persons positively known to have perished.

Clearing Away the Wreck.

Nearly 3,000 men were at work clearing away the wreckage and debris of ruined buildings in the yards of the great works of the Cambria Iron company. Since the arrival of Vice President Powell Stackhouse from Philadelphia, there has been a feeling of general confidence that was not experienced before. To-day additional evidence of the go-ahead spirit of the company was furnished when L. S. Smith, of the Gaudier mill which was entirely swept away, wrote this notice: "All Gaudier employees are requested to report on the 6th at 9 o'clock for work." The order from the Gaudier mill has a told-fold object. One is to have all the men report, in order to ascertain what men of the company force is still alive, and the other is to restore confidence. It is possible, too, that the men may be paid off. The monthly pay roll of the Gaudier mill was \$23,000. In the mill about 1,300 men are employed.

Under Martial Law.

The ruin city lies within a girdle of steel—the bayonets of the Fourteenth regiment. The militia has captured Johnstown, and now over the desolate plain where the city proper stood, through the towering wrecks, and by the river passes, marches the patrol, crying "halt" and challenging the vagabonds, vandals and ghoulies, who cross their path. Gen. Hastings, of course is the highest officer in the rank and in command, and when the survivors of the flood awake in the morning, when the weary pickets are relieved at sunrise, brigade headquarters will be fully established on the slope of Prospect hill, overlooking the hundreds of white tents of the regiment down below under the tower, by the German Catholic church.

The Fourteenth regiment was reinforced yesterday and it is now 600 strong, is still camped in freight cars beyond the depot opposite the late city proper. Space is rapidly being cleared for its tents, however, near the ruins of the Irish Catholic church, which was on fire when the deluge came. Early yesterday morning the Fourteenth regi-

ment went into service. Company F was detailed to Cambria City, where the element of ruffianism meeting that of desperation forethrew a storm. During the day many people of questionable character were escorted out of the city limits.

Mineral Point, containing about 250 residents, is situated about seven miles east of Johnstown. It has, since last Friday, been completely cut off from the rest of the world, and until the Times' reporter managed to get into the place to-day by wading his way along the bed of the stream, it was uncertain whether any one had escaped. The loss of life here was not nearly so large as it would otherwise have been had not the most of the people left their homes some time before, owing to the report of the dam being liable to break at any moment. Out of a total of thirty-four houses in the place only seven are left and the reason they were not taken was that they were situated at some distance up the mountain side out of the reach of the flood. Not a single vestige of the houses swept away is seen. There was only one church—the place, Methodist, and it was swept away.

The number of persons up to the time known to be drowned is sixteen. The town is almost completely obliterated. What was formerly the Main street is now the bed of the river.

Many responsible people here who saw the flood coming affirm that it was at least twenty feet higher in the center than it was at the sides, and as one person graphically described it, looked just like "a sliding forest rushing on us."

A large number of freight cars were lying at Mineral Point when the flood came, and contained produce for the east, some of them being filled with hams, others with eggs, butter, flour, crockery, glassware, etc., these being a very godsend to the destitute inhabitants, some of whom would probably have starved before any aid could have reached them, hemmed in as they were by unbroken forests.

Mr. Stoner, the division boss of the Pennsylvania railroad, has kept open house for the unfortunates, five families staying in the house with his family, besides giving free meals to all who apply.

The use of dynamite was resumed yesterday afternoon to burst logs and heavy timbers, with good result. A powerful steam windlass, located one hundred feet below the bridge with ropes attached, pulled out monster sections from the drift, and another span of the bridge was cleared from the debris to-day.

Yesterday the depot relief committee were approached by a troop of nine children walking single file, who were under the command of a girl 15 years of age. She told in a simple straightforward way how she was the oldest of her family and that her father, mother and older sister had been drowned, while they had survived.

Two hundred and forty-six bodies were found yesterday, of which the majority have been identified. This swells the list to 3,113 bodies.

The Missing Trains.

PITTSBURG, June 6.—Robert Piteairn, general superintendent of the Pennsylvania railroad, and Superintendent Starr, of the Fort Wayne, said in regard to the missing trains, that the first two were all right in Altoona, but the two sections of No. 8 were almost wiped out. They thought the loss of life cannot possibly exceed twelve, and they are hopeful it will not reach that. The reports of lost from the trains, they say, are very inaccurate, even as received over the company lines.

The following persons whose fate was in doubt were accounted for by telegrams to the Pennsylvania railroad office: F. Coleman, safe at Williamsport; John W. Early, of New York, at Altoona; Mrs. Gen. Lew Wallace is safe at Altoona; F. E. Fitch, safe with his daughter; R. E. Pettit, at Altoona and uninjured.

Mrs. M. C. Brady, reported drowned, is at Ebensburg.

A Mrs. J. A. Brady is supposed to be lost, as she was a very old lady, and remained in her berth in the Pullman.

Mr. Scherz, reported drowned, is safe.

Miss Emily Schenck, of Mt. Vernon, N. Y., is safe at Altoona.

Mrs. Frank Patterson, daughter and child, of Frankfort, Pa., saved.

Mr. Piteairn said that the mortality on these east bound trains was grossly over-estimated, and the more telegrams came in the more firmly the fact was established. Still there is a vagueness in the reports leaving the fate of a large number of passengers still in doubt.

Chief Bigelow has ordered a corps of civil engineers from the engineering bureau of the department of public works to report at once to go to Johnstown. About a dozen men will go, taking with them all the necessary instruments for surveying and laying out the streets and property, with a view to reorganizing the destroyed city.

Loss of Life at Woodvale.

JOHNSTOWN, Pa., June 6.—Out of a total population of 1,030 at Woodvale, 667 are known to have been saved, making the loss of life about 50 per cent. of the submerged portion of the village.

It is estimated that the number of orphans in the Conemaugh valley will be about 500. They are being removed to central points, where they can be found in case they are inquired for.

St. Mark's Protestant Episcopal church lost twenty-seven out of a membership of 150. The rector, Rev. A. P. Diller, wife and two children drowned, not yet recovered. Their new church building has disappeared.

Measles has broken out among the children to an alarming extent. Typhoid fever is making its appearance, while the prevalence of pneumonia is causing much uneasiness. Three hundred surgical cases have been treated at the Cambria hospital.

ored from being so long in the water. Wherever possible they were embalmed, while the others were rapidly carted away to the cemetery to fill nameless graves. This expedition is necessary to prevent typhus, which the physicians very much fear.

Relief for the Distressed.

PITTSBURG, June 6.—Two hundred thousand dollars in money and \$50,000 in provisions and clothing, has been given by this city, in aid of the sufferers by the flood at Johnstown.

Loss to Logs and Lumber.

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa., June 6.—Hopkins & Company, of Lockhaven, lose 10,000,000 feet and Wainwright & Bryant 12,000,000 feet of lumber. The logs and lumber of Sprague, Striedy & Bubb were saved. Six men were found drowned in a cabin at Little Trout run yesterday. They were bark peelers. One was named Weir and another Berserman. The only persons killed by the falling bridge at Maynard street were a man named Metter and a boy named Geiger. Provisions have arrived and are being distributed. At Ransom's Island, below the city, 20,000,000 feet of logs and 12,000,000 feet of lumber are piled up. A woman's body was found on the island yesterday, with some letters signed "W. H. Jackson."

TALKING WITH THE SIOUX.

Ex-Governor Foster, of Ohio, Begins the Argument—The Indians Slow.

ROSEBUD AGENCY, S. Dak., June 6.—The first council with the Indians was held Tuesday afternoon. All the prominent Indians of this agency were present, as well as delegations from all the other Sioux agencies, including the Santo and Flandran. Col. Spencer, Indian agent, introduced the commissioners in a few well chosen words.

Ex-Governor Foster, of Ohio, chairman of the commission, then explained in a speech of considerable length the provisions and scope of the act of congress. He called attention to the size of the present reservation as being out of all proportion to the needs of the Indians, and stated that it was not the policy of the government to allow land to be held for such reservation when needed for settlement; that the strip of land 400 miles long and 200 wide along the Missouri river was a barrier between east and west Dakota, that could not long exist.

He said that while the government did not propose to take their land except with their full consent and would pay liberally for it, that the commission hoped to be able to convince them that it was for the interest of the Indians to sell their lands, and that by so doing they would not only enter upon their new departure under more favorable conditions than any new people ever did before, but would also have the advantage of white settlers in their vicinity whose example would aid them in their progress for self-maintenance. At the request of the Indians the whole act was then read.

The close attention given by the Indians to the reading of the bill is evidence of the deep interest felt by all. The discussion will be long and every point will require careful explanation before the Indians will be willing to talk themselves.

After the reading of the bill the council adjourned to give the Indians an opportunity to discuss its provisions with each other.

MISSOURI CROPS.

A Decline of Six Points During May in the Condition of Wheat.

ST. LOUIS, June 6.—The secretary of the Missouri state board of agriculture furnishes the following crop report: The condition of wheat declined six points during the month of May, being now ninety-two, instead of ninety-eight May 1. The decline in condition is principally in southern Missouri, and is due to dry weather up to May 20 in southeast Missouri, and the ravages of chinch bugs and excess of rain in south and east Missouri, which is causing rust and the Hessian fly.

Chinch bugs are very numerous throughout about a large portion of the state, but the late general rains are keeping them in check. The condition of oats is 92, meadows 95, pastures 96; acreage of corn planted 99, cotton 103, flax 93, tobacco 90; condition of apples 79, peaches 95, grapes 94, small fruits 85. Light frosts on the nights of May 30 and 31 were quite general, but did little damage.

Another Big Syndicate.

NEW YORK, June 6.—The Sun says that Mr. A. Swan Brown, a merchant well known in the dry goods trade, has gone to London to attempt to arrange a syndicate for the purchase of the leading retail dry goods stores of New York and other leading American cities. The plan is similar to that on which the breweries are being consolidated.

Railroad Officers Re-Elected.

CHICAGO, June 6.—At meeting of the stockholders of the Rock Island road the old board of directors were re-elected. The earnings of the road show a deficit of nearly \$1,000,000 less than expenses for the past year. At a meeting of the board of directors the present officers of the road were re-elected.

A Democrat Appointed.

WASHINGTON, June 6.—John Vignau, who was yesterday appointed United States marshal for western Louisiana, is a Democrat and was recommended to the president by the Louisiana Republicans, for protecting negroes from violence at the November election.

Found Hanging to a Tree.

DANVILLE, Ill., June 6.—Yesterday while hunting in the woods north-west of this city, Dr. Ralston and W. A. Burk found the body of an unknown German who had committed suicide four or five weeks ago by hanging himself to a tree with a leather strap.