

ITION

MANY EXPLOSIONS AND GREAT SMOKE

Prest-o-Lite Fire, Spectacular
and Alarming. Causes
Loss of \$40,000.

ONLY ONE PERSON INJURED

Grave Danger Threatened by Blaze in
Factory Supplying Automobile
Light Tanks and Acetylene.

A spectacular fire, which started shortly before noon to-day in the compressor-room of the Prest-O-Lite Company, a concern at East and Pearl streets, manufacturing and charging acetylene gas tanks for automobiles, caused an estimated loss of \$40,000 and the injury of one employe, Miss Katie Metz, who suffered a sprained knee by jumping from a fire escape.

No one was in the compressor room when the explosion which started the fire occurred, but it is known to have been one of the small acetylene tanks that had



ORELY IN NEED W, STRONG RULER

MAY FOLLOW DOW.
S. ABDICATION.

S CRITICALLY ILL

August 17.—Private dispatches

Pekin forecast a gloomy
to the unsettled state of the
caused by the absence of

in the compressor-room at the time and
the explosion of the first caused a sheet
of flame to shoot forth.

That flame became a spreader of trouble and soon the room became the scene of a miniature Port Arthur. The tanks exploded in rapid succession and a still alarm was sounded for hose company No. 24, in Maryland street. Before that company reached the place the building was in flames and a black column of smoke was curling to the clouds and visible all over the city.

A general fire alarm was soon sounded and every piece of apparatus in the downtown district was soon wrestling with the flames in the bombarded building.

Employees' Quick Exit.

It was fortunate that all of the twenty-five employees of the concern were in other parts of the building at the time of the explosion. The first explosion was a signal for escape, and there was a rush for the street. Three women employed on the third floor were given first place on the fire escape and they descended.

August Tamm, Jr., who was passing the plant at the time of the first explosion, saw the sheet of flame and the rush that followed for the fire escapes. He ran to assist the women to alight from the fire escape, the lower ladder of which hung above the sidewalk about eight feet. Before Tamm could reach her Miss Metz jumped and injured her knee. She was able to move out of harm's way, however, and was sent to her home.

Several of the men on the second floor made their escape by descending a rope hanging from the roof on the Pearl street side of the building. All got out safely before the general bombardment began. The rapid descent of fire escapes and ropes caused a report to circulate that several employees had been left in the building and had not escaped because they had not been seen.

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caused by the absence of
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dowager, who heretofore
mistress of affairs, is now
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to play one minister
in order to prevent the
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the Empress is incapaci-
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Stability Improbable.

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L TO AGREE UNDAY SODA SALES

at Noblesville and Take
ur Ballots—Eight

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The rapid ascent of fire escapes and
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several employees had been left in the
building and had not escaped because
they had not been seen.

Got Out Barely in Time.

The employees knew the danger of the
situation, however, and quickly sought
places of safety clear of the plant. They
had not a moment to spare for the last
man was hardly out of the shadow of the
building before the caps from the explos-
ing tanks began to fill the air.
One smashed a window in the tinshop of
Christian Zimmerman, across the street.
Another made its presence felt by bom-
barding the hotel of Frank O'Brien, at
Washington and East streets. Other caps
struck cars standing in the railroad
yards.

Fearful of just such a fire as they ex-
perienced to-day, the managers of the
Frost-O-Light company had instructed
their employees to make a dash for es-
cape the moment an alarm in the build-
ing was sounded. The managers knew
the danger of the high explosives there
stored.

The instructions served a purpose to-
day for as soon as the first explosion oc-
curred the employees rushed for the fire
escapes. Not a moment was lost by them.
This probably accounts for the fact that
only one person was injured.

Tamm Sounded Alarm.

"I had no more than heard the ex-
plosion and seen the flames shoot out,"
said August Tamm, Jr., who sounded the
alarm, "than I saw the fire escape
thronged with young women. All were
proceeding in an orderly manner to quit
the building."

James Kerins, patrolman, rushed for
the alarm box, but Tamm had already
sounded the alarm when he got there.

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FAIL TO AGREE SUNDAY SODA SALES

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y-Four Ballots—Eight
for Acquittal.

one to The Indianapolis News.]
VILLIE, Ind., August 12.—After
l night the jury in the case of
rs. John Bold, charged with
creams and soda water on Sun-
ed to-day that it could not
was discharged. Forty-four
e cast, and the last one stood
acquittal and four for convic-
is a test case, growing out of
closing movement started by
son, who has prohibited the
rs, ice cream and soda water.
The defendant took a change
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an appointed to preside. Most
was taken up in the selection
Over fifty business men were
m service because they had
ed or expressed an opinion.
mony was brief, only two wit-
g examined by both sides.
Frank Barnett testified that
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admitted making the sale, but
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ed by E. H. Harriman.
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Kerins returned to the building and as-
sisted in getting the young women em-
ployes down from the first rung of the
fire escape.

Crowded About Place of Danger.

In the face of the danger a crowd
swarmed around the burning building,
now casting a volcanic shroud of smoke
over the neighborhood, and it was with
difficulty that the police drove the curious
back from the danger zone. The firemen
ran long lines of hose around the plant
and soon had twenty streams playing
through the shattered windows.

The explosions continued, and it is said
by employees that not less than three hun-
dred gas tanks exploded before the fire-
men had the flames under control. The
heat was expected to cause the explosions
to continue throughout the day, as there
were several hundred tanks yet intact in
the ruins. The tanks are about thirty
inches long and six inches in diameter
and are charged with acetylene gas. They
are carried on automobiles for lighting
purposes.

After the flames had been put out and
the crowd for the most part had dis-
persed, a series of three explosions was
heard in quick succession. Spectators
held their breath, as they knew the
building was filled with firemen. While
they were still wondering what had been
the fate of these three fire fighters looked
out of the third-story windows and
saw that they were all dead. Then they

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the fate of these three fire fighters looked
out of the third-story windows and
grinned. That was all. Then they re-
turned to their work. The grins were re-
assuring, however, and the spectators
drew sighs of relief.

No Insurance Obtainable.

The Prud-O-Life Company, of which
Carl Fisher is president, P. C. Avery,
vice-president and secretary, and J. A.
Allison, treasurer, has been organized
about three years. The company makes

Continued on Page Three.

indebtedness on the structure.

MANY EXPLOSIONS AND GREAT SMOKE

Continued from Page One.

FUND OF \$2,000,000.

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at the Key.

Both the Western
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act as Mediator.

August 17.—Commis-
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Commercial Telegraphers'
and at the offices of
and Postal Telegraph

a specialty of automobile gas tanks. Frank Sweet, who is in charge of the plant during the absence of President Fisher, says that no insurance was carried as none was obtainable on account of the dangerous nature of the business. The plant occupied the old Greiner veterinary college, a brick building three stories high with entrances in both East and Pearl streets, owned by the Frederick Ostermyer estate and valued at \$15,000. The closing down of the plant at this time will be serious as this is the busy season.

Bookkeeper Took Dangerous Chance.

S. C. Hamilton, a bookkeeper employed in the concern, took a dangerous chance to recover the books and papers of the company. In the face of warnings by the firemen, Hamilton entered the building and mounted the stairs to the third floor, while the building was walled in smoke. He groped his way through the stifling gas vapor into the office. The water poured in on him in torrents, yet he reached into the desk and brought out the books under his coat. He was almost suffocated, but saved valuable documents for his employers.

Considerable excitement was caused among the police and newspaper men by the report that a man had been seen to run from the place with his clothing in flames. A search of every house in the neighborhood failed to locate such a man. Employees of the plant say they have accounted for everybody.

Mr. Sweet said it looked to him as if the loss on building and contents would be about \$40,000. This would depend on how many of the tanks failed to explode.

The Laugh Came Afterward.

An incident that was only half laugh-

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aturday, August 24.

ing the Postal Tele-
en will play against a
the Western Union
for the teams is an-
ys: Postal-Shortstop,
ret-base, D. F. Brad-
Jack Gorman; third-
pitcher, P. J. Barrett;
cGee; left-field, John
L. T. L. Gard; right-
Western Union-
ullen; first-base, David
se, Timothy Connors,
Dickerson; pitcher, A.
ner, Harry Lewellyn;
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ld, J. M. Ryan.

number of the players
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r teams, and that the
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WINTER'S
AS ARGUMENT

The Laugh Came Afterward.

An incident that was only half laugh-
able, though the principals in it laughed
afterward, occurred half an hour after the
first explosion. Samuel H. Sweet, general
freight agent of the L. E. & W. railroad,
father of Frank Sweet, who was in
charge of the Prest-o-Lite factory, hur-
ried through the crowd gathered in
Washington street. He was perspiring
and panting. At the corner of East and
Washington streets he found Frank, in
somewhat the same condition.

"Are you hurt, Frank?" the father de-
manded sternly.

"Not a bit, father," answered the son,
not smiling at his father's anxiety and
excitement.

"I'm—I'm mighty glad of that!" said
the elder man and it was not hard to see
that he was.

RESCUED THEIR BIRDS FIRST.

Then Women Covered Tombstones in Nearby Shop with Clothes.

While the walls of neighboring build-
ings were shaking from the intermittent
explosions, three women, pale and quak-
ing with fear, ran down the stairway
from their apartments above 453 East
Washington street, carrying their bird
cages. Mrs. D. W. Sheen had six of the
pets and a cage for each canary, which
she carried to a tombstone shop nearby.
Mrs. E. E. Baxter thought first of her
parrot. She had the screeching bird in
a big cage covered with a cloth to pre-
vent its being frightened by the crowds
as she edged her way through to a place
of safety for her bird. She was assisted
in the rescue by M. a Eda Britton.

"I thought of my parrot first," she said,
her voice trembling. "I think more of it
than anything else."

When the bird had been taken to a
place of safety Mrs. Baxter hurriedly re-
membered that she had not saved her
bible. Rushing back up the stairway to
the third floor she came down later pant-
ing, carrying a small book yellowed with
age, the back torn away, but all bound
round with heavy twine. This she placed
in the tombstone shop along with the
parrot and the birds.

After these trips to their rooms the
women went back and carried their
clothing to the tombstone shop, using the

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not strikers or union men, positions last night, but away, as there was no services at the present

together with operators and brokers, held a meeting at headquarters in Iron to which all broker operators, either union or non-union, were invited. The meeting was called to talk over the situation. The strikers later part of the morning, and they were so occupied that they were unable to play the game that is to be played on Saturday, August 24. Representing the Postal Telegraph men will play against a team from the Western Union. The lineup for the teams is as follows: Postal—Shortstop, first-base, D. F. Bradshaw; Jack Gorman; third-base, P. J. Barnett; pitcher, P. J. Barnett; McGee; left-field, John McGoey; right-field, T. L. Gard; center-field, T. L. Gard; right-field, T. L. Gard; Western Union—Mullen; first-base, David Mullen; second-base, Timothy Connors; third-base, F. Dickerson; pitcher, A. Hatcher; Harry Lowery; King; center field, W. King; left-field, J. M. Ryan.

A number of the players have considerable experience on amateur teams, and that the hard fought, A. G. Ham- of the local union, will act

WINTER'S GAS ARGUMENT

from Page One.

He insisted that the option was void before the plaintiffs could get the relief. Winter then went on to show that the option, that it was bound

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After these trips to their rooms the women went back and carried their clothing to the tombstone shop, using the monuments as resting places for their wardrobes.

One woman in the neighborhood thought first of a poodle dog which she clutched tightly to her breast as the cannonading continued and the flames shot out in the face of the firemen.

Accused of Forgery in Illinois.

[By Telephone to The Indianapolis News.]

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