

By John McEwen.

Tw'as on the fourteenth of July
A fearful noise was heard,
And all were in amazement
As to what had occur'd,
And each one of his neighbour
Enquired with anxious face,
The meaning of so strange a noise
That shook the very place.

Like distant thunder echoing
With fearful force around,
That shook the very elements-
Or earthquake more profound.
At length it was discover'd
That the cotton works had blown,
The most fatal and most fearful
That e'er before been known.

And people ran with eager haste
To know who had been kill'd,
And many stout hearts shook with
fear,-
With tears their eyes were filled,
To see the wounded and the dead,
And dying lay around
And mutilated portions of
The young and old abound.

Mothers, wives and sweethearts,
With mournings rend the air,
And husbands who had lost their
wives,
Would weep in wild despair.
Poor *Tilly* and poor *Petley*,
Who now together sleep,
One had been married a few
months,
The other a few weeks.

And *Austin Wyles*, who was at work
With me just at the time,
As fine a youth as could be seen,
Was cut off in his prime.
And *Stringer*, who stood near,
escape
A most untimely end,
But lost his wife, to him most dear,
His true and faithful friend.

And *Toppin*, who had just returned,
And whom all did esteem,
Was scarce one moment on the
spot, Where finished his last scene.
Alas! I must report no more,
Nor dare such scenes review,
Except to state how poor my wife
And I escaped too.

It was about eleven o'clock
As near as I could tell,
I heard a loud and rumbling noise,
And round me ruins fell.
For scarcely twenty yards from
where,
The blow had taken place,
And where of buildings, trees or
stones,
It scarcely left a trace-

A steeping pan, with it contents
Were down upon me hurl'd,
And round it iron bars were bent,
And pumps completely curl'd.
But still it was, thro' providence,
The means of saving me
And *Marsh*, who close behind me
stood,
As you shall plainly see.

Of nitric acid near a ton,
And vitrol, liquid fire,
In iron pan of two tons weight,
Perhaps a little higher.
We stood behind it scarce three
feet,
And tho' the force was great.
It stopp'd each missile as it flew,
Nor can we call it fate.

It severly burnt and shook me,
And I fear I shall no more
Regain the health I once possess'd,
The strength I had before,
Nor can time that awful moment
From memory efface,
When I, half conscious, op'd my
eyes,
And hasten'd from the place.

Our master quickly at the scene,
And sadly show'd his eye,
Tw'as his example that we took,
The men their upmost try.
And onward bravely *Stratford*
rushed
Tw'as he first heard my wife,
'Midst threatening danger ran to
her
And nobly risked his life.

And for poor *Ransom's* fate will flow
The sad and trickling tear,
His was a bold intrepid heart
That never knew no fear.
And all tread lightly o'er the grave,
Where his remains doth lay,
Poor fellow, he saved other lives,
But lost his own next day.

Nor can I speak without regret
Of *Kempzell*, now no more,
Soon follow'd to the dreary grave,
But few respected more.
Poor *Mercy Clark*, kill'd near my
wife
Her piety most rare.
Let's hope as she aspir'd to heaven
She may find mercy there.

And now, ere I lay by my pen
Would speak my gratitude
To one who gave me every aid,
To *George Pordage* I allude,
Altho' away from friends and
home,
To aid me many came.
Mrs Roberts, *Jenkins* and *Dervall*,
And *Jemmett* I must name.

Oh never may this town again
Such harrowing scenes behold-
So dire a tale was never pen'd
Or poet ever told.

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