

BURNED BEFORE COMPLETED

The New Barker Building Completely Destroyed by Fire Last Night.

DAMAGE TO OTHER BUILDINGS. Falling Walls Crash the Davis and Ames Real Estate Offices—The Loss and Insurance—Notes and Incidents

The Barker Block Burned.

The most disastrous fire that has occurred in Omaha for several years broke out in the new Barker building, just nearing completion, at the corner of Fifteenth and Farnam streets at 7:30 o'clock last evening. At that hour Mr. Frank Moores, the Washington agent, who was sitting in his office just across the street, noticed a blaze in the second story of the building and hurried to his telephone to notify the fire department. At the same time, the patrol wagon was returning from a call and the driver, George Trimmer, passing the building noticed the blaze and set up a cry of "fire," which was heard at the central station by Jailor Sigwart who promptly turned in an alarm from box 62 at the corner of Sixteenth and Farnam. The alarm from the box and Mr. Moore's telephone call reached the fire department at almost the same instant. A general alarm was sounded calling all of the hose companies to service the fire. This first alarm was not a very few seconds but before the firemen could reach the scene the building was all ablaze, the wood-work of the interior was being consumed and sending flames high into the air. The fire companies were on the ground in a few seconds. Chief Galligan was at their head and realizing the great danger of the situation made an immediate arrangement by which every member of the department could be used to the best advantage. Lines of hose were laid from the engine to the corner of Sixteenth and Farnam, Fifteenth and Farnam, and in less than five minutes after the first tap of the bell was sounded, four streams of water were playing on the flames and a fifth was added later. The work of the firemen was apparently without effect for some time, but the construction of the buildings made it almost impossible to get a stream of water upon the heart of the flames. The entire interior of the structure was one net work of flame reaching upward, and the account of the open condition of the roof and windows admitting air in abundance, burned the timber and spread the flames over the building. The firemen had no means of getting access to the flames. Every window and doorway was belching forth volumes of fire and smoke, making it necessary to do the fighting from the outside of the building.

THE LOSS AND INSURANCE.

The total loss to the Barker building and the other structures near the fire will exceed approximately \$1,000,000. Mr. Joseph Barker says that he has put into the building already \$100,000. The loss on that structure will be complete. The loss on the building immediately south of the new structure is estimated at \$1,000,000 and was damaged to the extent of about half that amount. Mr. O. J. DeWitt, who reported to the fire department, says that he has lost all his property. He states that his loss cannot be measured by figures, as he has lost all his property. Dr. Ayres occupies with Dr. Hoopes offices on the second story. He lost about \$500 worth of instruments, books and furniture. His insurance will cover about one-third of the loss. Dr. Hoopes' loss is estimated to be about \$100,000. The other occupants of the building were, for the most part, lawyers, who, consequently, arranged to have their papers, books and other valuables taken to the library.

THE FIRE.

The fire increased in volume with startling rapidity. The firemen were at a disadvantage in this respect over the crowds of people who witnessed them. The first tap of the bell was the signal for a grand rush to the scene of the conflagration. The streets were lined with people. The clerks from the stores that observe early closing hours were just at liberty, hundreds of theater-goers were heading for the theater, and the great mass of people who throng the streets during the early evening were all on hand and crowded forward to the scene of the fire. A few minutes after the fire started, the streets were packed with spectators to such an extent that progress along the sidewalks was accomplished, even by the firemen and policemen, with the greatest difficulty. Men, women and children crowded as near to the burning block as the heat of the flames would allow and contended for available places from which the work of destruction could be observed to an advantage. The Merchants' hotel the Wash block and other structures were the scenes of observation were especially sought for, while on the outside venturesome boys even climbed upon telegraph poles to water the progress of the fire. The crowd was an unusually orderly one, most of the people standing with bated breath and open mouths, only speaking when the threatened falling of a wall or some especially incident, such as the breaking out of a cry or remark. They stood silent and speechless, and gazed, as many of them had eight years before gazed, at the spectacle presented by the burning of the Grand Central hotel. To the latter, that memorable catastrophe was present in mind in all its frightfulness. Then, it was a building towering high and wide, and far beyond the power of a few impatient mortals to witness. The scene was presented by the burning of the Grand Central hotel. Last night it was a building equally high, incapable of being reached with water save from the streams, but yet being slowly consumed with flames which seemed fanned with the blast of wind. The comparison, too, might be extended, when the danger in which the firemen worked was considered. The fierceness of the flames on the ground floor had expelled them from venturing beyond the lower entrance, and consequently the memorable loss of life which signaled the former horror, could not have taken place within the burning structure. It might have come with toppling walls, which at any moment might sway from their perpendicular, so lone and anchored they seemed, and the ground floor had earthy brethren then the gallant fellows who were engaged in the unequal fight.

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and utterly destroying the first story of the structure. Four minutes later another section of the wall fell, and soon after, the superincumbent weight of rubbish into which the Davis building had been transformed, relieved itself by falling upon and leaving nothing but the front wall of Ames' real estate office standing. The people were then put behind a line and kept beyond the reach of danger.

The flames, meanwhile, continued to roll in upon the fire, and through and was at its height, the awnings on the west side of the Paxton building caught fire making it necessary to take one stream from the main fire to protect the block. The water used in the fire was not only used in the fire but also in the fire.

The heat from the burning block was intense and soon began to affect the adjacent buildings. After the fire had been in progress about fifteen minutes and was at its height, the awnings on the west side of the Paxton building caught fire making it necessary to take one stream from the main fire to protect the block. The water used in the fire was not only used in the fire but also in the fire.

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"Gosh, but ain't it a daisy," murmured one small boy as he gazed on the fire.

There is not a perfect window on the Fifteenth street side of the Paxton building.

The water from the fire flowed in a stream down Farnam street as far as Twelfth.

WASHINGTON MATTERS.

News and Gossip from the National Capital. WASHINGTON, Nov. 5.—Special Telegram to the Bee.—W. J. Cannon, of Dubuque, Ia., called at the postoffice department today to see Colonel Bates, chief of the free delivery. Colonel Bates, whether he will return to the Hawkeye state, whether he will vote, till tomorrow, Mr. Cannon is here for political work. Cannon probably changes his lower postmaster's ship and is unable to tell what struck the democratic party in his state on Tuesday last.

ARMY AFFAIRS.

General Sheridan has ordered that hereafter paymasters must wear undress uniforms when paying troops on the muster rolls. Captain George M. Dawney and James A. Haughey, Twenty-first infantry, are at Fort Sidney, Neb., under medical treatment. Private John Cant, Company E, Fifteenth infantry, has been granted two months furlough from November 20, from Fort Buford, Dak. Lieutenant William F. Blauvelt and First Sergeant Nicholas Finnegan, Company D, Fifteenth infantry, have been ordered from Fort Randall, Dak., to Fort Leavenworth, Kan., as a witness before a court martial. Major General William F. Blauvelt, Seventeenth infantry, is commanding his regiment and the post at Fort David, Ark. Major General William F. Blauvelt, Seventeenth infantry, is commanding his regiment and the post at Fort David, Ark. Major General William F. Blauvelt, Seventeenth infantry, is commanding his regiment and the post at Fort David, Ark.

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was embodied in frisky Nellie McHenry, whose coquettish charms suffer no diminution. Nate Salisbury is always clever, but his ability does not find its deserved scope in the frothy "Brook." The piece affords plentiful opportunity for the introduction of specialties, and it is in the abundance of music, dancing and general professional hash that its success consists. Nate Salisbury as a matter of fact carried off all the honors, but the other members of the company John Webster, F. B. Blair and Marie Bockel contributed a large share toward the evening's entertainment, Nellie McHenry and Marie Bockel being very happy in their songs.

"The Brook" will be repeated this afternoon and evening.

ALONE IN OMAHA.

A sorrow-stricken woman looking for her husband. The tendency of husbands to leave their wives in other cities and come to Omaha for the purpose of finding employment was illustrated yesterday morning in a singularly painful manner. A man named William O'Brien, formerly of Peoria, came to this city about a month ago, leaving his wife in the city mentioned, while he claimed to have found work in this city. His wife was in a delicate condition, and upon receipt of his letter, about two weeks ago, wrote him, at this point, informing him of her desire and determination to come to this city. She arrived here yesterday morning, and Saturday night arrived in Omaha. She had a little money, and stopped at one of the hotels, but her condition was such as to require considerable attention and she was compelled to go to the poor house. She made inquiries, however, at the postoffice and found that the letter she had written her husband, telling of her intention of coming here had been taken from the postoffice, but here her husband has gone she has not the remotest doubt. To aggravate her misfortune, the check to her trunk, together with a pair of shoes, was stolen from her trunk. It has almost come to a pass that no public improvement can be made in Washington without the aid of the poor woman. It is built of asphalt, and is besides a popular residence throughout a favorite place to the poor woman. It is built of asphalt, and is besides a popular residence throughout a favorite place to the poor woman. It is built of asphalt, and is besides a popular residence throughout a favorite place to the poor woman.

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