

The facts of the case are as follows: Two young ladies who were dressmaking for us, upset a lighted lamp on the sewing-room floor against the wainscoting. It occurred about six in the evening, while Miss Elderkin and myself were with the children in the school-room, directly below the sewing-room.

I heard the noise, and thinking something unusual had occurred, ran up as quickly as possible and threw two wool beds lying near upon the fire, and crushed out all that was visible; but the oil had run under the wainscot and the fire was doing its work between the walls. I sent a boy for an axe, but he hadn't time to get back, though he went very quickly, before the screams of a boy who was in bed with a sore leg on the third floor called me there. When I got up I found the fire bursting through a closet door directly above where the fire originated. In the meantime messages had been conveyed to our nearest neighbors, and in a very few minutes efficient help was on the ground. But all efforts were unavailing, the resinous wood and tar paper burning so furiously. I secured the insurance policies and account books out of my room, but all my own effects are gone save one coat and two dresses. Miss Elderkin and Miss Somers saved the most of their things in a more or less damaged condition, their rooms being on the second flat and out of reach of the smoke, which was so dense on the third floor as to make it impossible to save the furniture and clothing. Most of the furniture on the first and second floors was got out, but much of it was damaged.

The representative of the London Insurance Co. waited upon us at once.

I telegraphed to Miss Cartmell this morning. The children living near have been sent to their homes, the rest are at Mr. Tate's. We intend retaining about thirteen of the most needy cases in Mr. Tate's home.

We await orders.

The affair was purely accidental, and I believe all that was possible to be done was done. It is one of the mysteries. May the Lord direct us. The children are all unhurt.