

# OVER 500 DEAD

## Fire in Chicago Theater With Awful Results.

### FEW MEN WEPE IN THE AUDIENCE

Bodies by the Score are Lying in Undertaking Parlors With Little or Nothing Left to Aid in Identification.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—About 550 people were killed in 10 minutes this afternoon during a fire in the Iroquois theater, the newest, the largest, and, as far as human power could make it, the safest theater in Chicago. Estimates of the dead and injured vary. The police count is 536. The estimate of the newspapers is 560. There are 55 people missing at midnight, the majority of whom are probably among the dead in the morgue and various undertaking establishments. Eighty-six of the dead have been positively identified, and 92 others are known to be injured.

Some of the people were burned to death, many were suffocated by gas, and scores were trampled to death in the panic that followed the mad plunge of the frightened audience for the exits. There are bodies lying by dozens tonight in the undertaking rooms, in the police station and in the hospitals, from which nearly everything that could reveal their identity to those who knew them best is gone. Their clothing is torn to rags or burned to cinders and their faces have been mashed into an unrecognizable pulp by the heels of the crowd that trampled them down as they fled for safety.

The count of the dead was practically completed at midnight, but it is not yet accurate, and the exact number will not be known before some time tomorrow. Despite the utmost care, great confusion marked the removal of the bodies.

In their haste the police transported bodies to undertaking rooms, and in many instances forgot to report the fact to their station. This is evidenced by the fact that in five different establishments bodies were received of which the police had no record whatever. Allowing for these discrepancies, the lists made by the police and the newspapers practically agree.

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

With a roar and a bound the flames shot through the opening over the heads of the people on the first floor and, reaching clear up to those in the first balcony, caught them and burned them to death where they sat.

Immediately following this 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," and 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 the gas reservoirs of the theater, causing them to burst.

The theater was completed less than a month ago, at a cost of half a million dollars, and was the finest playhouse in Chicago. It was opened to the public on the night of November 23. The style of the structure, architecturally, is French Renaissance, which has a strong suggestion of the classic. It has a total seating capacity for 1,724 chairs, with plenty of good standing room on each floor. The balcony had seatings for 475 persons. The records of the city building department show that the theater was complete in every detail and that it was absolutely fireproof, all requirements of the law having been complied with.

### China Is Blamed By Russia.

Peking, Jan. 1.—Huy Ufen, director of the Imperial railroad, has returned from Port Arthur, where he has been interviewing Admiral Alexieff as to why Russia has not evacuated Manchuria. The Russian commander, it is reported, told him that Russia is disappointed at the failure of China to listen to proposals that would mean an amicable settlement of every point at issue. Alexieff, it is understood, warned the director that China is being deceived by Japan into an unfriendly attitude that is unwise.

### Work Has Not Stopped.

New York, Jan. 1.—Seventeen hundred men are at work on James J. Hill's big steamships at New London Conn., and work is being rushed to complete both ships by next summer. Operations were practically stopped last summer by strikes, and it was determined to try and finish only one ship, but the present plan is to complete them both. Unless there are further strikes the work will be carried on steadily.

### Japan Will Not Wait Much Longer.

Berlin, Jan. 1.—The Lokal Anzeiger without reserve says: "The Japanese government has informed the representatives of the powers at Tokyo that the situation at this moment is unbearable, and that Japan must strike if Russia does not accept the propositions Japan has submitted, as Japan cannot longer wait for a final decision."

### CITY IS STUNNED.

#### Chicago Is Completely Overcome by Grief for the Stricken.

Chicago, Jan. 1.—For the first time since Chicago has possessed bells to peal, whistles to shriek and horns to blow, the old year was allowed silently to take its place in history, and the new year permitted to come in with no evidence of joy at its birth. All Chicago mourned for the 600 persons who died in the fire, panic and suffocation at the Iroquois theater.

In an official proclamation issued yesterday afternoon Mayor Carter H. Harrison suggested that the usual New Year's eve celebration be omitted. The idea found a ready response in the hearts of the people and the mayor's words seemed only to give utterance to the universal desire.

The list of the dead continues as it was given last night, in the neighborhood of 600. A widely accepted estimate is that 564 is the number of the dead. This number will likely be increased, as there are persons in the hospitals who will probably die. It is believed, however, that the total will not exceed 600. Including the dead, missing and injured the total number of casualties is approximately 1,000. There were about 2,500 spectators and actors in the theater at the time of the fire.

### RUSSIA WILL SAVE HEBREWS.

#### Government Fully Realizes the Probability of Massacre at Kishinef.

Washington, Jan. 2.—Simon Wolfe, of this city, who has been active in his endeavors to induce the United States government to make representations to Russia looking to the protection of the Jews of Kishinef, had an interview with President Roosevelt today. At its conclusion Mr. Wolfe said that at the request of the president himself, he could not discuss the interview for publication.

It is known, however, that Mr. Wolfe was informed that, prior to his presentation of the matter to the state department, the president had directed the United States consuls in Russia to inform this government if there was any likelihood of a repetition of the Kishinef massacre of last spring. The replies to that inquiry thus far received have been reassuring. Moreover, they indicate that the Russian government is fully alive to the reports of possible trouble at Kishinef on January 7. In view of that fact, it is assumed that the Russian authorities will take, if indeed they have not already taken, steps to prevent a recurrence of the massacres.

### "THERE MAY BE WAR."

#### Russian Journals Assume a Decidedly Pessimistic Attitude.

St. Petersburg, Jan. 2.—The foreign dispatches received here yesterday afternoon are reflected today in more pessimistic editorials. The Novoye Vremya begins its leader with: "There is no war today; tomorrow there may be war."

The paper rather fatalistically directs attention to the fact that was marked the opening of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The Novoye Vremya nevertheless still professes faith in a peaceful settlement, saying: "We believe Japan will not place Russia in a position where to yield would appear to be a renunciation of the defense of her vital interests in the far east. Russia does not desire war, but nobody believes Russia will permit the Japanese or other nations to execute a diplomatic dance upon Russia's peaceful disposition. In firm consciousness of her power Russia will await events."

### China Acting Hostile.

Paris, Jan. 2.—The Chee Foo correspondent of the Paris edition of the New York Herald says that Colonel Artimeff, who is in close touch with Admiral Alexieff, Russian viceroy in the Far East, declares the situation is most critical. The Japanese, he says, apparently want war, and the Chinese, especially Yuan Shi Kai, commander in chief of the Chinese army and navy, are assuming a hostile attitude. Disturbances in Manchuria are due, he says, to the support the Chinese government is giving the bandits.

### Insurgent Ships Taken.

Santo Domingo, Jan. 2.—The provisional government has captured two vessels from Curacao, which were carrying arms and ammunition for the insurgents. The vessels were brought to this port and 15 prisoners landed. The insurgents who attacked General Guerrera have been defeated and several prisoners taken. There was fighting yesterday morning between government troops and insurgents outside the city.

### December Shows a Surplus.

Washington, Jan. 2.—The forthcoming monthly statement of the government receipts and expenditures will show the total receipts for December, 1903, to be about \$42,747,532, and the expenditures \$32,248,000, leaving a surplus for the month of \$10,499,532. The surplus for the six months of the present fiscal year will be about \$5,433,667.

### ARMY TO PANAMA.

#### General Staff Gives Orders to Prepare to Go to the Isthmus.

Washington, Dec. 31.—The general staff of the army today ordered troops to prepare for a Panama campaign. Soldiers at Vancouver, Wash., are among those selected, as will be seen by the list, which follows: First, Fifth and Twenty-fourth batteries of field artillery, Presidio, San Francisco; Eighth battery of field artillery, Vancouver barracks; troops A, B, C and D, Ninth cavalry (colored), Monterey, Cal.; troops I, K, L and M, Ninth cavalry, Presidio; Fifteenth infantry, Monterey; Nineteenth infantry, Vancouver barracks; Tenth infantry, San Francisco; battalions of the Thirtieth infantry at Fort McDowell, Fort Madison and Benicia barracks, Cal.; four companies of Sixteenth infantry of Fort Slocum, N. Y., and eight companies of the same regiment at Fort McPherson, Ga.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Shaler, who is a member of the general staff of the army, and an expert on fortifications, has been ordered to Panama to inspect the fortifications, and have his report in Washington before General Reyes, of the Colombian army, who is now here, can return.

These orders for preparation were issued today because the general staff has been informed that Colombia can land troops upon the isthmus much more easily than was believed to be the case.

General MacArthur will have charge of all matters on the Pacific coast. His return from Hawaii was hurried for this purpose.

### ON WAR FOOTING.

#### Japan Is Completing Final Preliminaries—Britain Will Take Loan.

Yokohama, Dec. 31.—The government is completing the final preliminaries for placing the country on a war footing. Imperial ordinances issued authorize the government to make an unlimited issue of treasury bonds to provide war funds, creating a special council of war, and fixing the imperial headquarters.

In the event of war, if a special issue of war bonds is made, it is understood that the bonds can be floated in England, whence it is said assurances have come that the money would be forthcoming.

The ministers and executive chief discussed the situation for three hours yesterday, but nothing regarding their deliberations was made public.

The ordinance passed yesterday by the cabinet council authorizing a guarantee of the principal and interest of an issue of 10,000,000 yen debentures for the purpose of expediting work on the Seoul-Fusan railway, and which provided for all possible military expenses for the protection of the railway and other interests, also authorized the government to utilize 50,000,000 yen, the proceeds of the Chinese war indemnity, which hitherto has been devoted to educational and other purposes, as a war fund. In addition, authorization is given to issue treasury notes, repayable in five years, and to raise loans repayable in two years to an unlimited extent.

### ASKS FOR AMERICAN WARSHIP.

#### Minister Powell Deems the Situation at Santo Domingo Grave.

Washington, Dec. 31.—With three revolutions raging on the island, the forces of Jimenez within four hours of Santo Domingo City, and excitement prevailing, Minister Powell thinks the situation demands the presence of an additional warship, and in a cablegram dated yesterday appeals to the state department for aid. In anticipation of the crisis which appears to have arrived, the state department has already taken steps to send another warship to Santo Domingo, and at its request Secretary Moody yesterday cabled Rear Admiral Lambertson, commanding the South Atlantic squadron, now at Trinidad, to dispatch one of his vessels to Santo Domingo at full speed to assist the gunboat Newport in protecting Americans and other interests.

Admiral Lambertson late today cabled the navy department from Trinidad that he has sent the Scorpion to reinforce the Newport in Dominican waters.

### Soldiers Travel in Boxcars.

Victoria, B. C., Dec. 31.—Number 83 company, Royal Garrison artillery, 113 strong, left for Hong Kong on the steamer Empress of India today, being relieved by No. 58 company, which arrived from Halifax tonight. The change is made in the regular schedule of garrison changes and has no bearing on the Far Eastern crisis. The company which came from Halifax came in boxcars fitted with hammocks, instructions having been given to test that mode of travel. The men found the arrangements comfortable.

### Canal Party Wins Great Victory.

Panama, Dec. 31.—Heavy rains have been falling here for several days, causing severe damage to telegraph lines. No news has been received from Los Santos or Chiriqui provinces. From other provinces confirmation has been received of the overwhelming triumph of the mixed candidates proposed for membership in the constitutional convention by the patriotic committee, which endeavored to choose men favoring the ratification of the canal treaty.

### Offers Him Dawson Consularship.

Washington, Dec. 31.—Louis A. Dent, register of wills of the District of Columbia, called on President Roosevelt today, and talked over the recent action of the president in displacing him, and naming Corporal Tanner as his successor. The president has tendered to Mr. Dent the position of consul at Dawson City, Yukon.

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