

TERRIFIC GAS EXPLOSION.

House of L. M. Hubby, Esq., Blown to Atoms by the Explosion of Gasoline from Bierce's Patent Generator--Mr. Hubby and His Daughter Ella Badly Injured--Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Hubby Slightly Hurt--Full Particulars of the Explosion.

Mr. L. M. Hubby, President of the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Indianapolis Railroad, and his daughter, Miss Ella Hubby, aged 18 years, were badly, if not fatally, injured, on Saturday evening, by the utter demolition and burning of his beautiful residence in East Cleveland, valued at \$40,000, from a terrific explosion of gasoline, prepared for lighting the building by Bierce's Patent Generator. Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Hubby, a son and daughter-in-law of Mr. Hubby, and Miss Ella, a daughter, were in a parlor at the front part of the house when the explosion occurred, and Mrs. L. M. Hubby and her husband's mother were in rooms immediately in the rear of that occupied by the young people. Mr. Hubby was in the cellar, making an examination of the gas pipes, with a lighted candle. The house was situated nearly half a mile from the city limits, in the township of East Cleveland, on the south side of the Euclid avenue road. It was of brick, two stories high, elaborate in architectural design, and was finished, both externally and internally, in the most elegant manner. It was sumptuously furnished throughout, and was in all respects one of the finest suburban residences of the city. It was nearly a year in course of construction, and being designed for a permanent home, no expense had been spared to render it a model of comfort and convenience. The grounds surrounding the house, spacious and delightfully situated, were being laid out and improved with the utmost care and taste. A stream of water courses through the grounds, and a small lake is formed by an artificial embankment. The family formerly lived at 115 Lake street, and only removed to their new residence about the first of January last.

Such a building, of course, was incomplete without gas, and, as the city pipes had not been extended that far into the suburbs, Mr. Hubby manufactured his own gas, making arrangements, however, in the mean time, to extend the city pipe to his residence within a few days from the date of the explosion. The city pipes already extend to Judge Bolton's residence, the second west of Mr. Hubby, and was lighted for the first time, Saturday evening, with city gas.

The principal article used by Mr. Hubby in the manufacture of his own gas was gasoline. The apparatus of the generator consists of a gasoline tank, air receiver and a pump operated by means of weights. The air is forced through pipes into the gasoline, by which it becomes so impregnated with the inflammable properties as to become gas. From the tank it is conducted through the house and is ready for use. The tank in which the gasoline was kept was placed outside of the building, and several feet distant. It was covered with earth to a considerable depth and only connected with the house by the necessary pipes. The pump, air reservoir and other portions of the apparatus, were placed in the basement of the house immediately beneath the drawing room, at the east side and near the front. A barrel of gasoline was put in the tank on Friday. The gas manufactured in this manner is heavier than air, and settles to the bottom of a room. On Saturday evening the light in the house was very defective. A short time before the explosion Mr. Hubby and his son visited the cellar with a light. They did not stoop, and thus bring the light in contact with the stratum of gas which at that time doubtless lay next to the floor. They were there to remedy the defect in the light. A steam pipe was attached to the generator, which seemed to quicken it, but the effect was only spasmodic. Subsequently, Mr. Hubby retired to the basement, alone, at 7:15 P. M., with a lighted candle, and, while there, it is supposed he lowered the light, bringing it in contact with the settled gas, as he has not recovered sufficiently to give the detail of his movements immediately prior to the explosion. The entire building was shivered and rent as if by an earthquake, from turret to foundation stone. The floors were blown upward, breaking into fragments and descending with the debris, consisting of a chaotic mass of timbers, bricks, and articles of furniture, all of which were immediately consumed by fire. Bricks were hurled through the air with great force, some being found two houses distant. The spacious and beautifully laid out grounds were covered with timbers from the wreck. Doors were wrenched from their hinges, shivered to atoms, and one was hurled to the edge of a stream, fifty feet distant. The key stone of an arch over one of the doors, weighing two or three hundred pounds, was driven out leaving the arch standing, and thrown a distance of fifteen or twenty feet. The doors leading to the rear of the basement and upper back rooms were closed, confining the greatest force of the explosion to the front part of the house. What followed during the few moments subsequent to the explosion no one can tell. Frank found himself groping about in the ruins at the bottom of the basement, almost before he knew that anything had happened. His wife was soon after discovered by Mr. Estep near an opening in the building where, a few moments before, a window had been, calling for some one to take her out. How she got there she does not know, but supposes she was blown there. Miss Ella was first seen by Mr. Kelley Bolton, who was upon the spot a few minutes after the first explosion, and just in time to be uncomfortably near when a second explosion took place. She appeared at the window with her hair and clothing wrapped in flames, and leaped to the ground, fanning the fiery fiend into greater fierceness as she dropped into the arms of Mr. Bolton. He and Mr. Estep, who was present about that time, did all they could toward quenching the fire by using hats, coats, and whatever came most convenient. The shrieks of the poor girl will ring in their ears forever. Mr. Estep rushed into the burning house for a blanket in which to wrap her to quench the flames. He found that the ceiling had fallen upon the bed clothes in the bed room, to which he readily made his way, and that he could not extricate them from the mass of debris upon them. He rushed out and heard some one call and turning discovered Mrs. Frank Hubby as above stated. To release her was but the work of a moment, and then he turned his attention to the other members of the family. Bursting open a back hall door he found the grandmother standing by it uninjured and vainly trying some way to undo the fastening. She says the first she knew of the accident the ceiling of her room began to fall upon her, she saw the walls rock and then heard a report mingled with the crashing of glass. She knew that something terrible had happened and instinctively sought the back stairs, down which she rapidly sped, and so saved herself. She was burning a coal oil lamp in her room at the time, and the apartment did not take fire quite so quickly as did those into which the gas pipes extended. For a time it was feared that the wife or killed outright by the explosion, but an extended search revealed her with her son-in-law, Col. Doubleday's family safe and uninjured, with the exception of a slight burn on one of her hands. How she got out upon the ground is a mystery to her. The first she remembers she was running to the Colonel's as fast as she could.

The injuries to the family with two exceptions, are very slight. Frank Hubby had one hand burned quite severely but not seriously. The grandmother and Mrs. Hubby escaped, the former unscathed, and the latter with, as has been stated, only a slight burn in the hand, not even serious enough to require more than a temporary dressing. Mrs. Frank Hubby received several bruises about the body and on the hip, probably caused by some of the falling brick or timbers, but her injuries are not at all severe. Beyond a temporary lameness, and a feeling of soreness, she will be all right in a day or two. Mr. Hubby was badly burned in the face and hands and in various places about the head. His injuries are very serious, and will not only confine him to the house for several weeks, and, perhaps, months, but will leave scars that he will carry with him to the grave. Miss Ella is the most badly injured of all. Beautiful beyond a fault; kind and affable without exception; with a disposition

calculated to make friends everywhere, the fiend of destruction made her the object of his especial vengeance.

The patients are under the care of Drs. Weber and Dellenbaugh, receiving all the attention those distinguished medical gentlemen can give, but it is possible that their efforts may prove unavailing, particularly in the case of Miss Ella, who is still suffering intensely from the effects of the accident.

The fire was so fierce in its commencement that no power could quench it. The city fire department responded and quenched the charred remains, and a policeman was detailed to guard the place, as considerable plate and other things of value were in the ruins. Valuable keepsakes, splendid paintings, rich furniture, necessary clothing, mementoes of other days, books, papers, everything passed in almost an instant's time from the palpable to the impalpable; from form, beauty and usefulness to ashes and nothingness. Ten thousand dollars worth of useful, ornamental and valuable furniture was swept out of existence in less time than it takes to write it. The greatest loss in property to Mrs. Frank Hubby was that of her bridal trousseau, which had been carefully laid away since the memorable occasion on which she became a wife. Fortunately most of her presents made on that occasion were made of silver, and for greater security had been placed in a safe down town, and of course escaped the general destruction.

The house of Mr. E. J. Estep was fired, but the flames were quenched before it sustained any serious damage. Hundreds of persons visited the scene of the disaster on Sunday. Only the near relatives sought admittance to the rooms of the afflicted family, which were in the house of Col. Doubleday, a son-in-law of Mr. Hubby.