

Serious Fire in Sheffield Petroleum Store in Flames

What at one time seemed to be a very serious fire broke out shortly before noon to-day in the Midland Railway Company's coal yard, Brightside lane. The yard is principally for coal, but Mr. William Tupholme, petroleum, oil, and lamp merchant, of Bridge street, had a large petroleum store there, It consisted of square brick building, built into the embankment of the railway company's main line. The oil was stored in a large iron tank; sunk about twelve feet into the ground, and there was storage for several thousand gallons. The oil was brought in special oil waggons close to the store, and it was pumped direct into the tank. When required for customers it was pumped from there into barrels. No one was in charge of the place regularly, and when no oil was wanted the premises were locked up. A carter named George Pike went to the store about nine o'clock this morning for three barrels, and when he left all was safe, Shortly before noon, however, two carter saw smoke issuing from the building, and a telephone message was at once sent to the Fire Brigade Station, from Messrs. Longbottom and Company's office in the Yard. The Midland Railway authorities were also communicated with, and Mr. Wilson, the traffic manager hurried to the place with several men. Luckily the 'tank was not even half full, but there were five barrels filled ready for carting and a quantity of timber in the place. The fire spread with almost incredible rapidity, and there being a fair breeze, the flames were carried right across the railway lines, Men were stationed to caution the engine drivers, and one train had to be stopped for a short time. There was also great danger to the telegraph wires, and several were slightly damaged. Superintendent Pound was on the scene in good time, but found himself much handicapped. The nearest hydrant was some 350 yards away, and the water power being poor and the hose somewhat short, only a small jet could be poured on the fire, Fresh hose was procured, and the efforts of the firemen were devoted to playing upon the top of the tank to keep it cool. There was considerable danger of an explosion, but the tactics adopted soon averted this, and at last the firemen were able to stand at the entrance to the building. It was a considerable time, however, before the fire was completely subdued. The premises and their contents are insured, but what the amount of the damage is cannot yet be ascertained. The origin of the fire is at present unknown.