

HOLIDAY MATINEE TURNED IN FEW MINUTES TO FEARFUL TRAGEDY

564 PERSONS DIE IN FIRE IN CHICAGO THEATER

Men, Women and Children Burned, Suffocated or Trampled Beneath Rushing Feet—People in Galleries Cut Off from All Escape and Await an Awful Fate—Firemen and Police in Heroic Rescue Work—Bodies Found Piled in Heaps.

The story of the destruction of the Iroquois theater by fire on the afternoon of Dec. 30, by which 564 lives were lost, is as follows:

The theater was almost in darkness in the second act. The stage was lighted only by the soft artificial beams from the calcium, which lent beauty to the scene during the singing of "The Pale Moonlight" by the double sextet.

A flash of flame shot across through the filmy draperies, started by a spark from the calcium. A show girl screamed hysterically. The fire stopped short, but with presence of mind the director increased the volume of the music.

Scores rose in their seats as the stage manager shouted an order for a continuation of the song. It was obeyed with feeble hearts. The brave

girls forced the words from their throats until two of their number swooned. The audience could no longer be controlled.

Reassuring Words in Vain. Eddie Foy, the principal comedian, rushed from the wings to the footlights, but his words of reassurance were in vain. Clouds of smoke poured from the stage into the auditorium, enveloping the struggling mass of panic-stricken men, women and children.

Behind the scenes all was confusion. It required but a moment to perceive that the fire had gone too far to be conquered by the amateur fire brigade formed by the stage hands.

In the dressing-rooms as high as the sixth story were the scores of girls of the ballet. At the first alarm the elevator boy fled from his post and the flames soon shot upward in the wings and made escape by the narrow stairways impossible.

The screams and groans of despair from the imprisoned girls in the upper rows of dressing-rooms came to the ears of the more fortunate below as they rushed to the stage doors. Some stopped for a brief moment, thinking to give aid, but the clouds of smoke, growing denser and denser, forced them to flee. Their escape even then was miraculous.

Escape from Stage Easy. Those who had been singing on the stage escaped easily. Two of their number who had fainted were carried in the arms of the others, and were revived in the alley in the rear of the theater. In a terrified and hysterical group the girls clustered in the narrow passage.

Some had sisters and all had friends in the blazing building. The bitter cold pierced them through and through, for they were clad only in their thin stage gowns, with necks and arms wholly exposed. Nevertheless they had to be dragged from their station in the alley and into neighboring stores.

The blackened bodies which choked the aisles and stairways, the lines of policemen and firemen carrying limp forms from the building, the overturned hospitals, the rows of dead and dying in the surrounding buildings, which were thrown open to the sufferers, tell briefly the tale. Only a few of the heartrending incidents will ever be known.

Mass of Struggling Humanity. The first seconds of the rush for life were quiet, say those who live to tell the tale. Few if any in that throng realized what was to come. They thought only of themselves and their dear ones as they pushed and struggled for every inch as they advanced toward the exits.

It was but a moment until the stairways leading from the balcony were a mass of struggling humanity, with scores behind constantly pushing closer and fighting to get out. Those in the van, unable to keep their footing, fell headlong. Those behind fell over their prostrate forms, crushing and suffocating them.

The scene was then a veritable bedlam. Women and children were in the majority in the fighting crowd, and

their shrieks of agonizing fear mingled with the groans of the dying the prayers of supplication. In those dark moments poor souls who had perhaps long unheeded religion called upon their God.

Mothers Pleaded for Babies. Women seized their babes in their arms and frantically clung to them, beseeching cars that were deaf to entreaty to save them from the terrible fate impending. Had the others been so disposed they could not have given the assistance so piteously besought.

In the last hope, born of desperation, scores climbed to the railing and clung to the pit of the theater, many feet below. Their mangled bodies were found long afterward when the smoke cleared away and the firemen could grasp their way with lanterns into the grewsome house of death.

hospital. The long tables offered admirable means of service, and upon them the bleeding, burned, and moaning injured were laid.

Within a block are a dozen great buildings occupied almost exclusively by doctors, and in a remarkably short time a great host of physicians came to give voluntary service to those in distress. They saved the lives of scores of women and children, frenzied with pain, who would have died in the street or under the kindly shelter of the neighboring buildings.

Rush from Orchestra Seats. The great majority of those who occupied orchestra seats had escaped with their lives, though scores were badly hurt in the rush. Some were knocked down, and with broken limbs, were unable to rise. They had been left to die with a number of women who fainted from fright. With these bodies were found the corpses of those who had leaped from the balcony and gallery.

In the exits of the balcony and galleries the greatest loss of life occurred. When the firemen went to remove the bodies they found 100 or more piled in indescribable mass in each place. The clothes were torn completely away from some of the bodies. Here and there a jeweled hand protruded from the pile. All the faces were distorted with the death agonies.

Moan from Heap of Dead. From beneath this mangled mass of humanity there suddenly came the moan of a woman. It was a cry of anguish, not of pain. The cry, faint though it was, pierced to the very soul, sounding above the yells of the firemen, the moans of agony from within the smoke-filled auditorium, and the shrieks of grief maddened fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers in the street without.

Trembling hands plunged their way into the tangle of human forms, and with a mighty effort pulled to the surface the woman—could such a thing be a human being?—from whose lips had come the cry. The blackened lips parted, and a fireman bent over her to catch the words.

Mother Love Is Uppermost. "My child, my poor little boy! Where is he? Oh, do bring him to me."

There in that awful hour, her body bruised beyond recognition in the mad fight for life that followed the first flash of flame across the stage—there was mother love uppermost. Again the trembling lips parted.

"Is he safe? Tell me he is safe and I can die."

"He is safe," the fireman muttered, and all knew his reply was best. She died, and her body was lifted tenderly with those of the hundred others in that one spot.

The calamity was so overwhelming that the firemen and the policemen who were the first to reach the upper part of the house could not realize its astounding extent. They began by dragging a body or two from the terrible piles at the head of the stairways, as if they did not know the piles were made of human bodies.

Gradually the full significance of the catastrophe dawned upon them. All the lights of the theater had been extinguished. The lanterns of the firemen cast only a dim glow over the piles of dead. From the bodies arose small curls of steam. The firemen had drenched the piles before they knew they were made up of human corpses.

Through the tiers of dead and dying in the building all about men and women searched with frenzied faces. Now and again a searcher would find one for whom he looked. One could but turn the face from such scenes.

A restaurant next door was at once thrown open for temporary use as a

ACT IS NOT POPULAR

RELUCTANT REPUBLICAN SUPPORT OF THE CUBAN BILL.

President McKinley Quoted by Congressman Hepburn to Prove That the Only Sound Reciprocity Is That Which Excludes Competitive Products.

The number and the names of the Republican representatives who voted reluctantly and under protest for the Cuban reciprocity bill will never be known. It is, however, perfectly well known that a large number, probably a majority, voted for the bill under pressure of one sort or another and against their better judgment. Mr. Hepburn of Iowa, like the most of his associates, lacked the courage to vote according to his convictions and against the bill, but he had the courage to say that he voted for it under constraint and unwillingly. In his speech of November 19 Mr. Hepburn confessed that he was yielding to coercion when he said:

Mr. Chairman, I have intimated that I intend to vote for this bill, and yet I confess I do it with reluctance. I do it because a large majority of my associates seem to think that it is necessary, because the administration very heartily approves of it, because the last Republican state convention of the State of Iowa declared in favor of it. Therefore I intend to vote for it, but I am not satisfied with the reasoning indulged in by gentlemen in support of it.

Under ordinary circumstances people who disapprove of a measure vote against it. It would seem, however, that extraordinary circumstances must have impelled Mr. Hepburn and a hundred or more just like him to stifle their convictions and help enact into law a bill which they know to be bad in principle and vicious in practice. Like the gentleman from Iowa, all of these unwilling supporters of the Cuban bill did the wrong thing with their eyes wide open. All of them in so doing confessed that they surrendered to influences stronger than their con-

cent of the tariff imposed on like products from other foreign countries will be imposed if the bill becomes a law.

This would mean a reduction of one-half in the duty on sugar, and it would be a more injurious blow to the sugar-beet industry than the proposed reduction of 20 per cent in the duty on sugar from Cuba.

There is no foundation for a claim that this reduction should be made on Philippine sugar. It would be made at the expense of an American industry which needs protection. If there is any merit in the protective tariff theory at all it applies in the case of the beet sugar industry.

As a result of the proposed reduction of 50 per cent in the tariff on Philippine sugar, great sugar plantations would be started in those islands and it is altogether possible that legislation would be crowded through permitting the importation of Chinese labor into the archipelago for the purpose of working such plantations.

The Philippines are costing the people of this country millions of dollars every year, and it injures to the benefit of the inhabitants of those islands rather than to the people of the United States. Certainly we should not be asked to go farther and destroy one of our industries in order to make the sugar plantations of the Philippines more profitable.—Denver Republican.

To Attack the Tariff.

The majority of those who are constantly sounding the praises of reciprocity have no other purpose except to attack the tariff by the only means at hand. Of course there are a few who honestly believe that reciprocity in competitive products is consistent with a protective tariff. But there are not many of that kind. Reciprocity reminds one of the men who used to call themselves "bimetallists." Men used to stand around and say, "We are in favor of the use of gold and silver both; we are bimetallists." They would proceed to say that there was not gold enough in the country to make a currency, therefore silver must be used. Time demonstrated that all such men were silver standard

A BREAK THAT THREATENS THE ENTIRE DYKE.



sciences, more potent than their convictions. Mr. Hepburn was neither worse nor better than his associates, so far as his vote was concerned. They were all in the same boat.

The speech of the Iowa congressman was full of good reasons for sticking to his principles. He denied that he owed anything to Cuba and rightly argued that in sacrificing many lives and three or four hundred millions of treasure we incurred no moral obligation to assuage any of our own industries for Cuba's benefit. He declared his belief in Republican reciprocity—namely, non-competitive reciprocity, the reciprocity that McKinley advocated in the last speech he ever uttered:

"We should take from our customers such of their products as we can use without harm to our industries and labor."

"That," said Congressman Hepburn, "is what William McKinley said." And then he asked:

"What is there in that that gives encouragement to men who claim that the competitive article, the article that does harm to our industries or does harm to our labor, is to be the subject of reciprocal agreement?"

And yet Congressman Hepburn voted for the Cuban bill. But so did something over a hundred Republicans in the House. There was applause and approval on the Republican side when the eloquent speaker deprecated the democratic free trade policy which "looks to the support of people beyond the seas rather than to the interest and happiness of our own people." It was a fine sentiment finely expressed. And yet Mr. Hepburn and more than a hundred others of his party voted to do that identical thing; voted in the interest of "people beyond the seas, rather than to the interest and happiness of our own people." Like the reluctant dame described by Byron:

"And whispering 'I will ne'er consent'—consented."

Philippine Tariff Reductions. Senator Lodge has introduced a bill placing all Philippine products on the free list, except sugar and tobacco, and on these a duty of only 50 per

men. In this instance time will demonstrate that the radical advocates of reciprocity will necessarily land in the Democratic party.—Des Moines Capital.

Would Injure Eighty Per Cent.

Senator Allison is an acknowledged authority on economics. He always knows what he is talking about. He says that only 20 per cent of goods are made by trusts in this country, and he deals in facts because he knows. In other words the tariff has nothing to do with the formation of trusts. The tariff is intended to keep countries where labor and material are cheap from flooding our country with articles which will bankrupt our producers and force labor into idleness. To remove the tariff, he says, from trust made goods would remove protection from 80 per cent of goods made by independent manufacturers. Free traders should give this subject serious thought.—Davenport Republican.

Hangs to Calamity.

The Waterloo Times-Tribune is a truly Democratic newspaper. Under a block head entitled "Hot shot for the prosperity makers," it publishes a column or so calamity items. Since the miserable failure of the last Cleveland administration it is wonderful with what tenacity the Democratic party hangs to calamity.—Vinton (Iowa) Eagle.

The Better Way.

The case is clear. It is better to protect your own and take chances on other nations buying of you than to throw open your industries to foreign competition, with the possibility of not producing any manufactures which they want to purchase.—Troy Times.

Which?

The Democrats claim that free trade will capture the trade of the world for the United States. To do so it will be necessary to cut the incomes of American wage-earners on a level with underpaid foreign labor. Which do you prefer, gentlemen? Davenport (Iowa) Republican.



Height of Wheel and Draft of Wagon.

This is a subject regarding which there is considerable difference of opinion, says a bulletin of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Missouri Station has put the matter to practical test in a series of trials made on macadam, gravel, and dirt roads in all conditions, and on meadows, pastures, cultivated fields, stubble land, etc. With a net load of 2,000 pounds in all cases, three sets of wheels were tested, as follows: "Standard—front wheels, 44 inches; rear wheels, 55 inches. Medium—front wheels, 36 inches; rear wheels, 40 inches. Low—front wheels, 24 inches; rear wheels, 28 inches." The results obtained and conclusions reached were, in brief, as follows:

For the same load, wagons with wheels of standard height drew lighter than those with lower wheels. The difference in favor of the standard wheels was greater on road surfaces in bad condition than on good road surfaces. Low wheels cut deeper ruts than those of standard height. The vibration of the tongue is greater in wagons with low wheels. For most purposes wagons with low wheels are more convenient than those of standard height. Wagons with broad tires and wheels of standard height are cumbersome and require much room in turning. Diminishing the height of wheel to from 30 to 36 inches in front and 40 to 44 inches in the rear did not increase the draft in as great proportion as it increased the convenience of loading and unloading the ordinary farm freight. Diminishing the height of wheels below 30 inches front and 40 inches rear increased the draft in greater proportion than it gained in convenience. On good roads, increasing the length of rear axle, so that the front and rear wheels will run in different tracks to avoid cutting ruts, did not increase the draft. On sod, cultivated ground, and bad roads wagons with the rear axle longer than the front one drew heavier than one having both axes of the same length. Wagons with the rear axle longer than the front one require wider gateways and more careful drivers, and are, on the whole, very inconvenient and not to be recommended for farm use. The best form of farm wagon is one with axles of equal length, broad tires, and wheels 30 to 36 inches high in front and 40 to 44 inches behind.

Application of Fertilizers.

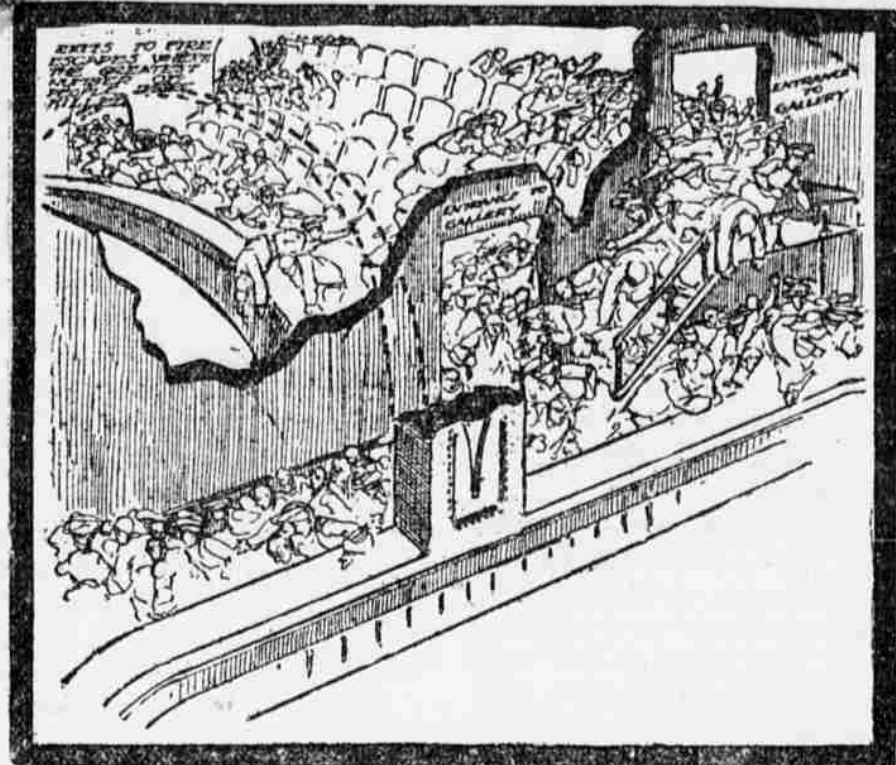
The question as to how fertilizers should be applied is somewhat difficult to answer because it depends on a number of conditions, especially the kind of fertilizer and the amount to be used. Phosphoric acid and potash, even in water soluble forms, do not leach out of the soil to any appreciable extent. On the contrary, they do not distribute themselves well enough, and therefore should be applied to some depth. Nitrogen, on the other hand, finally leaches out of the soil unless taken up by the roots of plants.

In some materials, however, it is much less readily soluble than in others. Tankage, for example, should be applied deep, and it is well to mix cotton-seed meal and blood with the soil; but nitrate of soda and ammonium sulphate should nearly always be applied as surface dressings. Only one application is advised for ammonium sulphate, but when large quantities, over 200 pounds to the acre, of nitrate are to be used, two applications of 100 pounds each are often made to advantage, one when the plants are first coming up and the other two or three weeks later. Potash salts when used in quantity, 100 pounds or more to the acre, are well applied in the fall, so that the winter rains may take out the chlorine, which when combined with either lime or magnesia acts in a detrimental manner to plant growth. Lime is also well applied in the fall. Acid phosphate when used as a top dressing may be applied either in the fall or in the early spring. When a small amount of fertilizer is to be used it is best applied as the seed is sown or as the plants are set out, in the row or in the hill or, when practicable, drilled with crops which are drilled. As a general rule only a heavy application of a complete fertilizer, say 1,000 pounds or more to the acre, is recommended to be applied broadcast and worked into the soil for crops which are planted in rows.—Bulletin of Tennessee Station.

Wisconsin Butter Makers.

The Wisconsin Butter Makers convention is to be held at Eau Claire on February 2 to 4. Secretary F. B. Fulmer writes us that a great convention is expected, as the people seem generally interested and enthusiastic. The city in which the convention is to be held is located on three lines of railway, which means that it is readily accessible. The citizens have already raised a purse of \$300, which will be used in swelling the prizes to be awarded for good butter. The sessions are to be held in the Knights of Pythias Hall, newly erected, and which has a seating capacity of 600. A good exhibit of butter-making machinery is also being arranged for.

A woman feels the distinction of ranks and station much more in relation to her own sex than she does in relation to men.



Crush at Second Balcony.



Bodies Dragged Across Alley.