

mill, which was utterly destroyed, there was a clearing where the hands had run for safety when the building caught fire; there, surrounded by a blazing forest, they threw themselves on the ground, trying to evade the flames and the smoke; but all of them, sixty-eight in number, were suffocated by the terrible heat and smoke. Three of the mill-hands did not run there, but threw themselves into a large tank of water under the mill, with the idea that thereby they would escape; but only one of them survived, the other two were so badly burned that one died the next day, and the other a few days later. The survivor told the writer that he saw one girl, named Desautel, run from the mill, and when a little way off stand as if petrified; she remained motionless, and her body was soon wrapped in flames and burned to a coal. On the other side of the bay the loss of life was appalling. The village of Peshtigo, with its mills, its hotels, its churches and school-houses, its halls and dwellings, was wiped from the face of the earth in one night, together with over seven hundred of its inhabitants.

Five thousand people were now homeless and destitute, with their dead, wounded, and dying; farms and homes, churches and schools, mills, lumber, and timber were in blackened ruins; the desolation alarmed the survivors, and a Wisconsin winter was coming on apace. Such was the condition of the different Belgian settlements on that gloomy 9th of October, 1871. Thanks to the generosity of charitable people in all parts of the civilized world, especially the American people, abundant relief began to pour in; with rekindled courage, self-reliance, and hope, the Belgian settlers began to erect new houses and barns, new school-houses and churches, and still further to enlarge their farms. Large tracts of timber land had been burned over, leaving nothing but charred logs and timber easily removed, so that thousands of good tillable acres were added to the farming tracts already under cultivation. Nearly all the marketable timber having been burned or destroyed, it followed that the lumber and shingle-mills