

HORRORS OF GREAT FIRE

Heartrending Scenes Enacted at Burning of Iroquois Theater in Chicago.

OVER FIVE HUNDRED DEAD

Mad Rush Occurs Upon First Alarm and Women and Children Are Trampled to Death by the Stronger Ones.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—About 550 people were killed in 10 minutes yesterday afternoon during the fire in the Iroquois theater, the newest, largest, and, as far as human power could make it, the safest theater in Chicago. Estimates of the number of dead vary. The police count 544; the estimate of the newspapers is 552. There were 55 people missing at midnight, the majority of whom are probably among the dead. Eighty-six dead have been positively identified and 92 others are now known to be injured.

It will be many hours before the number of dead is accurately known and many days before all of them are identified. There are bodies lying by dozens in undertaking rooms, police stations and in hospitals from which nearly everything that could reveal their identity to those who knew them has been lost. The clothing is torn to rags or burned to cinders and their faces have been mashed into unrecognizable pulp by the heels of the crowd that trampled them down as they fled for safety.

The fire broke out during the second act of the play, "Mr. Blue Beard," the first production in the theater since its erection. The company, which was very large, escaped to the street in safety. Nearly all, however, were compelled to flee into the snow in the streets with no clothing but their slight stage costumes. A few members of the company sustained minor injuries, but none was seriously hurt.

Darkness Delayed Work.

The fire chief immediately called upon all his men in the vicinity to abandon work on the fire and come at once to the rescue. The building was so dark and the smoke so thick that it was found impossible to accomplish anything until light had been secured. Word was at once sent to the Orr & Lockett Hardware Company near by, and that firm placed its entire stock of lanterns at the service of the department. Over 200 lights were quickly carried into the building and the work of rescue commenced. So rapidly were the bodies brought down that in an hour there were two streams of men in and out of the door, the one carrying bodies and the other composed of men returning to get more. The bodies were carried into the Thompson restaurant, which adjoins the theater on the east, where the available space was given by the proprietor. The dead and wounded were placed on chairs, one woman even being placed, for lack of a better spot, on the cigar case.

Because of the tremendous throng which surrounded the block in which the theater building stood it was not possible for the police to carry the dead and wounded any distance, and they were compelled to wait for the ambulance at the theater. Although all the patrol wagons and every ambulance owned by the city was pressed into service, they were utterly inadequate to carry away the dead, and in a short time there was a line of corpses 50 feet long piled two and three high on the sidewalk in front of the theater. It was found necessary, in order to convey the bodies rapidly to the morgue and to the various undertaking establishments to press trucks into service, and in these, upon costly blankets fur-

ished by the drygoods stores in the vicinity, and covered with the same material, the dead were hauled away practically like so much cordwood.

Merchants Lend Aid.

The merchants in the vicinity of the theater came to the emergency in splendid fashion. Marshall Field & Company, Mandel Bros., Schlessinger & Mayer, Carson, Piatt, Scott & Company and other large drygoods stores sent wagonloads after wagonloads of blankets, rolls of linen and packages of cotton to be used in binding up the wounds of the injured and to cover the dead. The drugstores furnished their stock to anybody that asked for it in the name of people hurt in the fire. Doctors and trained nurses were on the ground by the score within half an hour after the calamity was known and every wounded person who was carried from the building received prompt medical aid. A number of doctors waited at the entrance to the theater with stethoscopes in hand, and as soon as a body which looked as though it might possess life was carried out it was at once examined and, if dead, placed on the pile lying on the sidewalk. The others were at once placed in ambulances and whirled away to the hospitals or to the offices of physicians in the vicinity.

Origin of the Fire.

Accounts of the origin of the fire are conflicting, but the best reason given is that an electric wire on the lower part of a piece of scenery broke and grounded. The fire spread rapidly toward the front of the stage, causing the members of the chorus to flee to the wings with screams of terror. The fire in itself up to this time was not serious, and possibly could have been checked had not an asbestos curtain descended about half way and then stuck. The fire was thus given a free through which a strong draught was setting, aided by doors which had been thrown open in the front of the theater. With the rear flames shooting through the opening over the heads of the people on the first floor, and reaching clear up to those in the first balcony, the fire caught them and burned them to death where they sat.

Immediately following the rush of flames there came an explosion which lifted the entire roof of the theater from its walls, shattering the great skylight into fragments. As soon as the flames appeared beyond the curtain a man in the rear of the hall shouted:

"Fire! fire!"

The entire audience rose as one person and made for the doors. It is believed the explosion was caused by the flames coming in contact with gas reservoirs of the theater, causing them to burst.

The building in which the calamity occurred stands midway between State and Dearborn streets, on the north side of Randolph street.

As near as can be estimated, about 1300 people were in the theater. Three hundred were on the first floor and the remainder in the balconies and hall ways.

All Ran Same Way

The audience, in the rush for the outer air, seems to have chosen, for the greater part, to flee to the left entrance and attempt to make its way down the eastern stairway leading into the lobby of the theater. The outside people were burned and suffocated by the gas. It was on these two doorways on the first and second balconies that the greatest loss of life occurred. When the firemen entered the building the bodies were found stretched in an immense pile. This mass of dead bodies in the center of the doorway reached to within two feet of the top of the passage way. All the corpses at this point were of women and children. The fight for life which must have taken place at these two points is something simply beyond human power to adequately describe. Only a faint idea of its horror could be de-

(Continued on page 7)

BUSINESS LOCALS

LET YOUR WANTS BE KNOWN. Somebody has what you want, or wants what you have to sell. Here is where want and wanted come together. ADVERTISE.

Smoke La Imperial cigars.

For sale, cheap—Good organ. Inquire at this office.

The Columbia Oyster House is now handling the celebrated Toke Point oysters.

First-class meal for 15c; nice cake, coffee pie or doughnuts, E. W. S. restaurant, 434 Bond street.

Sale of pictures now on. We need the room; we need the money. Call around for bargains. Woodfield's Art Store.

T. F. Laurin has a complete line of toilet articles and perfumes, the most complete stock in any retail store in the northwest. Give him a trial.

Upper Astoria has a place where you can get a fine glass of beer, as good wine and liquors as you can find any place in the city.

HARRY JONES, Opposite Kopp's Brewery.

Those who need tinning done on their houses should call on J. A. Montgomery, the tinning department of whose establishment is in charge of L. Noe, who has no superior in that line of the business.

The La Tosca is under new management and the new proprietors solicit a continuance of the former trade and are amply able to care for the new. All treated alike. They keep an orderly house and they solicit a call.

Do you like chicken tamales or choice con carne? If so, ring up J. G. Cook, or call on him. Headquarters in rear of National saloon. Ask for Cook, who makes the finest con carne and tamales. Orders delivered at private residences.

For supper what is nicer than a chicken tamale, or a dish of Chile Concarne? And the only place in town to get either is at the National Restaurant, which also serves all kinds of sandwiches and fine steaks and chops.

Jicky! What's Jicky! A special perfume made by Guerlain Paris, imported and sold by Frank Hart, the druggist, who also sells Crown Perfumery Company's crab apple blossoms, Atkinson's white rose, Rogers & Collet's perfumes and the other odors usually carried in a first-class retail drugstore. Remember the place opposite Foard & Stokes.

T. F. Laurin, the purchaser of the Conn drug store, corner of Commercial and Twelfth streets has made

some needed changes in his new store and is better prepared than ever to meet the requirements of the trade. He has also renewed the chemicals and subscription medicines and his customers can depend that the stock is new and fresh.

A black purse containing a small sum of money, a locket and chain, and a roundtrip ticket on the A. & C. R. R. between this city and Portland, was lost near the depot Christmas eve. Finder will please return to this office.

All of Wise's customers who have bought \$10 worth of goods or over since June 1, 1903, who have not as yet received their numbers are requested to secure them before the drawing for four first-class round-trip tickets to the world's fair at St. Louis. The drawing will take place at Foard & Stokes' hall on January 14, at which time Wise's customers will be given a masquerade ball.

JAPANESE GOODS. New stock of fancy goods just arrived at Yokohama Bazaar. Call and see the latest novelties from Japan.

COAL! COAL! COAL! If you want your money's worth Ring 'Phone 1811. GEO. W. SANBORN, Agt.

BEST 15-CENT MEAL. You will always find the best 15c meal in the city at the Rising Sun restaurant, No. 612 Commercial street.

To The Public. Having assumed the management of the saloon known as the La Tosca we beg leave to state that it shall be our aim at all times to sell only the best goods and to assure to all of our patrons courteous treatment. A concert will be given every evening by the best musical talent to be procured on the coast, and in every possible manner we shall endeavor to make our house attractive to the public.

JESS CHESHIRE, THEO. BRAKKE.

January Sale. Mrs. R. Ingleton will have a big reduction sale during the month of January on hats, skirts, shirt waists, underclothes and all kinds of ladies' and children's furnishing goods, hair switches and pompadours.

MRS. R. INGLETON, Welch block.

Notice to Subscribers. Subscribers are requested to telephone this office in all cases of failure upon the part of carriers to deliver the paper which will be sent by special messenger and the charge therefor deducted from the wages of the carrier responsible for the oversight or negligence.

THE PUBLISHERS.

DENSMORE TYPEWRITER. We sell, rent, and repair all makes of typewriters. Write for new catalogue of New Densmore.

Muxley, Ryan & Co., 24 Fourth Street, Portland, Or.

CALL ON HIM. Electrical fixtures. Electrical wiring. Electrical supplies. Gas mantles guaranteed. 408 Commercial street. M. F. Hardesty, Electrician Contractor.

AT THE TOKE POINT. If it is in season you will find it at its best at the celebrated Toke Point oyster house on Eleventh street. Fish, game, shell-fish, choicest meats, pastry coffee, etc., etc., served to the queen's taste. Special accommodations for parties. Open all night. Don't miss the place, Eleventh street, near Bond.

Call for Proposals. Sealed proposals for the erection of a cold storage warehouse to be built on the site of the Hawthorn cannery in Astoria, Oregon, will be received at this office until 11:00 a. m. January 5, 1904, and then publicly opened. Specifications and all available information will be furnished on application to this office.

Columbia River Packers' Association Samuel Himore, Vice-President. Astoria, Ore., Dec. 31, 1903.

Occident Shop. Four chairs at the Occident barber shop. No use to miss everything waiting for a shave. First-class artists and by the way, this is the place to get a bath. Everything the very best.

Notice. Notice is hereby given that the committee on Streets and Public Works of the common council of the City of Astoria, Superintendent of Streets and City Surveyor have filed with the Auditor and Police Judge of said City a certificate of the acceptance of the improvement of Franklin avenue, from the west line of Fifth street to the west line of Ninth street, under ordinance No. 2834, by L. Lebeck, the contractor, and unless objections are filed against the same, said improvement will be accepted by ordinance at the next regular meeting of said council.

OLOF ANDERSON, Auditor and Police Judge. Dated Astoria, Oregon, December 29, 1903.

A LIFE SAVER. Many lives are annually destroyed by

diseases resulting from faulty plumbing. Be sure your plumbing is done by an expert, and save annoyance and danger. Gas and steam fitting, heating, tinning, etc. Fixtures in stock. JOHN A. MONTGOMERY, 425 Bond street. Phone 1902.

Cheap Fuel. Fir slabwood, stove lengths, \$2.00 per cord. Boxwood \$1.50 per large load. Phone 2211 Black, Kelly, the transfer man.

Notice of Dissolution. Notice is hereby given that the partnership heretofore existing under the name of the Franklin Printing Company is this day dissolved by mutual consent. The business of publishing The Astorian will be conducted in future by the Astorian Publishing Company, to whom all accounts due said firm are payable.

OTIS PATTERSON, EDGAR W. STAHL, ROBERT GIBSON. Astoria, Oregon, Dec. 24, 1903.

City Treasurer's Notice. There is money in the City Treasury to pay the following warrants drawn on the following streets:

- Alleyway and Cedar, No. 16,460 to 16,468, inclusive.
 - Fifty-one and Birch, No. 16,441.
 - Fourth street, Bond to Astor, No. 16,313.
 - Fifth, Commercial to Astor, No. 16,364 and 16,365.
 - Fifteenth, Jerome to Niagara, Nos. 16,208, 16,209, 16,204.
 - Eighth street, Commercial to Astor, Nos. 16,438, 16,439, 16,437, 16,435.
 - Eleventh street, Bond to Franklin, Nos. 16,700 to 16,714 inclusive.
- Interest will cease after this date. THOMAS DEALEY, City Treasurer. Astoria, Ore., Dec. 19, 1903.

Assessment Notice. Notice is hereby given that the assessment made for the purpose of improving 50th street from the south line of Cedar street, to the north line of Date street as per assessment roll No. 71 was made by an order of the common council due and payable January 8th, 1904 by ordinance No. 2873 confirming said assessment roll. That the following are the names of the persons against whom the assessments are made, amounts owing by each, to-wit: Allen, E. F. \$13.56 Anderson, George 26.00 Duffner, Otto 25.41 Kelly, Mary M. 196.23 Wevang, Andrew Heirs of 3.39 City of Astoria 76.22 By order of the common council, OLOF ANDERSON, Auditor and Police Judge. Dated Astoria, Oregon, Dec. 26, 1903.

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KRATZ' CAFE

Favorite Rendezvous for Astorians

Sixth and Washington St. - Portland, Or.

SLEEPING QUARTERS.

Comfortable, well furnished rooms to be had by the day, week or month, upon application at the restaurant or at

The O. K. Parlors.

Neatness in the keeping of the rooms is assured. P. A. PETERSON, Prop. Astor St., Astoria, Or.

J. H. HANSEN

Plumbing and Tinning

STEAM AND GAS FITTING

All work promptly Experted. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Telephone 441 Main. 505 Bond Street, Astoria.

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JOHNSON & COOK, Props.

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Kopp's North Pacific Beer PAGE BUILDING—ASTOR STREET

The GROTTO.

ASTORIA'S LATEST AND MOST ELEGANT RESORT FOR GENTLEMEN.

UNEQUALLED ANYWHERE.

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