

The South Chicago Fire - song lyrics

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THE SOUTH CHICAGO FIRE.

(AUGUST 24, 1893.)

Tune-"Only a Picture of Her Boy."

By T. F. Ford.

It was on a pleasant afternoon, the sun shone bright and clear,
The clocks were striking just the hour of four;
Every one seemed happy and no danger did they fear,
Children playing by their cottage door,
When suddenly there came a cry that made their blood run cold;
Like lightning it spread all o'er the land-
A fearful fire was raging soon, and suffering untold
For South Chicago's poor seemed close at hand.

Tho wind was blowing fiercely, the fire-king had full sway,
And like a demon madly leaped around;
While the firemen worked like heroes, its ravages to stay,
Two hundred houses soon burned to the ground.
A general alarm was sounded, but help arrived too late;
The people then had only one desire:
To give shelter to unfortunates who were stricken down by fate-
Left homeless by the South Chicago fire.

One man down at Jackson Park, with pleasure time beguiled.
Not thinking that he soon would have to roam;
Another at the cemetery burying his child,
The idol of that father's little home.
Returning home at eventide, their hearts filled with dismay-
Their little earthly treasures all had gone,
They found their place in ashes, everything had passed away.
Oh! God have pity on the poor forlorn.

How sad must be the fate of those who are left upon the strand,
With the wolf of hunger knocking at their door:
And the dreadful panic everywhere throughout this glorious land,
'Tis enough to make the strongest heart feel sore.
Men who, until this sad day, had never come to grief,
Lost the homes their earnings did acquire.
May the rich men of this nation quickly come to the relief
Of the homeless from the South Chicago fire.