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## APPALLING DISASTER

### No Such Tragedy Ever Before in New York Harbor.

#### An Excursion Laden With a Thousand Women and Children Takes Fire and the Loss of Life is Over Five Hundred

New York, June 15.—The three decked excursion steamer General Slocum, of the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, burned to the water's edge in Hell Gate this morning resulting in the death through burning or drowning of at least 600 persons, mostly women and children. Four hundred and forty-seven bodies had been recovered tonight and divers were at work taking bodies from the hold of the steamer. The remains of many persons who leaped into the river have not yet been found, and it will be many hours before the list of dead is anywhere near completion.

The General Slocum, one of the largest excursion steamers in these waters, left Third street, East River at 9.30 o'clock this morning, having on board the annual Sunday school excursion of St. Mark's German Lutheran church, located in Sixth street. Her destination was Locust Grove, one of the many resorts on Long Island sound. The excursion was in charge of Rev. George C. H. Haas, pastor of the church. The vessel was commanded by Capt. William Van Schaik, one of the best known excursion boat captains in New York harbor. He had commanded the General Slocum for almost the entire time since she was built in 1891. The number of excursionists on board today is variously estimated at from 1,500 to 2,500, but according to an official statement issued by the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, owners of the Slocum, the number of passengers was 873, that being one third of the vessel's licensed capacity.

The steamer, after leaving her dock this morning proceeded up the East River, all three of her decks being crowded with merry makers. Bands played and the great side wheel was decorated with flags from stem to stern.

The Slocum had reached a point near the Sunken Meadows off 135th street, Manhattan, which is at the extreme eastern end of Randall's Island, when fire broke out in a lunch room on the forward deck. The blaze was caused by the overturning of a pot of grease. The head way of the vessel and a high wind almost instantly fanned the insignificant blaze into fury. Efforts were at once directed to subduing the fire, but they were futile. The blaze spread aft with almost lightning rapidity. Captain Van Schaik in the pilot house had been informed of the outbreak of the fire, and realizing the danger to the hundreds of excursionists, decided to send his vessel to shore at 134th street. At this point there are a number of lumber yards and several huge oil tanks and the captain was warned that to attempt to land at this point would endanger the property and perhaps further imperil the scores of people, who had already been frightened into a state of almost uncontrollable excitement.

Changing the big steamer's course slightly he headed her for North Brother Island, half a mile away.

By this time the flames were rushing by leaps and bounds from the forward part of the ship aft.

The great open decks, built for excursionists, with little obstruction from bow to stern, offered a clear sweep for the fire. As the Slocum dashed forward the flames caught stanchion and cabin work, eating and tearing their way across the vessel.

The excursionists, but a few moments before in the full enjoyment of an ideal summer's day on Long Island Sound, were driven to the after part of the steamer to escape the heat, flames and smoke that were constantly increasing. Police-men and deck hands aboard the boat, struggled hard to quiet the panic, but their efforts were in vain. The wild disorder increased,

as frantic mothers sought to find children who had been at play about the decks.

The steamer's whistle was blowing for assistance and the tugs and other nearby craft answered to the call. Before any of the boats could reach the burning steamer, however, the frantic women and children began to jump overboard. The current was strong and there are many whirlpools in the channel. The boats that always abound in the vicinity picked many persons from the water, but these were only a small number of those that were seen struggling in the swift current.

On the Slocum the first sweep of the flames cut off escape from the hurricane deck, where a great many of the women and children were crowded together, and soon burned away the light wood of the uprights which came down with a crash on these below. It is thought that most of those on the hurricane deck were burned.

As the fire increased, the struggle to gain a point of vantage at the stern became frightful. Women and children crowded against the after rail until it gave way and hundreds were pushed off into the river. After this there was a steady stream of persons who jumped or were thrown into the water.

By this time the shrieking whistles of the Slocum had attracted the attention of river craft for a considerable distance around this and tugs and other small boats were rushing to the assistance of the burning steamer.

These small boats rescued all those in the water whom they could reach, but many persons struggled and sunk before any help could reach them. In the wake of the Slocum as she hurried up stream was a line of little black spots, marking the heads and bodies of those who had sought to escape the roaring furnace on the ship by throwing themselves overboard.

Few of those saved by the small boats had no life preservers. At no time during the progress of the fire was there an opportunity to either lower the life boats or get the life preservers out.

### The Lightning Rod.

The pranks played by lightning in this city a few days ago makes lightning rod talk timely. Does the rod give any real protection against lightning? If you are a farmer and would ask the agent that question in all seriousness, he would talk you into at least three rods on your barn and two on your house. Properly constructed the lightning rod does protect. The United States Weather Bureau gives its sanction to that verdict and has issued a pamphlet of advice and instruction to the people at large. It is prepared by a University professor and says that the first desideratum is what the electricians call a "good ground"—that is, close and permanent connection with a large mass of high electrical conductivity, like damp soil or an extensive system of metallic pipes. The lightning rod itself should be a wide band, a thin-walled tube, or a wire cable, rather than a solid wire, for so is the conductivity of a given amount of metal largely increased. And of extreme importance is it that the course of the rod to the ground should be as short and straight as possible. If the pathway provided for the "bolt" be devious, the impatient messenger from—or to—the clouds will not follow it, no matter how much is spent for glass or other insulators, while the path be straight the insulators are needless for any charge the rod can carry. What happens when a good lightning rod is put to test is thus described by a man who went through the experience at a mountain hotel in New York State: "I was standing on the piazza when the most tremendous shock or concussion conceivable took place. I had a sudden dazzle in the eyes, a bitter taste in the mouth, a violent ringing in the ears, a pungent, sulphurous odor in the nose, and a severe headache. Then I learned that the house had been struck by lightning; that is to say, that the conductors had functioned effectively and had safely conducted the electricity into the lake, instead of the discharge falling upon the hotel and wrecking it."

Let no one speak of the lightning rod in scorn.—Charlotte Chronicle.

Miss Mary Pope most pleasantly entertained a number of her friends at her home Tuesday evening.

Don't be too modest. Because of its modesty the lowly violet is frequently trampled under foot.

### Veterans' Reunion at Nashville.

Over 30,000 people attended the opening exercises of the Veterans' Reunion opened Tuesday in Nashville, Tenn. It was the first convention in the history of the organization that the Sons of Veterans sat with their fathers, and the cheers from the younger generations proved that the spirit of 1861 still reigns and will for years to come. The Veterans were called to order by General Stephen D. Lee, the acting commander in chief. Chaplain Jones delivered the invocation; in a splendid address Governor J. B. Frazier, of Tennessee, welcomed the delegates, after which Colonel A. S. Williams, mayor of Nashville, extended the city's welcome. General Gordon then brought forward General Stephen D. Lee, as the permanent presiding officer and commander in chief. He was received with round after round of enthusiastic applause, and for several minutes was kept bowing from side to side, unable to make himself heard. From the body of his eloquent address, which thrilled to the hearts of his hearers, we quote the following: "It is a source of joy to, every one of us, as we make our annual pilgrimage to meet together, when we see how prosperous our country has grown. At last I think we all feel that the prosperity of the land is assured. When the savings of all previous generations were consumed in the common disaster, it seemed for awhile as if the South had to face the bitterness of poverty for generations to come. Statesmanship, literature, art, culture, flowers of leisure and opportunity, were to remain forever withered on the soil once so congenial; nothing was to be left but the hard struggle with adversity till the bitter end.

"I think we are convinced now that the South is fully on its feet again. In material prosperity we have now not only reached, but surpassed, the achievements of our fathers; yet, when I look about me for the men who are to enter into the garden which you, my brave comrades, have made bloom under such hard conditions, I cannot but be sensible to the incomparable loss which the South sustained. The tongues which would have commanded the applause of Senates were never heard after the cry of battle was over; the genius that might have directed the counsel of nations, breathed its last upon some forgotten skirmish line. The very flower and pride of our people perished in the battle front, and the blood of our race lost much of its most magnificent strain when they went to their graves."

### The Disgrace of Doing Nothing.

The early Indian builders of the ancient district of Tobasco, in Central America, had a word in their language which stood for the definition of "nothing." This word, so far as its history has or can be traced, contained thirty-two syllables and was unpronounceable. As the Tabascans said: "It stands for 'nothing,' and therefore cannot be spoken."

When some man of the district, or woman, or even wayward child died, whose life the hi priests and teachers felt had been utterly worthless, helpless to all that still lived, they placed at the point of burial, grave, tomb, or funeral pyre, a block of stone bearing the name of the dead and this one unpronounceable word.

This custom prevailed more than seven hundred years ago among a strange and now extinct people, but the force of being a negative or useless character in the world is still as potent today as then.

The unpronounceable word of Tobasco has been forgotten by all but students, but not the uselessness of a life that is given wholly to selfishness or idleness. It is a singular thing that in the history of every nation known to man there appear in one form or another the two phases, "Do right!" and "Do things!"

Right living, helpful living, is always active, always working. It strives to keep the pure mind, the clean tongue, the helping hand, the tender heart. It accepts the cross in place of that dishonored block of stone of Tobasco, upon which there was always carved a word that no person could pronounce.—The Boy's World.

Possibly you have observed that lots of girls marry during leap year who never married before.

### Lumber Bridge Locals.

Correspondence of the Robesonian

We have not yet learned who will be the successor to Mrs. M. B. McDonald at the McDonald House. Mr. W. A. Chason the veteran hotelist takes care of all boarders and travellers.

Rev. J. D. Cross goes over to Red Springs every Thursday night and conducts a prayer meeting service in his church there.

Miss Eettie Brown, who has been abroad about a year for study has reached her native land and may be expected at home ere long.

Rev. A. M. McLaughlin has decided to change his field of labor from Childress, Texas, to Fort Worth. He is making a short visit now to his old home near Antioch.

Mr. Jack Singleton and family went down to Wilmington this week and combined business with pleasure.

Dr. D. Hughes went over to Sharron to worship last Sunday. It was communion day.

We learn as we pen these lines that all the sick among us—they are not many—are better.

Rev. P. R. Law will preach at Antioch next Sunday.

Mr. D. A. Smith has a large field of the largest and most luxuriant corn we have seen anywhere this year.

Mr. J. C. McPhail shows exceptional enterprise on his farm.

We notice from the view we get from the public road the growing of corn, cotton, tobacco, cucumbers, canteloupes and potatoes. He has evidently caught the spirit and set the example of diversifying.

Mrs. Daniel McLeod who has been in Morven Georgia is spending sometime with friends and kindred around her old home at Cross Roads.

Miss Mary D. Law is spending a day or two with Mrs. M. B. McDonald at Hope Mills.

### Ashpole Items.

Correspondence of the Robesonian.

We had none of the severe hail felt by our neighbors of Kingsdale and Sterling last Friday but have the cold weather which it brought.

We were glad to hear that Miss Kate Saunders, who left here sick, arrived safely at home in eastern Virginia, and was improving.

The children's day service at the Methodist church last Sunday was a very enjoyable occasion.

Mr. Ashby's address to the children was very good indeed.

Rev. W. T. Walker was here Sunday to fill his usual appointment at the Presbyterian church.

The Baptist parsonage is completed and Rev. J. A. McKaughan and family moved in last week.

The brick work of Mr. H. S. Floyd's store on Center street is finished and it is in the hands of the carpenters.

Floyd Bros. are finishing a two story annex to their store in which they expect to keep fine furniture.

Capt. F. C. Jones is off enjoying his summer vacation visiting Mt. Olive and other points.

A fire in the woods near by created quite a sensation for a short while last Friday during the high wind, but fortunately the rain came in time to prevent damage.

In the death of Mrs. C. A. Inman, which sad event occurred last Monday, our community loses one of its most elect ladies. She was well beloved by a host of friends and relatives and will be sadly missed. The sympathy of all is with her bereaved family.

Mrs. W. W. Carlyle, of Lumberton passed through here last Monday on her way to a visit to relatives in South Carolina. Mrs. Mary Hughes joined her here for the visit.

Mr. Pate, of Dillon, S. C., was here last week erecting a lovely little monument to the grave of little Miss Myrtie Ratley, the daughter of Mr. N. A. Ratley, who died last year.

### Swallowing Coins.

If the coin is swallowed, there is seldom any danger. The best thing to do is to take a slight aperient, and in all probability it will pass away all right. If it enters the windpipe, medical aid should immediately be sought, and the only thing that could be done would be to seize the individual by the legs and hold him upside down, and strike him violently on the back, when it may be coughed up.—Exchange.

### TRIP NOTES.

Staff Correspondence.

That is a beautiful piece of road leading from Lumberton toward Fayetteville. By the way, the more of Robeson county we travel through the prouder of our county do we feel. And no little cause for our county pride is the condition of her roads which is an index to the spirit of progress and improvement that our people and their leaders possess. If others counties would inspire in their people a spirit of county pride, let their men of influence come to Robeson and do considerable driving, go back and agitate the matter of good roads until they can boast such roads as we have. Who can drive over the roads leading from Lumberton to Ashpole, Rowland, Pembroke and Buie without a thrill? But these are not all.

Our trip to Barker's some time ago was one of pleasure. Some of the finest crops we have seen were those on the first road mentioned. We have the opinion that in the vicinity of Barker's is excellent trucking land. It has been proven by a few who have grown them on a small scale that strawberry growing would be a profitable industry for this section. The community seems to be making splendid improvement in farming.

Perhaps along no line has this section improved so much in recent years as along the line of education. Barker's High School and Business University is a credit to the county and merits its pride.

We attended the recent commencement of this school and were more than pleased with what we saw and heard. The exercises by the school were of a high order and reflected much credit on teachers and students. Evidences of thoroughness in class room work were not far to see. The sermon by Rev. J. C. Massee on the subject of "The Man, Christ Jesus," was a masterful discourse that moved the audience. Rev. T. A. Smoot's address was one of power and inspiration. A bountiful dinner of good things prepared by those hospitable people was served from a long table in the grove. Twelve baskets full were taken up after the large crowd and the "Robesonian Man" had eaten.

Since we were here two years ago the dormitory and school building have been enlarged and painted. Prof. and Mrs. Colson and Prof. Bunch treated us with the greatest hospitality.

The same faculty will be in charge again next year. We spent a short while very pleasantly in the home of Mr. J. W. Powers.

We were interested in a recent visit to the Alfordville and Hillside communities. This is a great farming section. One can see hundreds of acres in a field. The cotton acreage is very large. Labor is scarce. Soe mhave lost a great deal this spring in damage to cotton, for want of chopping although 75 cents a day was offered for hands. This is a prosperous country agriculturally and financially, but where are the churches?

Their frequency and appearance must indicate a country's progress along some lines.

We have visited Rowland and Maxton again since last report. We propose to talk about Parkton, Red Springs, Fayetteville, Dunn, Lillington and Buie's Creek next week.

### JAS. A. PARHAM.

Some society women have better clothes than manners.

### The Bingham School.

We are in receipt of the Bingham school Catalogue for its 11th year, the best year financially in its history. We note that beside its North Carolina contingent it has attracted more than 140 pupils from outside of the State, representing an area which reaches from Connecticut and Nebraska, through Florida and Texas, Mexico City and Tenuatepec, to British Honduras; and we note also that it is refusing pupils instead of increasing its accommodations. We congratulate Colonel Bingham that the success of the school is even greater at Asheville than it was in Orange County.

Mr. J. P. McNeill returned this morning from Raleigh.

Mrs. White, of Gastonia, who has been a guest in the home of Mr. John Kinnear for several days, leaves this afternoon for Greensboro.

## NEWS OF THE WAR.

### Fighting Still in Progress Near Port Arthur.

#### Reported Engagement of Japanese Protected Cruiser and Russian Squadron Between Korea and Japan Recently.

London, June 15.—The correspondent of the Central News at Liao Yang telegraphed today as follows:

"The fighting at Vafangow, about 55 miles north of Port Arthur, was renewed today and is still proceeding. No details are obtainable, but there are persistent rumors that the Russians were partly successful, destroying three squadrons of cavalry and making prisoners of 60 men. The Russian casualties in the fighting yesterday were three hundred and eight men killed and wounded.

"The Japanese casualties are not known."

"Later a section of Russian cavalry marching in the direction of Tahan-Chow and Lun-Koo, discovered on its right flank a great force of Japanese cavalry. An engagement ensued, and according to the latest dispatches, fighting is proceeding all along the line, the Japanese having obtained reinforcements from Vafangow, consisting of three infantry divisions with artillery and cavalry."

Tokio, June 15.—It is reported here that the Japanese protected cruiser Vladivostock squadron off Tsu Island, in the Strait between Korea and Japan. This report, however, lacks confirmation.

The Japanese transports Ugo and Fuyo, homeward bound, met the Russian vessels near Oki Island. The Russians pursued them and fired 16 shots at the Japanese ships. The transports escaped and reached Katamotou.

Tokio, June 15.—Reports of cannonading have been received here from various points, such as Chi-Kuzen province, Oki Island and Tsuzhimi, but the exact nature of the operations of the Russian Vladivostock squadron is not disclosed.

The Japanese warships in the vicinity are hurrying to the scene. Sasebo is being closed. There is a strong possibility that a naval engagement will take place soon. No southern city in Japan is exposed to attack, but this Russian raid may prove expensive to shipping.

London, June 15.—A dispatch to the Central News from Tokio, filed at 6 p. m. today says:

A dispatch just received from Moji says the cannonading at sea stopped at 1 p. m. There was a heavy sea in the straits all day. Ten Japanese merchant steamers are known to have left various ports for Moji and there is much anxiety about their fate.

It is rumored tonight that the Russian warships have gone eastward.

Tokio, June 15.—Three Japanese transports, out bound from Shimonoseki, met the Russian warships this morning outside the straits of Korea. The Russians fired 18 shots at the Japanese ships. One transport escaped. The fate of the other two is not known. It is believed at Sasebo that a naval engagement is imminent.

### He Wasn't Hurt.

Pat was working on the railroad, and was staying at the town hotel with a number of his fellow laborers. Pat's room was on the third floor, up two flights of stairs. One night a severe fire broke out in the hotel. Pat was awakened from his deep slumbers, and immediately realized his danger. He dressed hurriedly, and in his excitement he put on his trousers front side behind. He rushed to the window, and jumped to the ground. He was at once surrounded by his friends, who thought him seriously hurt. "Air ye hurt, Pat?" was heard on all sides.

Pat got up, shook himself, and then noticing the appearance of his trousers, said, "Oi don't belave Oi'm hurt, but Oi'm fatally twisted."—Selected.