GREAT HISTORIC FIRES.

CONFLAGRATIONS WHICH HAVE BLOTTED OUT WHOLE CITIES.

A Few of the Most Noted Fires of the Last Two Centuries—Modern Fire Apparatus Does Not Seem to Count for Much Under Certain Conditions.

The great fire which recently devastated one of the most flourishing business districts of the English capital vividly recalls the famous conflagration of 1666, in which most of the city was destroyed. The fire of 1666 began as a trifling blaze in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane, not far from the Tower of London. An east wind, amounting almost to a gale, was blowing, and the baker shop became a starting point for the most destructive conflagration in the histroy of the English capital. Pepys mentions in his diary that on the 2nd of September, as people were coming from the theatre their attention was attracted by a large fire near the tower. It seems to have made little impression on the minds of the population during that night, but on the following day it had swept far to the west and interested everybody in London. During four days it raged extending from the Tower to the Temple Church, a distance of over a mile, and when the flames were finally subdued, or rather were stopped by blowing up buildings ahead of them, an area of 436 acres was covered with burning debris.

What loss of life there was by the great fire will never be known, but it was believed at the time to mount up into thousands, for the buildings of London were at that time of very flimsy construction, mostly wooden; the streets were exceedingly narrow; many hardly wider and some not nearly so wide as the alleys in a modern city, and when the flames spread to a row of slight wooden buildings, many persons were probably overtaken, and burned to death or suffocated in an attempt to escape. For many weeks after the fire the odor of burned and

DECAYING HUMAN FLESH,

filled the air, and a long time elapsed before the ruins were finally cleared.

Of buildings for residences and offices 13,200 were destroyed; eighty-nine churches were burned, including old St. Paul's Cathedral, and nearly all the churches in "the city" except St. Giles', the one which suffered in last week's fire. Pepys tells of the homeless multitudes on both sides of the river, of the 200,000 people who encamped in Islington and about Highgate, and of the inability of the police of that day to cope with the crowds of rioters and thieves who took advantage of the general distress during the fire to plunder shops, break into houses and enrich themselves at the expense of the sufferers. When thousands of men were hurrying to and fro with personal property of every description, it was impossible to say whether a man had his own or another's belongings, so the operations of rogues were made easy. The point at which the fire was stayed is now marked by the London monument, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and erected between 1671 and 1677. It is 202 feet high, including a 40-foot pedestal, cost £14,500, and at the top is the figure of an angel with outstretched arm staying the progress of the flames.

The great Chicago fire surpassed, both in extent and in loss, even the fire of London. The fire began on the night of the 8th of October, 1871, in a stable, wherein Mrs. O'Leary's famous cow was housed. A party of revelers, in the adjoining tenement to that of Mrs. O'Leary wanted milk in which to stew oysters, and it not being otherwise available, they took a candle and proceeded to rob Mrs. O'Leary's cow, the candle was overset, the stable was burned, and thus began the

GREATEST FIRE OF HISTORY.

The Chicago fire is still fresh in the public mind, but its exact extent and the terrible character of the loss can scarcely be estimated by an array of statistics. It raged more than two days, but during that time accomplished a destruction such as was never before known in the history of any fire department. It covered over three and one-half square miles, or 2,240 acres and 17,450 buildings were completely ruined. During the progress of the fire, 200 persons are known to have lost their lives, either in the flames, in accidents from falling walls or in the streets; 98,000 were made homeless, and the loss exceeded $200,000,000. The great London fire was not a source of much grief to the insurance companies, for, although there were insurance companies then, their business was on a small scale, but the insurance companies of both the United States and Great Britain were very seriously affected by the Chicago blaze, and many of them lost so heavily as to be compelled to go out of business.

Next in importance to the great Chicago fire was the fire of Boston, which occurred November 9 to 11, 1872. Like the other two, it was at first insignificant, but developed a fury which paralyzed the efforts of the fire department, and resulted in a conflagration which destroyed 800 business houses and residences and involved a loss of over $80,000,000. One peculiarity of the Boston fire was the fact that so-called fire-proof buildings suffered almost as much as others; great stone structures went down before the flames like cardboard. Fortunately, in the Boston fire, the loss of life was trifling, although the damage to business interests far exceeded the published statistics of the actual loss.

The ruin of the Russian capital, the Holy City of the Czars, at the time of its occupation by the French army in 1812, was not the only disaster of this kind that Moscow had suffered. In 1570, a fire started, as in the great London fire, in the shop of a baker.

ALL MOSCOW

was then composed, with the exception of the Kremlin of wooden buildings, as the city was in the immediate vicinity of vast forests and pineries, and wood was far cheaper than stone. There were then no fire departments; hand-bucket brigades proved entirely unequal to the emergency; the whole residence portion of the city was destroyed and after the fire was over 200,000 persons were encamped in the vicinity of the city. The fire of 1812 was the deliberate act of the city authorities at the command of the Czar. On the approach of the French army the city was evacuated by the entire population. This act was represented as voluntary, but, in truth the inhabitants left their homes at the command of an absolute monarch, and obedience was enforced with a severity characteristic of a despotic ruler. The people were literally driven out at the point of the bayonet, and ere the French occupation began powder mines had been laid and piles of combustibles set in every square in the city. The prisoners of the jails were released before the evacuation on the specail condition that they should remain in the city and set fire to the houses. They did their work well, for the first night of the occupation flames burst out everywhere and raged in every quarter of the city until the whole was destroyed. It is estimated that 15,500 houses were burned and the population of 300,000 was rendered homeless at the beginning of a winter of arctic severity. The historians of Russia state, that, according to the best information obtainable, one-fourth of the exiles from Moscow perished of hunger and cold ere the advent of spring.

THE CITY OF THE SULTAN

has been the scene of a number of exceedingly disastrous conflagrations. The construction of the Constantinople houses closely resembles both that of Moscow and London before the great fire. The streets are very narrow, and in the Turkish, Armenian and Greek quarters the houses are of wood of very flimsy construction, the upper stories projecting sometimes almost touching across the street. In 1831 a great fire broke out which devastated almost the entire hill on which the city is builded; 18,000 houses were destroyed with great loss of life. Constantinople had many destructive fires before and has had many since, but this was the worst. There is no fire department in Turkey worthy the name, the engines being worked by hand and the largest hose not surpassing in size the garden hose used for sprinkling lawns in this country. A remarkable custom prevails, or rather prevailed up to 1855, in the Yildiz Kiosk. When a fire of any importance broke out in the capital, one of the officers of the Sultan's guards, with a yellow cloak wrapped closely round his form opened without ceremony the door of the Sultan's bed chamber knocked on the floor with his saber until the monarch was aroused, and stood there like a yellow statue until the Sultan rose, dressed, mounted his horse and, attended by his guards, went to the fire. Since the Crimean war, this, for some reason, has been discontinued, and the Sultan no longer attends Constantinople fires in person, being now represented by the Grand Vizier or some other official.

Great conflagrations are common in the crowded cities of Japan, and Yeddo, Pekin and Canton have often suffered from the fire fiend. In one fire only a few years ago, at Yeddo, 150,000 people were rendered homeless, but a fire in a Chinese or Japanese city does not represent so much destruction as would be caused by the burning of even a warehouse in an American or European city, for the buildings are mostly of light wood, cost only a few dollars and are easily replaced. Cairo, the ancient capital of Egypt, was, in 1824, almost blotted out by a conflagration that destroyed the Arab portion of the city. Several great fires have occurred in

CALCUTTA AND BOMBAY,

where the conditions prevailing are closely similar to those of China, Japan and Egypt, but of recent years efficient fire departments have been organized in those cities, and the light bamboo and matting buildings are so easily removed that by blowing up or tearing down a few, the advance of a fire can be stopped. In 1842 Hamburg, the great commercial emporium of Northern Germany, was almost ruined by a fire among its warehouses which destroyed property to the amount of $35,000,000. Seven years before the great Hamburg fire New York similarly suffered; over 600 warehouses were blotted out, the loss being variously estimated at from $20,000,000 to $30,000,000. In 1851 San Francisco, then experiencing the good results of the mining boom of 1849, was almost wiped out of existence by a fire which destroyed 2,500 houses and left nearly the entire population homeless, a misfortune, however, which was not taken much to heart, for most were transients, and after being burned out a large portion left for the gold fields. In 1876 the flourishing City of St. Johns, Newfoundland, suffered from a conflagration which destroyed the entire business district of the city and caused a loss of $12,500,000. The improvement in fire apparatus and in the efficiency of the fire departments does not seem, in many cases, to count for much against a blaze well started, under favorable conditions, and fanned by a high wind.

SCENES IN DAWSON CITY.

MONEY HAS NO VALUE IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD.

Here's a New Phase of the Klondike—Pleasures Come High, but the Miners Must Have Them — Their Social Life, Habits and Amusements—Vivid Picture of a Great Mining Camp.

If there is one place in the whole world where money has no value it is on the Klondike, writes an American correspondent. You see this exemplified in the social life—if such it may be called—of the mining camps as you see it nowhere else. On the Klondike gold is a common commodity. Much has been written of this desolate region, but the historians have, as a rule, dwelt almost entirely upon the mineral development of the country. It is my intention to give you a glimpse of the people, their customs, their amusements, and their utter disregard of the value of money.

The principal diversions of Dawson are the gambling saloons and the dance halls. The most profitable industry is the sale of liquor, the saloons paying no revenue to the government. Beer and whiskey sell for fifty cents a drink. The gambling saloons are run wide open day and night, and the dance halls never close until daylight. It may be remarked, incidentally, that there are two churches, one a Roman Catholic and the other a Protestant Episcopal. I fancy it would make some of your congregations stare to see the collection plates heaped up with nuggets and dust on Sundays.

The winning or losing of from $1,000 to $3,000 at a gambling table excites no comment here. I was in the Golden Palace the other night, and the Golden Palace is by no means what its name implies, when Swiftwater Bill, a young man who hails from Spokane, Wash., came in and announced with a whoop that he was going to "bust the bank."

GAMBLING IN DAWSON.

Swiftwater Bill owns some of the richest claims on Eldorado Creek, and when he breaks loose the dust is sure to fly. Bill took a seat at the faro table, and in just one hour he had lost $7,500 in gold nuggets. "Things don't seem to be coming my way to-night," he remarked as he rose from his seat and stretched himself. "Let the house have a drink at my expense."

There was a rush for the bar, and waiters carried drinks to the various tables where games were in progress. That round cost Bill $112. Then he lighted a dollar and a half cigar and strolled out.

The gambling saloons, in external appearance, are very much like all the other buildings in Dawson, except that they are larger. They are built of logs hewn on three sides and solidly chinked with heavy moss. The roofs are made of poles, on which a layer of moss fully ten inches thick is laid, and then a layer of dirt about twelve inches deep serves to keep out the cold. Heavy embankments of earth piled up against the huts on the outside serve as additional protection against the chilling blasts of the Arctic winter gales. A few saloons are built of lumber, with double walls between which sawdust and moss are tightly packed, but old Yukoners tell me that such constructed buildings are inadequate against the severe cold weather.

Last year logs sold for $1.40 apiece, and now they bring as high as $4. To build the commonest kind of a log cabin, say eighteen by twenty-four feet, costs in the neighborhood of $4,500.

Games involving $5,000 and $10,000 are running night and day. Professional dealers of "banking games" receive $20 a day. The manner of hazarding money is unique even in a mining-camp. The player takes his seat at a faro table, passes over his sack of gold dust to the dealer, who drops it into a small pigeon-hole. The chance of "overplaying his sack" devolves upon the player's honor. He is given full credit and can call for as many chips from the check rack as he desires.

As the checks are passed out a tab is dropped on his sack. At the conclusion of the play the chips on hand are credited to the account of the sack. The dealer hands the player a slip of paper showing the condition of the account, and the latter takes it and his sack of gold to the bar. If he has lost he weighs out his gold dust, or, in the event of winning, the barkeeper does the paying.

"SHORTY'S" FORGETFULNESS.

About four o'clock one morning a miner known as "Shorty" left his seat at the table where he had been playing all night, saying that he had gone broke. The dealer handed him his bag of dust and his slip, the latter corresponding almost to a grain with the value of the gold. "Shorty" walked over to the bar and invited a couple of other miners to have a drink. Then he was seized with a fatal fit of forgetfulness.

He edged toward the door and was about to push it open when the bartender called to him:—"Say, Shorty, haven't you forgot something?"

"Forgot hell!" exclaimed Shorty, and the door swung out. When it rebounded it stopped half way, obstructed in its inward passage by the body of a dying man. A flash of flame and the report of a pistol from somewhere in that low ceilinged, smoke laden room, explained the draught of cold air that came in through the half open door. "Shorty" was buried the next day.

In the effete East there is a fine distinction drawn between the society man and the club man. The same distinction is drawn here. The club is the gambling saloon; society is the dance hall. I attended a "soiree" at the Morning Star.

A TYPICAL DANCE HALL.

I got in about midnight, although the dancing begins as early as seven o'clock in the evening. The building is a large one, built of logs, but with a floor of rough hewn boards. It answers every purpose, however, for the mazy waltz and the two step are not popular with these boisterous revellers. They prefer the old fashioned Virginia reel, or the plain quadrille, with lots of room to throw their feet about.

You could cut the tobacco laden atmosphere with a knife. Through the blue haze the figures of a couple of musicians could be faintly distinguished fiddling away for dear life and calling out, "Sashay all!" "Swing yer pardners!" "Ladies through!" as the occasion demanded. They received $20 a night for doing this, and they earned every penny of it.

To one side, extending the entire length of the room, was the bar, and the three dispensers of drinks were what better brand brought $40.

Of course, the men greatly outnumbered the women. There were probably a dozen of the latter, some of them young and quite pretty. They have little or no time to rest between the dances, and when the morning sun peeps over the eastern mountains he finds them a jaded and somewhat bedraggled lot. But they charge a dollar for every dance, and Cripple Creek Carrie, the acknowledged belle of the "dancing set," has been known to make as much as a hundred dollars a night tripping the light fantastic toe.

THE SOCIAL LEADER.

A young fellow whom they called "Pinkey" was pointed out to me as the social leader of Dawson City. He was the only man in the room who wore a boiled shirt. When he goes to a dance, which is almost every night, he carries a pair of pumps with him. He leaves his boots behind the bar, dons his patent leathers and sails in on a wild career of terpsichorean dissipation. "Pinkey" has been known to buy $120 worth of dances in three successive nights.

Most of the men wore their ordinary working clothes, with top boots or heavy, spike bottom shoes. Their heads were covered by broad brimmed hats, which they never removed, and in their mouths were cigar butts, which seemed equally stationary.

Fist fights form a mild sort of diversion at these affairs, usually brought about by a dispute over who shall dance with the women. Occasionally the evening's festivities will conclude with a shooting affray, and along toward morning, when the corn juice has commenced to get in its fine work, a popular form of amusement is shooting out the lights. But as a rule fisticuffs find the greatest favor.

With all this talk about drinking and gambling saloons and dance halls, I dare say you are wondering if the inhabitants of Dawson City ever eat. I assure you they do, but it is quite as expensive a luxury as are the other forms of dissipation. Eating here is really a dissipation. If you don't believe it, I'll tell you what my dinner consisted of to-day. I had sour dough bread, with molasses instead of butter, fried salt pork, stewed apples, oatmeal mush and tea. For supper I had tea, oatmeal mush, stewed apples and sour dough bread, with molasses. For breakfast I shall have graham pancakes, fried oatmeal mush and coffee.

DOGS BY THE HUNDREDS.

I must tell you about the dogs. It is my honest conviction that no community of this size ever had so many dogs. It is estimated that there are nearly 1,500 of the animals in Dawson City, and as many more in the mines. The most of them are fine appearing fellows, and in the cold season net their owners handsome profits by hauling sleds heavily laden with supplies to the adjacent mining camps. In town they travel in companies ranging from ten to twenty, and the moment they catch sight of another dog away from his company the pack will give chase. Dog fights are so common as not to excite a passing glance.

Personal vanity in the matter of dress is an item of no small expense in Dawson City. I paid $1.75 for having a white shirt washed and ironed the other day, and then I couldn't wear it. The misguided laundress had not only starched and ironed the bosom but had subjected the entire garment to that operation. It might have been all right for a suit of mail, but as an article of fin de siecle wearing apparel it was quite out of the question.

FORTUNES IN THIRSTS.

Aside from the two stores, three or four barber shops, half a dozen laundries, five or six restaurants, a second hand store or two, two sawmills, three butcher shops, two jewelry stores, a dozen physicians and dentists, a couple of real estate offices, the principal business engaged in is the sale of intoxicants.

The receipts for sixty days last spring in one saloon amounted to $124,500, and the day the successful miners were taking their departure on the first steamer of the season the receipts amounted to $6,500. Hardly a saloon in town is receiving less than $300 a day, besides winning large sums of money at the gambling games. Barkeepers are paid from $1250 to $20 a day, and even the porters, where such luxuries are deemed necessary, are paid from $7.50 to $10. A rumor has emanated from official sources and is going the round to the effect that a Canadian official will arrive shortly and enforce a law permitting only hotel and inn keepers to engage in selling liquors.

AN AGED JOKE.

Hewitt—Why didn't you laugh at that joke when I told it?

Jewett—I don't believe in laughing at an old friend.

ADVICE TO MOTHERS

THE HEALTH OF THEIR DAUGHTERS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY WATCHED.

Young Girls Susceptible to Trouble That May Result in Decline—Pale Faces, Headaches and Fickle Appetite the Symptoms of Early Decay.

Fro mthe Sun, Orangeville, Ont.

Some months ago Maggie, the fifteen-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Sweeney, of John street, of this town, began to fail both in health and spirits. Her face was almost as white as chalk, her appetite very fickle, and her limbs began to swell. Notwithstanding her growing weakness she persisted in attending school until one day her teacher advised her to go home, and not to return until she felt better. At the same time the teacher, who knew the value of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in such cases, advised her to take them. The advice was followed, and Mrs. Sweeney told our reporter that almost from the outset there was an improvement in her daughter's condition. Her appetite became better, the color returned to her face, and the severe headaches that had made her so miserable vanished, and she is now feeling better than she has done for many months.

It is quite evident that this young maiden was suffering from a lack of blood, as do so many young girls who are just at a critical point in life and it is quite as apparent that there is no other remedy the equal of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in such cases. They enrich the blood, stimulate the nerves and build up the entire system, and mothers will act prudently if they insist upon their daughters taking an occasional box. We know from experience that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have done great good in Orangeville and vicinity, and there is scarcely a day that our reporter does not come in contact with some one who has a good word to say for this wonderful medicine.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure by going to the root of the disease. They renew and build up the blood, and strengthen the nerves, thus driving disease from the system. Avoid imitation by insisting that every box you purchase is enclosed in a wrapping bearing the full trade mark, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People."

THE PERFECT MARRIAGE.

A perfect and complete marriage is, perhaps as rare as perfect personal beauty.

Men and women are married fractionally—now a small fraction, than a large one.

Very few are married totally, and they probably only after some forty or fifty years of gradual approach and experiment.

Such large and sweet fruit is a complete marriage that needs a very long summer to ripen in, and then a long winter to mellow and season it.

But a real, happy marriage of love and judgment between a noble man and a woman is one of the things so lovely that if the sun were, as the Greek poets fabled, a god, he might stop the world in order to feast his eyes on so rare a spectacle.

MARRIED TO A FLOWER-VASE.

Among the curious marriage customs prevailing in China is one which is thus described by a writer:

Not long ago, a very pretty girl, the daughter of a prominent Chinese official, was married with great pomp to a large, red flower-vase, representing a deceased bridegroom, who had died a few days before his wedding was to be celebrated.

His inconsolable bride-elect declared that she would never marry any one else, but would devote herself as a widow to the dead man's family. So the ceremony with the flower-vase was gone through with to enable the girl to enter the family, and the town proposes to build an arch to commemorate her devotion.

POPULATION AND AREA.

The leading countries of the world rank in population as follows: China, 402,680,000; the British Empire, 381,037,874; Russian Empire, 113,354,649; United States, 73,000,000; France and her colonies, 59,666,967; German Empire, 52,244,503; Austro-Hungarian Empire, 41,827,700; Japan, 41,089,940; Turkish Empire, 33,559,787; Italy and her colonies, 34,970,785, and Spain and her colonies, 28,911,609. In area the leading countries stand in the following order; British Empire, 11,335,806 square miles; Russian Empire 8,644,100; China, 4,218,401; United States, 3,602,990; Brazil, 3,219,000; France and her colonies, 3,127 856; Turkish Empire, 1,652,583; Spain and her colonies, 603,076; Italy and colonies, 425,765, and the German Empire, 211,108.

AN IMPOSSIBILITY.

Billy, keep your eye on this small boy of mine while I run over to the postoffice a minute.

Keep my eye on him! Gracious, I'm no revolving telescope.

FOR TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS

DUNN'S BAKING POWDER

THE COOK'S BEST FRIEND

LARGEST SALE IN CANADA