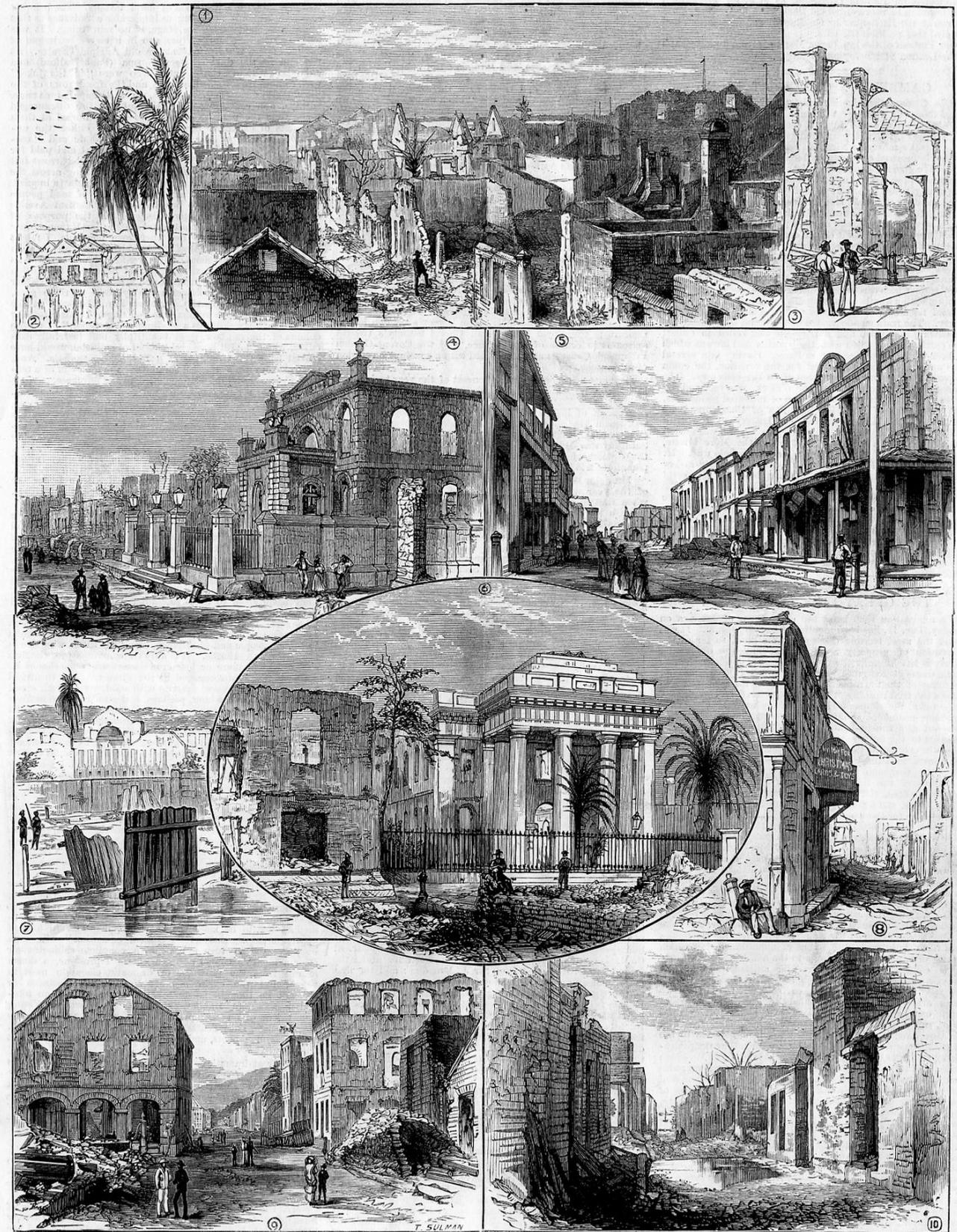


Illustrated London News 20 Jan 1883
THE GREAT FIRE IN JAMAICA.

The conflagration that befel the chief town of Jamaica on Monday, Dec. 11, has been mentioned in this journal. It was one of the most terrible disasters of its kind, so far as the destruction of property is concerned, and the distressing poverty it has brought upon a large number of persons. The annual races at Kingston were to have taken place next day, and many of the townspeople had gone to the race-course to witness the trial running of the horses entered for those races. In the town, the shops of Harbour-street were thronged with Christmas customers, about noonday, when the fire suddenly broke out at a timber-wharf; the sea breeze from the south increased to the force of a whirlwind, scattering the lighted embers in every direction, and in a few minutes setting fire to the houses in twenty different places. In less than an hour, the Government Savings Bank, the Colonial Bank, the offices of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, the telegraph offices, the two Jewish synagogues, many warehouses, shops, and dwelling-houses, were in flames. The chief thoroughfare for the wholesale houses, known as Port Royal-street, was left a heap of smouldering ruins. The Custom-house was fortunately saved by the gallantry of a company of Bluejackets, under the command of Major-General Gamble, from Port Royal. In Harbour-street only a dozen houses remained standing, while the lower part of King-street, nearly the whole of Orange-street and Princess-street south of the Parade, a large-part of Church-street, almost every wharf on the quays, besides the offices of the Colonial Standard, the Cleaner, and the Budget, and the principal shops, were reduced to ashes. The dense volumes of smoke which rose front the burning mass enveloped the Whole city; while, as the flames burst forth, lighting up the: range of mountains below which the city of Kingston slopes down to the sea, the scene was one which cannot be described. The authorities were, of course, unable to cope with such an overwhelming disaster; and not until a detachment of soldiers from the two camps arrived and (happily aided by a sudden change of wind) commenced pulling down the houses at various points, was any check given to the spread of the fire. The Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave, in a despatch to the Colonial Office describing this calamity, mentions the praise-worthy exertions of Major-General Gamble, Colonel Wiseman Clarke, and the officers and men of the military garrison; also those of Commodore Purvis, R.N., and a party of officers and seamen from H.M.S. Foam. Mr. Kemble, the Custos of Kingston, Sir J. Lucius Smith, General Mann, and others, rendered signal service; but the Governor himself (who is about to leave Jamaica) was present throughout the fire, and distinguished himself no less by his personal sympathy than by his substantial aid to the unfortunate people who were compelled to fly in a state of panic with the little they were able to save. At a public meeting held on the following day subscription list was opened for the relief of the sufferers, the Governor heading tile list with a donation of £100. We have received from Mr. George Spencer, of Kingston, a letter bearing testimony to the great amount of distress caused by this visitation, and a series of photographs of the ruins, taken Mr. Duperley, of that place, from which our Illustrations are copied. Au appeal is earnestly made to the benevolent sympathy of the English public for pecuniary aid to thousands of the inhabitants of Kingston, suddenly reduced to a destitute condition. The Bishop or Jamaica has been presiding over the local relief committee. It is proposed that the colony shall raise a loan of £200,000 or £300,000, for the rebuilding of the city.

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1. Peter-lane, from Bary-street, looking south. 5. Harbour-street, from King-street. 8. Water-lane, from King-street.
 2. View from Royal Mail Steam-Ship Company's Wharf. 6. Portugese Synagogue, from Princess-street. 9. Princess-street, from Port Royal-street, looking north.
 3. In Harbour-street. 4. German Synagogue, Orange-street. 7. Ruins from McDonald's Wharf, King-street. 10. Peter-lane, from Town-street.

RUINS OF THE FIRE AT KINGSTON, JAMAICA.