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The Semi-Weekly Colonist.

VOL L., NO. 153 — VICTORIA, B. C., TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 1908 — FIFTIETH YEAR

MEN ARE KILLED ON U. S. CRUISER

Steam Pipe Bursts in Engine Room of Tennessee at San Pedro

FOUR MEN DIE INSTANTLY

Two More Believed to Be Fatally Injured, and Others Suffering

San Pedro, Cal., June 5.—A terrible accident occurred on board the United States armored cruiser Tennessee at 10.08 o'clock this morning, while the ship was steaming at 19 knots per hour, off Point Puenene, Cal. A steam pipe in the starboard engine room burst under 235 pounds pressure, killing four men and injuring ten others, all the men in the compartment at the time.

The explosion, the cause of which is unknown, occurred only a few minutes after Admiral Sebree, Capt. F. B. Hoard and Chief Engineer Robertson had left the engine room on a tour of inspection. Four of the men were killed instantly, and two are apparently fatally inpured.

The dead: Geo. Wood, water tender, Scranton, Pa.; F. C. Boggs, second class fireman, Woodlawn, Ala.; A. Reinhold, machinist's mate, second class, Germany; Geo. W. Meek, first class fireman, Skidmore, Kansas.

Fatally injured: S. Stematis, first class fireman, Norfolk, Va.; F. S. Mansfield, second class fireman, Toughkena, Pa.

Seriously injured: F. J. Burns, coal passer, Brooklyn, N.Y.; J. P. Carroll, second class fireman, Hartford, Conn.

Slightly injured: R. W. Watson, fireman, East St. Louis, Ill.; R. E. Rutledge, coal passer, Athens, Pa.; G. McCorns, fireman, Irontown, Ohio; A. Sayes, water tender, Brooklyn, N.Y.; H. Fitzpatrick, fireman, Brooklyn, N. Y.

There were fourteen men in the fire room when the tube, which is four inches in diameter and inclosed with water inside the boiler, blew out, driving a torrent of scalding steam, coal dust, cinders and hot ashes through the ash pit and showered the entire compartment with them.

A blast of white steam from the ventilators told those on deck of the accident, and Lieut. Commander S. S. Robinson, the navigator, instantly sounded a general alarm and dropped twenty lines of hose ready for instant use in case of fire within the doomed fire room number 3 amidship of the starboard side, which is one of the sixteen enclosed fire compartments, the surviving seamen were fighting for life.

Reinhold and Meek were stricken dead at their posts. Boggs and Wood crawled into the adjoining fire room number 11 and died almost immediately. The surviving seamen, all of whom received some injuries, acted with the greatest heroism in aiding their unfortunate mates.

Rear Admiral Sebree himself escaped death or serious injury in the fated fire pit by a narrow margin. He had left the room, where the explosion occurred not fifty seconds before the fatal blast. The Admiral stood in the engine room adjoining the fire room with Chief Engineer Robertson and Capt. Howard. His first intimation of the tragedy was as he mounted the ladder and a fireman leaped past him suffering from severe scalds.

When the fire call was sounded all the crew went to their stations in perfect order. Seyeral of the crew behaved with heroism, and will be reported to the department later when full particulars are known. The ship was undergoing inspection by the commander of the second division, and had been under way for over two hours. The engines, boilers and all machinery had been working well, equally as well as during the acceptance trial.

The Tennessee which is the flagship of the second division of the Pacific cruiser fleet, left Santa Barbara at ten o'clock this morning with the cruisers Pennsylvania, Washington, Colorado and West Virginia in her wake, on the semi-annual speed trial provided by naval regulations.

Admiral Sebree had ordered the cruiser to steam at full speed, and the Tennessee had just concluded a series of evolutions and started straight away at a speed of between 18 and 19 knots. The admiral in the engine room had just taken note that a mean pressure of 230 pounds was recorded when the explosion occurred, less than fifteen minutes after the tubes had endured a pressure of 265 pounds.

An official investigation had been ordered. The boiler was of the standard tubular pattern, the Babcock and Wilcox makes, used on many warships. It consists of a large cluster of four-inch tubes carrying water into the main boiler. Only one tube, and this one of the bottom tier, exploded. The break was less than six inches in length. There was no wreckage, but the explosion as described by the survivors was frightful. So great was the blast of soot and steam that every man in the room was blackened from head to foot, while those closest to the break were cooked alive. When the first outside rescurers entered the fire room it was in utter darkness. The steam and soot covered electric lights and ceiling and walls with a thick coat.

The impression among the officers and crew is that Rheinhold and Meek were martyrs to duty, for they were found dead where others escaped, and stayed at their posts to the last. The accident served to demonstrate the complete efficiency of the fire drill. There was no confusion.

Dr. W. A. Weldon, marine surgeon at San Pedro, has been ordered to bring eight of the most seriously wounded to the Marine hospital at Los Angeles, leaving here at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

Rear-Admiral Sebree, when seen on board by a reporter of the Associated Press, said: "The explosion was one of those accidents which cannot be provided against."

LIQUOR TRAFFIC IN SASKATCHEWAN

Government Bill Passes Second Reading in the Legislature

NOT A DISSENTING VOTE

Leader of Opposition Thinks Local Option Areas Might Be Larger

Regina, June 6.—Without a dissenting voice the new government liquor act passed its second reading this morning. The second reading of the bill was moved by Hon. Mr. Turgeon, who explained the provisions for local option on a majority vote, curtailment of hours to ten o'clock, decreasing the number of licences according to population, the closing of clubs so far as licences are concerned, and the shutting of bars on Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday and Thanksgiving Day. He explained that owing to a mistake in the section it was provided that no existing licences should be affected by the change in the number granted on the population basis, and said that next year the number would be required to come down to the basis of population.

Mr. Haultain agreed with the broad principle of the bill, and said there was no doubt the time had come when a change was necessary in the licencing system, to keep abreast of the times. The government bill provided for licences outside of towns, cities and villages, but he thought any community not large enough to incorporate as a village should not be allowed a licence. He also thought the area over which local option should have force should be increased, and stated that the whole area of the province would be desirable, if they could have a vote on that basis. He had no doubt if a vote were taken it would be possible to secure prohibition over the whole area. It was a matter of opinion as to whether a majority vote was sufficiently strong in sentiment to enforce the act, but personally he thought it was sufficient. The adoption of the provincial voters' list was, however, a mistake, as the people who had a right to vote on municipal questions were those entitled to vote on the liquor question.

Mr. Langley congratulated Mr. Haultain on the statesmanlike position he took, and agreed with the general principles of the bill. Mr. Brown also agreed that the measure was a wise one. Premier Scott read a telegram from the Methodist conference at Saskatoon approving generally of the bill.

Mr. Langley said he favored a larger division over which local option should have force, and suggested that the electoral divisions of the province should be the ones accepted. These divisions would mean that they would be longer in securing prohibition, but when it did come the sentiment behind it would be stronger and enforcement more sure.

Rev. Dr. Chown is pleased with the legislation, but thinks the municipal lists should be used in deciding the local option question.

Indians Drowned

Brockville, Ont., June 5.—Two Indians were drowned here yesterday. Their names are not known.

COLONIST INTERVIEW PRACTICALLY CORRECT

Major Hodgins Modifies Statements Made Before the Committee

Ottawa, June 5.—Major Hodgins after reading the official report of the proceedings before the special committee on Wednesday expressed a desire to modify the statements which the counsel for the commission led him to make in connection with his interview in the Colonist.

To the Colonist correspondent he said: "I did not wish to repudiate entirely the general corrections of my first interview, as the answers drawn from me by the counsel would appear to indicate. What I desired to express briefly was that the second interview corrected to a considerable extent the errors made in the first, but in a few minor points the errors of the first interview remained uncorrected. The second interview I had an opportunity to read right before it was published, and as the corrections cleared up the most serious errors I made no more objections."

The inquiry has been adjourned for a week. In the meantime Chief Engineer Lumsden of the Transcontinental commission and Mr. Wood, assistant chief engineer for the Grank Trunk Pacific, will go over the district of which Major Hodgins formerly had charge.

Winnipeg, June 6.—The army corps advance detachment left this morning to prepare for the opening of camp on Monday.

Against Opium.

Exeter, Ont., June 6.—At yesterday's session of the London Methodist conference a resolution to memorialize the Dominion government to prohibit the importation and preparation of plum in any of its forms except for medicinal purposes was unanimously carried and will be sent to Ottawa.

Lindsay, Ont., June 6.—At the Bay of Quinte Methodist conference yesterday the moral reform and temperance committee brought in a resolution asking the Dominion government to prohibit the importation, manufacture and sale of opium except as medicine.

PASSENGERS DIE IN TRAIN WRECK

Fifteen Killed and Many Injured in Collision Near Annapolis, Md.

A CONFUSION OF ORDERS

Many of the Dead and Injured on Their Way to Naval Academy Ball

Annapolis, Md., June 6.—In a head-on collision between two specials of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Railway Co. shortly before 8 o'clock, 15 persons were killed outright and a score of others were seriously injured, some of them perhaps fatally.

The collision was due to a confusion of orders, as the line has been running several extra cars each way in connection with the commencement festivities at Annapolis.

The dead are: Richard Norton, 25 years old, Baltimore; A. Schultz, 40 years of age, Baltimore; Police Patrolman Shreiber, 40 years old, employed by the railway company at Academy Junction; an unidentified white woman, apparently 25 years of age, said to be from Baltimore, and dressed in ball costume; Beach O'Neil, motorman of one of the wrecked cars; Ruth Slaughter, six years old, daughter of General Traffic Manager Wm. Slaughter of the road; J. W. McDaniel, Baltimore; Geo. White, Baltimore.

Those more or less injured include State Senator P. J. Campbell and his daughter, Miss Campbell, of Baltimore, and Judge James Brasser, of this city. The unidentified white woman was killed and is believed to be a Miss Harris, of Philadelphia. She and several of those injured were on their way to this city to attend the graduating ball at the Naval Academy.

The wreck occurred on a curve, which prevented the motormen of the cars seeing more than a short distance away.

The dead were laid beside the track by those on the scene, and the injured were taken from the wreck as rapidly as possible. It was noted that they all showed remarkable fortitude, and many of them insisted that others be given first attention. They were brought to the emergency hospital, crowded to overflowing, and a crowd of anxious inquirers and sympathizers.

The wreck occurred just beyond Camp Parole, which is the first station after leaving this city. Both the wrecked cars were specials, one of them bound from Baltimore for Annapolis, the other running from here bound for Washington. The latter car had few passengers, while the other was well filled. The impact was terrific, and both cars were wrecked, that bound for this city being thrown from the rails. As quickly as possible aid was sent from here, and the dead and injured were brought to this city.

Of the injured, General Traffic Manager Wm. E. Slaughter of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis road, was in the worst condition, and his death at any moment would not cause the physicians surprise.

Drowned at Toronto.

Toronto, June 6.—J. W. Bates, aged 20, was drowned in the lake at Sunnyside Beach yesterday afternoon while swimming. His body was recovered.

Old Settler Killed.

Fort Francis, Ont., June 6.—Thomas Gawsby, one of the early settlers at Stratton, near here, was killed early yesterday morning by a freight train while walking the C. N. tracks.

Small Boy Drowned.

Birtle, Man., June 6.—Fred Cornes, aged 13, while fishing on the banks of a creek this morning, tumbled in and was drowned.

Found Drowned.

Penetanguishene, June 6.—John Misheau, about 40 years old, is supposed to have fallen out of his boat and been drowned. His body was recovered.

George Siler's Illness.

Chicago, June 6.—George Siler, the well-known sporting man and prize fighter referee, is said to be at the point of death. He has suffered for some time from angina pectoris, which has lately assumed a critical phase.

Celluloid Explosion.

Vienna, June 6.—Sixteen workmen were killed and seventeen others were more or less seriously injured by an explosion this afternoon in a celluloid factory at Otkaring, a suburb of Vienna. The explosion was followed by a fire, which completely gutted the factory. Four workmen still are missing. The explosion is attributed to the spontaneous combustion of celluloid dust.

Threw Carbolic Acid.

Toronto, June 6.—Elizabeth Taylor, 29 years old, was arrested last night, charged with assaulting Fred Chandler last Tuesday night by throwing carbolic acid with intent to do bodily harm. The woman is married, but is separated from her husband. She has two children. Chandler's face is badly burned, and his eyesight is threatened by the acid.

Eleven Injured by Explosion.

Indianapolis, June 6.—The plant of the Prestolite company, on South street, which stores gas in tanks, blew up today. Eleven persons were injured by the explosion, none fatally, however. St. Vincent's hospital and an engine house of the city fire department adjoining were badly damaged. The plant has been completed but a short time. It cost $70,000. This is the third explosion at the company's works within a year.

TORNADO CLAIMS MANY VICTIMS

Terrific Storm Sweeps Portions of Kansas and Nebraska

DEATH LIST WILL BE LONG

Heavy Rain Makes Suffering of Homeless People More Acute

Omaha, Neb., June 6.—The tornado which passed over Southern Nebraska and portions of Northern Kansas on Friday evening was the most destructive and covered the most territory of any simlar storm which has visited that region in many years.

At least 21 persons were killed, several were fatally injured and many others were hurt. In addition, reports received tonight say that several persons were killed at Byron, Neb., and Phillipsburg and Courtland, Kas., which towns have been cut off from communication.

The storm was general throughout Filmore, Webster, Franklin and Thayer counties, Nebraska, and reached over into Kansas, whence reports are coming in slowly of great destruction.

The towns of Carleton, Fairfield, Desplaer, Stickley, Geneva, Franklin, Byron and Riverton, Neb., are among those visited by the storm.

At Carleton five residences and two churches were destroyed, while a school building and three houses were partly wrecked.

At Geneva the storm wrought great destruction, and in the adjacent county claimed several victims, dead or injured.

At Fairfield more than 40 buildings are partly wrecked or demolished.

The loss will exceed $100,000. The storm has covered such a wide area and been so destructive that hundreds of farmers drove into the towns last night and today are seeking shelter, many of them being homeless.

Telephone communication was established with Chester. The postmaster reported ten deaths nearby, but could not give much definite information. Following the tornado rain soaked the homeless sufferers, making their lot doubly harsh.

ROYAL PARTY STARTS ON VISIT TO RUSSIA

Exchange of Entertainments to Take Place on the Royal Yachts at Reval

London, June, 5.—King Edward, Queen Alexandra and Princess Victoria started for Reval, Russia, tonight for a visit to the Emperor of Russia.

A large suite accompanied the royal party, including Sir Chas. Hardine, Permanent Under Secretary to the Foreign Office, Sir Arthur Nicholson, British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, Admiral Fisher and Lieut. Gen. Sir John French.

The party reached Port Victoria at eleven o'clock tonight and boarded the royal yacht Victoria and Albert, which will sail at four o'clock tomorrow morning.

The cruisers Minotaur and Achilles and four torpedo boat destroyers will meet the yacht at Kiel and escort it thence to Reval, which should be reached early on Tuesday. Emperor Nicholas will entertain his guests at luncheon and dinner aboard the Russian imperial yacht Standart, and King Edward will return the compliment to the Russian Emperor and Empress on board the British royal yacht on Wednesday. It is expected that Emperor Nicholas will visit England in the autumn, but this has not been definitely determined.

For Extensive Theft.

Pittsburg, June 6.—For the embezzlement of $1,005,000 from the Farmers' Deposit National bank, Henry Reeiber and John Young, former paying teller and auditor, were sentenced shortly after noon today to serve ten years each in the penitentiary.

DETECTIVES FIGHT BAND OF ROBBERS

One Bandit Fatally Wounded and a Detective Seriously Injured

Pittsburg, Pa., June 6.—Two men shot, one fatally, three under arrest and two escaped, are the results of a desperate battle fought by detectives and a band of alleged bandits who were surrounded in a farm house at Belle Bridge, about 20 miles east of here, today.

Thomas Manning, 23 years old, a member of the band, was shot four times by Detective Englert, and will die. Manning shot Englert twice, seriously, but not fatally, injuring him.

The men under arrest are Joseph Patterson and his two sons, John and Wilmer. The two men who escaped are unknown. All the men are alleged to be implicated in the robbery of the Monongahela Consolidated Coal Co., last Thursday morning. It was also alleged that they were implicated in the hold-up and robbery of a street car several weeks ago, when eleven passengers and the crew were robbed at the point of a revolver.

MEMBERS TALK ABOUT DELAYS

Conduct of Liberal Opposition in 1896 Recalled to Memory

SALARIES THEN HELD UP

House Gets Into Committee and Passes Interior Department Votes

Ottawa, June 5.—When the motion for the House to go into committee of supply was made, Mr. Owen, Conservative member for East Northumberland, attacked Hon. Mr. Paterson for having said in an address at Brantford that 1800 public servants in Canada were kept out of their pay because of the obstructive tactics of the opposition. As he understood it, the votes for the Customs Department had been passed.

Mr. Fielding in reply declared that Mr. Paterson was justified in all he had said. The votes to which Mr. Owen referred had passed committee of supply, but had not passed the house. "The trouble," Mr. Fielding said, "is that the minority in this House have too many rights and a loose system is maintained by which the opposition is allowed to delay business to an extent which is not permitted in any other civilized country in the world. In the British parliament the majority rules, but in the Canadian parliament so wide is the liberty of debate that any half dozen men in the House could, if they desired, hold up the whole service of the Dominion."

Mr. Owen asked what the Liberal party had to say for holding up supply in 1896, but Mr. Fielding declared that in the session of 1896 supplies for the current year were still available, and no man was kept waiting for his money. The opposition in 1896 declined to vote supplies for the succeeding year, but that was no precedent for the state of affairs existing today.

Mr. Gordon, member for Kent, urged a change in the rules of Parliamentary procedure in Canada in order to prevent the present state of affairs.

When the house met again at 3 o'clock Mr. Taylor, chief Conservative whip, charged the government with being responsible for not proceeding with the business of the country. He called attention to the vacant seats on the ministerial side of the House. Most of the ministers were away electioneering in Ontario and Quebec. He reminded Sir Wilfrid that in 1896 he held up the salaries of the civil service for seven weeks. The opposition of that date had no grievance; this one had.

When the 6 o'clock adjournment arrived the House had not yet gone into supply, Mr. Lemieux and Mr. Carvell being the principal contributors to the speechifying.

In the evening, however the House did get into supply and passed $1,500,000 of the votes for the department of the interior. Of this $700,000 is for the general expense of the immigration department and $600,000 for Dominion land surveys. The attendance was very slim during the evening, and had the attention of the chairman been called to the matter the House would have had to adjourn for want of a quorum. No one spoke, however.

Just before the House adjourned, Hon. George P. Graham, minister of railways, made a plea that provision be made for the employees of the intercolonial and the canals. He said they needed their money.

"Come on Monday," suggested Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Graham admitted that he would be absent on Monday. The House adjourned at midnight.

Madame and Her Prince

Paris, June 6.—The attorneys for Mme. Gould declared today that various matters had delayed the marriage of their client to Prince Helie de Sagan, but that the ceremony would occur within a month. The presence of George Gould, Mme. Gould's brother, at the marriage is problematical. Business interests demand his presence in the States.

Hudson Bay Railway.

Ottawa, June 6.—The proposed construction of a railway to Hudson Bay will be financed on the lines suggested by Mr. Sifton some weeks ago. Certain even-numbered sections in Saskatchewan and Alberta are to be sold to furnish the funds. The Canadian Northern may be asked to build the line, but all the other companies will have running privileges over it.

Logging Outfit Seized.

New Westminster, June 6.—A scow and logging outfit of Alexander Jones & Son of Sechelt, has been seized by the sheriff for debt on behalf of the Schaake Machine Works of this city. Messrs. Jones had their donkey-engine repaired by the Schaake Works and had it loaded on a scow and started off for Sechelt late at night. The nightwatchman gave the alarm and a deputy-sheriff was sent in pursuit with the result that the outfit was captured a short distance down the river and brought back to the city.

Dash for North Pole.

St. John's, Nfld., June 6.—Happy in the hope of a dash to the north with Commodore S. A. E. Peary, Capt. Bartlett, sailing master of the Arctic, and a crew of 11 sailors departed today in the Allan line steamer Siberian for New York, where they will make their start for the north on Peary's ship Roosevelt. The sailors have been selected with regard to their adaptibility to Arctic exploration and are practically the pick of Newfoundland's seamen. Capt. Bartlett asserts that if the Roosevelt is fortunate enough to get in the position made during the last attempt to reach the pole, the experience acquired in that voyage, combined with the aid of a specially selected crew, will make this effort to reach the desired goal an easy task.

TWO SCHOONERS ONLY WILL SAIL

Umbrina and Dora Sieward Alone to Go From Here to Bering Sea

TOTAL OF EIGHT VESSELS

Thirty-Eight Schooners Flying Japanese Flag on Northern Sealing Grounds

Two sealing schooners are being made ready to go to Bering Sea, the smallest number that has left in June any year since the City of San Diego first went into Bering Sea over a quarter of a century ago. The schooner Umbrina, belonging to Captain J. W. Peppett, of which Capt Delouchrey will have command, and the schooner Dora Sieverd, of the Victoria Whaling company, of which Capt. W. Heater will have charge, are being outfitted and will sail during the coming week. The Umbrina, which has been lying idle for many months at the Hudsons Bay wharf was towed to the face of the wharf yesterday morning and is taking on board her coal and stores in readiness to go north. The Dora Sieverd was placed on Turpel's ways to be overhauled, and when floated will go alongside the sealing company's wharf to ship her stores. The Umbrina will ship her Indian hunters at various points on the west coast of Vancouver Island and the Dora Sieverd has secured a crew at Ahousaht.

The Victoria sealing fleet of this year will be unprecdently small. Added to the two vessels of the June fleet, less than one-sixth of the usual number sent, and a sixteenth of the number sent in June a few years ago, there are two other vessels out with Indian crews on board, the Markland of the Victoria Sealing company and the Thomas F. Bayard, owned by Thomas Stockham and others of this city. There are also three schooners, with full compliments of white hunters, the Jessie, owned by Richard Hall, and the Allie I. Algar and Libbie of the Victoria Sealing company—a total fleet of eight schooners in all to represent the one-time depot of fleet of sixty sealing schooners engaged in pelagic sealing before the absurd continuance of the regulations which now discriminate so peculiarly in favor of the Japanese sealers made the industry unprofitable to owners of schooners.

The schooners flying the Japanese flag to hunt seals on the face of the waters in the north Pacific and Bering sea this year will total nearly five times the number of the local fleet. In all, 38 schooners have left the ports of Japan, and of these 35 are dispatched to Bering sea. Seven, mostly in command of former Victoria seal hunters, came across the Pacific to hunt off this coast. As the Japanese are not bound by the terms of the Paris award and can hunt without the restrictions to hinder them, yearly there is a line drawn sixty miles about the rookeries on which the patrol fleet circles to keep the Victoria schooners from poaching within this preserve kept where Japanese vessels may go at will to within the usual three-mile limit of international law, their hunters using firearms, while the hampered Victorians must use spears.

MINING ACTIVITY IN THE BIG BEND

The Revelstoke People Expect Much From Development of District

Revelstoke, June 6.—A great deal of mining activity in the Big Bend district, north of this city, is assured for the present season. John Thompson, a mining man from Spokane and eastern Idaho, left on Tuesday's steamer for an inspection of the Montgomery group, on Downie creek. J. C. Vance, manager of the French Creek hydraulic mines, is now on the ground with fifteen men and will commence mining at once. They will work the property night and day. Charles Richards, the foreman of this property, took with him fifteen pack horses to rush in supplies. John D. Sibbald, manager of the McCullough creek hydraulic mines, has had three men all winter preparing the ground for the season's work and a full crew will be at work in a short time on this property.

F. H. Guffy, manager of the Pittsburg owners of the Smith Creek hydraulic mines, is expected in the city any day and will send a big gang of men up to Smith Creek to continue operations this season. During the winter Mr. Guffy had a small crew whipsawing lumber for the construction of flumes, sluice boxes and buildings in general.

The lode mines of the Big Bend will have considerable attention paid to them this season judging from the number of inquiries from American capitalists as to the conditions.

The citizens of Revelstoke are greatly interested in the opening up of the Big Bend realizing as they do that the province has no richer district within its boundaries in mining, lumbering and fruit lands than this district.

The steamer Revelstoke is making trips twice a week north to Priest River district, and with the construction of a trail or wagon road round Death Rapids a distance only of three miles, Revelstoke will have a water route to the Grand Trunk Pacific railway or to within 30 miles of the road. Every indication would point to Revelstoke as being the supply point for the construction of the inner section of the Grand Trunk Pacific.

HAVOC WROUGHT BY FIERCE FIRE

Victoria Machinery Depot Almost Totally Destroyed by Conflagration

THE INSURANCE IS LIGHT

Damage Will Amount to $150,000—Originated in the Moulding Room

(From Sunday's Daily)

Commencing in the moulding room, though exactly in what manner is not known, fire, one of the worst in the history of Victoria, almost completely wiped out the extensive plant of the Victoria Machinery Depot, on the Esquimalt road. Of the great works which have formed one of the leading industries on the coast, little remains but the marine ways and a portion of the office building, the carpenter shop and planing shop, the latter situated in the building directly at the head of the ways. The balance of the big plant is nothing more than a heap of smouldering ruins, of charred timbers and twisted iron work of the many and various machines. The plant, which was valued by the owners at about $225,000 was equipped in a most up-to-date manner and practically the whole of the costly machinery is a ruin while a large amount of work under construction became a prey to the flames.

Just what will be the exact loss the proprietors were unable to state last night, but it is doubtful if it will amount to less than $150,000. Only $80,000 insurance was carried on the building and contents, being held chiefly in companies represented by R. P. Rithet & Co., Hall & Gospel and Joshua Kingham. Of the 150 employees of the company, some thirty lost all their tools to a total value of about $5,000; only two of the entire number succeeding in getting their property from the burning building.

TO REBUILD WORKS WITHOUT ANY DELAY

Standing almost in the midst of the ruins of the industry which they had worked hard to build to its recent magnitude, the proprietors of the Victoria Machinery Depot viewed the destruction, which in a short two hours had almost wiped out the work of years.

"It is a severe blow," said C. J. V. Spratt, president of the concern, "but just as soon as the embers cool we will start the work of reconstruction. Just what our loss will be in dollars and cents I cannot at present state. Besides the buildings and plant we had several large orders under way which will be a total loss."

The blaze was spectacular in the extreme. The flames sprang high into the still air, and it was a most fortunate circumstance that there was practically no wind, yet little breeze there was blowing from the southeast and carrying the sparks away from the ways on which were resting the two tugs, the Queen and the Fern, the former owned by J. H. Greer and the latter by Capt. K. Gardiner. Wet blankets, pails of water and a stream from a small hose put out any stray sparks which rested upon both ways and boats, and in this manner was saved a part of the plant which is valued by the owners at $84,000 exclusive of the value of the vessels.

FIRE DISCOVERED BY THE HINDU WATCHMAN

The fire was first noticed by the Hindu watchman who discovered the blaze shortly after 8 o'clock, by the reflection cast upon the windows of the moulding room and Mr. Houston, superintendent of the works, who lives directly opposite the plant was notified. A telephone alarm brought out the fire brigade. Mr. Houston and John Alexander, assistant superintendant engineer of the C. P. R., who was at Mr. Houston's house, rushed across to the plant and entered the moulding room. At that time there was but little fire in the place. They had but reached the road again when the fire brigade, with the Merriweather engine arrived on the scene. Two streams from the hydrant on Pleasant street were run through the front of the premises into the moulding shop which by that time was blazing fiercely. By the time the engine streams had commenced to play upon the blaze the fire had worked its way into the machine room and it seemed to be but a few seconds before the whole of that department, which contained sixteen costly lathes, one of which was recently installed at a cost of $4,000, with a mass of other valuable machinery was ablaze. Above the machine shop was the pattern room filled with patterns, many of which will be hard to duplicate, and form one of the chief items of loss.

MARCH OF FIRE WATCHED BY HUNDREDS

By the time the brigade had got all streams working from the engine and the hydrant the flames had gradually eaten their way northerly into the building fronting on Esquimalt road, and working eastward, completely wiped out the stores and a portion of the office premises, then worked around behind the offices into the boiler room and ignited the fitters shop, blacksmith shop and boiler shop, until the entire plant situated on the wharves, and all but the main portion of the office building and carpenter and planing shops was a seething mass of flames. The reflection lighted up the whole harbor and was seen miles away. In the water a host of small pleasure craft plied to and fro among the sealing schooners moored a short distance from the blazing plant and along the Esquimalt road and from every conceivable point of vantage an

(Continued on Page Two.)