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SOCIETIES. THE REGULAR COMMUNICATION OF Yukon Lodge, No. 79, A. F. & A. M. will be held at Masonic hall, Mission street, monthly, Thursday on or before full moon, at 8:00 p. m. C. H. WELLS, W. M. J. A. DONALD, Secy.

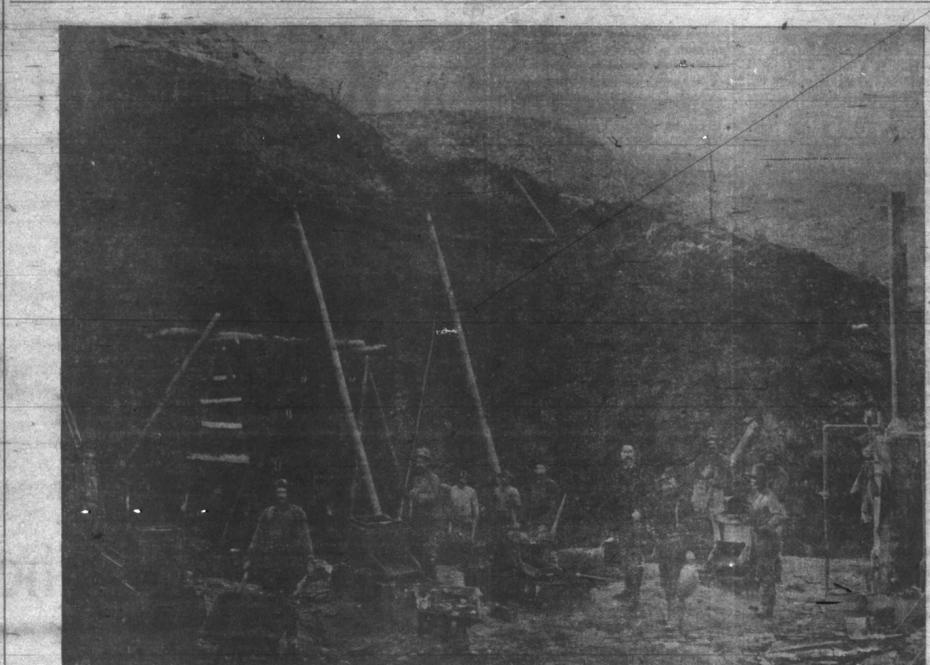
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Almost Wiped Out. Halifax, N. S., Oct. 29.-The prosperous and thriving town of Sydney, Cape Breton, was almost swept out of existence today by a fierce conflagration, which started about 2 o'clock. The flames, which were fanned by a 45-mile gale, swept through the principal business portions of the town, causing ruin and devastation. Four blocks of the finest business buildings are in ashes, and many more are badly scorched. The buildings were nearly all large wooden structures, and they burned so fiercely that it was impossible to save any of their contents.



BENCH CLAIM AT MOUTH OF SKOOKUM CREEK.

short time the fire spread to the buildings occupied by Carr, Jeweler; Blanchard, Bentley & Co., and the Maritime Premium Company. Then it spread to some small buildings on the opposite side of the street and jumped to the large department store of Prowse Bros. & Crowell, which was soon doomed. The whole town was then threatened. Assistance was sent for, and the fire departments of North Sydney and Glace Bay responded, and on arrival got quickly to work, but every effort to stay the flames was of no avail. The fire swept from Charlotte to Pajne street, and as far south as George street, carrying everything before it. Half an hour after the fire started, one-quarter of the business portion of the town was in flames. The town's water supply now gave out, and the engines had to be sent to the harbor to pump water. At 4:30 two of the business blocks were destroyed, and the fire spread to Bentick street, and half an hour later Bruce, George, Bentick and Charlotte streets were a mass of fire. The miners resorted to the use of dynamite, and several buildings were blown up.

with but little effect, as the strong wind carried the burning embers to other buildings. The fine building belonging to the Union Bank of Halifax and the Baptist and Presbyterian churches were soon destroyed. At 7 o'clock the fire had reached the east end of Charlotte street, and here its progress was stayed. The blocks on Wentworth, Prince and Pitts street, and half a block on George street, were destroyed. The flames were under control at 10 o'clock. The fire is supposed to have been started by the bursting of an oil stove. It is impossible to estimate the loss at present, but it is roughly placed at between \$100,000 and \$5,000,000, of which not more than half is covered by insurance.

Bill Will Come Up Again. Washington, Oct. 25.-Among the bills that failed to pass during the last congress, which are to make their appearance early in the coming session, is the financial bill drawn by Representative Overstreet, of Indiana. This bill, it may be recalled, makes the silver dollar exchangeable for gold in conformity with the present parity clause of the gold standard law, and as Mr. Overstreet asserts, Babcock bill, and favors legislation removing the tariff from articles "which no longer need protection."

Choosing Office Boys. George Sexton, who has charge of 200 boys in a big department store, loves to talk about boys. "Boys are not a necessary evil to this establishment," he said. "They are the material out of which men are to be made." "How do you choose your cash boys, Mr. Sexton?" I asked. "My first question is, 'Where is the boy?' You see, it all depends upon the boy himself. You can judge the boy better from his appearance, his manner, his dress and the way he comes into an office than from any description of him. Character shows forth in little things—you can't hide it. I take boys by what you might almost term first impressions. I have 'sized a boy up' before he asks me for a place. The removal or non-removal of the hat on entering the office, the respectful and self-respecting way in which a boy addresses me, the way in which he meets my looks and questions, all give me an idea of his bringing up and the 'stuff' that is in him. As to appearance, I look at once for these things: polished shoes,

THE TOWN BOYS REGARDED HIM AS A HOT PATSY WHILE THE GIRLS MADE FUN OF HIM. There was a social fizzle named Homer Spilvens. He was the damp-cracker that ever tried to pop in a public place. The patients spent \$600 on him so they might know how to enter a room. At the age of 36 he could get away without walking on several occasions. Among the town boys he was regarded as a hot patsy, but the girls who were too simple and bashful to be real interesting. At a stag party he was a James Dandy, but when he found himself in his merry mood and surrounded by the elite, he slumped down and became a mere half-wit and coffee-cooler. Homer was what the horseman call a bad shot. In the early morning practice he could do a quarter in 29, but when he had to pace with a bunch he struck a foolish side motion and ran into the fence. When he was among the fellows he opened up like a morning glory. He told stories and said sarcastic things about people he knew and wrote verses. The young men would repeat these brief observations to the girls and tell how witty and entertaining old Spilvey was. So the next time Homer showed up, the vivacious girls would form a semi-circle in front of him and say, "Oh, Mr. Spilvens, do tell us a story or make one of your killing jokes."

Mr. Spilvens decided to turn over a new leaf. He saw that his only chance was to jump in and make a bold play. His telepathic tactics had not made the slightest impression on Lucy. The silent system was no good. "The next time I get a chance to lead I will give her a grand surprise," he said to himself. "I will the little lady that I am not made of wood. I can be just as loving as the next one if my nerve holds out."

So he went to a bance and there was Lucy, looking very cute and coquettish and hemmed in by the usual gang of third-raters. Mr. Spilvens was about to buck the line and make a hard tackle, but he suddenly realized that he was not in condition. What he needed was a little Dutch courage. Accordingly he slipped out and stowed away five Santiago souars, so-called because they leave you wrecked on the beach. He came back a trifle squiffy and all set. Homer was ready to be as friendly and familiar as any girl could possibly wish. He laid hands on the surprised Lucy and led her to the dim conservatory. "This where my stock takes a leap of 20 points," he said to himself, as he led her to the rustic bench beneath a lemon tree. He fixed a burning gaze on her and carefully wrapped an arm about her supple waist. "Old girl, you are all right," he said. With a piercing shriek, she hurled him among the cacti and declared she had been insulted. "Why do you discriminate against me?" he asked in a hurt tone. "I always supposed you were a gentleman," she said, freezing. "I have been up to date and probably that is why my work is so coarse," he replied. "Was I too sudden?" "Wretch!" she exclaimed and swept back into the hall-room. For three days after that her brother was looking for Mr. Spilvens with a gun. Moral: It has to be done in a certain way. GEORGE ADE.

What made it so bitter for Homer was that in his heart of hearts he wanted to be a butterfly. Frequently he would say, "Some boys can fly why can't I?" At many an evening party he would reveal himself behind the bass viol and watch the frivolous capers of the many Freshes and wonder how they did it. He would listen to the merry talk and wish that he could part in it all evening without having anything to say. Sometimes he would overhear the conversation that came all the girls to double up and have duck fits. Then the cold sweat would gather in large beads on his forehead. The talk was a cross between the innocent prattle of childhood and the maudlin maunderings of the incoherent ward at Bloomingdale. "Oh! thought Homer, 'if only I could smother my mind, some evening and get out and deal that kind of pink perfume, I would be as popular as any of these willing performers.'" Homer fell in love at long range with a girl named Lucy Livingston. Lucy was a prize pansy who never jangled in algebra, but she was a talker from Conversationalville. Homer never told his love, but let concealment, like a green worm, feed on his

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