



There are two errors worth correcting in my account of the "great conflagration".

1st page 10. I was told, on what I supposed to be direct and unquestionable authority that the fire "originated with a fire cracker thrown by a heedless boy upon a pile of scattered shavings outside of a boat builder's shop," I was even assured that they boy had acknowledged it: But further enquiries made after it was too late, have satisfied me that there was no truth in the story and that the fire was undoubtedly caused by sparks from a local engine belonging to the Grand Trunk railways;. Other kindlings had happened before, and one in the same neighborhood, from the same cause, for which the corporation were held answerable. Since then I have petitioned for an ordinance obliging them to burn hard coal instead of pine wood. p. 10.

2nd page 5. On the authority of Mr. Beckett, the apothecary referred to, I stated that "even a mortar" of cast iron "used for a sign to an apothecary's shop, on being struck by the fiery blast, fell upon the pavement, like melted lead;" Incredible as the story seemed, for even a blow pipe would not have been likely to produce such a result, yet knowing the character of Mr. Beckett

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Date: April 29, 1868

Description: Corrections to "Account of the Great Conflagration in Portland, July 4th, & 5th, 1866"

for scrupulous truth, I accepted and repeated the story: Not long after this, he died under circumstances, which rendered it probable that he was deranged at the time he mentioned the incident. p. 5

3. No carefully prepared & full list of losses could be obtained, in season for the publication, which was wanted for a Directory, so that many large losses were overlooked, or greatly misrepresented by report. Among these were Mr. Horatio N. Jose, who was a large sufferer, and myself, not even mentioned; yet I lost a large Granite Store on Exchange Street, a large brick Mill five stories high, and a large wooden warehouse lined with brick, on Fox's court & both occupied by Walter Corey, furniture Manufacturer, two brick Houses on Cumberland Street, and all my law library, and office furniture, together with one or two hundred Volumes of miscellany, most of which cannot be replaced, on Exchange Street which goes to show that large omissions must necessarily have occurred in making up the list of losses for a hurried publication.

John Neal

Portland me April 29/68

P.S. Not only all that was foretold, but all and more than was hoped for by the most sanguine among us, has already been accomplished in the way of restoration and improvement of the under blocks of dwelling houses, are still going up all over the City. JN

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