

Iroquois Theater Horror Without a Parallel.

THE VICTIMS NUMBER HUNDREDS.

Already Nearly Six Hundred Have Been Taken from the Building—Many Died from Suffocation, Many Were Burned to Death, and Many Had the Life Trampled Out of Them as They Were Trying to Make Their Way to Safety.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—At 1 o'clock this afternoon the estimate of the dead in yesterday's fire at the Iroquois theater is 564. Of the 157 persons known to have been injured, probably one-third it is believed, cannot live. The missing is estimated at 314, but it is expected that many of these will be accounted for, probably a large majority of them. No additional bodies were found today in the ruins of the theater.

CORONER ACTS.
By order of Coroner Treger, the theater charnel house was today placed under a tight police guard. No person could enter without a written order from Chief of Police O'Neill, who was notified that he would be held responsible for keeping the building in the exact condition in which it was left by the sweep of the flames. Thirty patrolmen were stationed across the front of the building and twenty men guarded the rear while within were 30 more officers, the whole interior, including the stairways and fire-bitten balconies being jealously guarded.

As soon as possible today an additional detail of policemen went through the burned building from top to bottom. There were fears that in the basement beneath ten feet of muddy water, would be found more victims of the smoke and flames. Big fire engines that before had deluged the place were today being utilized to draw forth dozen of streams of thick murky water from the basement, while a dozen firemen in hip boots made a thorough search of the basement for bodies. No bodies, however, were found in the basement.

ORDINANCES COMPLIED WITH.
According to the records of the city building department which were closely scanned today, the building ordinance was complied with in every particular in the construction of the Iroquois. The inspector, Edward Laughlin, reported that no provisions of the ordinance were violated. It was generally considered to be an absolutely fire-proof structure. The Iroquois was provided with 57 double fire exits, but wood was used and stairways were employed.

JURY OF CITIZENS.
With the announcement that one jury of representative citizens would later on all the evidence regarding the fire and return a single verdict for all the victims, Coroner Treger today promptly empaneled a jury. National Republican Committee member, Edward Stewart, member of the firm of William H. Hoyt & Co., wholesale grocers, was told by the coroner that the death of Mr. Hoyt's daughter, Mrs. E. J. Morton Fox, and her three children, would be taken as a basis for the investigation.

If any persons are responsible for the fire, said Coroner Treger, "they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The investigation of the fire will be thorough. We will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to fix the responsibility."

CORONER'S JURY.
The coroner's jury is as follows: L. Meyer, secretary of the Kennedy Furniture company; Dr. Peter Byrnes, salesman for Lyon & Healy; Walter Clingman, salesman for the Toler Furniture company; Joseph A. Cummings, manager of Browning, King & Co.; George W. Atkins, creditman for Marshall Field & Co.; John W. Fine, salesman for A. H. Revell & Co.

Thousands of the curious today tried vainly to reach the scene of the fire. The police, however, prevented the throng from entering the street near by. The exterior of the building was the same as before the fire. The giant head of an Iroquois Indian over the grand entrance, fitting symbol of the cruelty of the disaster, stood forth from a front unstained by smoke or water.

A WHITED SEPULCHRE.
Though serene without, the interior of the theater marked it as a true whited sepulchre. Upon the marble staircases at the left and right within were the mess and confusion of the grim march of the bearers of the dead. Among thousands of bits of brilliantly colored glass shattered in the fight against the flames lay many scorched bits of clothing and occasional fragments of charred bodies. From the upper galleries the view today seemed a reminder of a burned out volcano crater. In a saloon near the theater after the fire. Five bushel baskets were filled with the purses, gloves and handkerchiefs of the fleeing mob of terror-stricken women. Two barrels were needed to hold the overflows and shoes found.

CENTER OF EXCITEMENT.
The greatest center of excitement today was not at the theater but Rolston morgue, to which the dead were taken. At the morgues were surrounded and taken than to any other, the scenes of anguish were worse. About the doors of the place were massed hundreds of men and surrounding them, like a huge fan, spread the hundreds of weeping women and children. The numerous police stationed there could not begin to handle the crowds and alleged morgues. On a lower scale the same fearful scene was in progress at the various other morgues.

FOUND HIS DEAD.
E. C. Frady, president of the Strober Piano company, today after an unsuccessful search, found five dead of a theater party of six, headed by his wife. Each one was found at a different morgue. One is still missing. Those identified were Mrs. William M. Frady, Mrs. J. H. Spindler, Mr. Frady's sister;

Burdette Spindler, 10 years old; Leon Frady, 10 years old. Frady's mother-in-law died at St. Luke's an hour after reaching the hospital. Mrs. William Rise, a sister of Frady, is still missing.

A STRANGE IDENTIFICATION.
One of the most peculiar of the identifications today was that of the headless body of Boyer Alexander, 8 years old. The lad's father, Dr. W. D. Alexander, 435 Washington boulevard, had sleeplessly sought his son all night long, and today, in examining the headless corpse of a child, the physician found his own boy by a watch, a birthday present from the father, found upon the remains.

A PITIFUL SCENE.
A pitiful scene attended the identification of Margery Edwards, 14 years old, of Clinton, Iowa. Her father, W. M. Edwards, who has been in Chicago on a visit, identified the daughter's terribly burned body from a couple of the cloth in her skirt which he carried in his pocket.

HELPING THE SEARCHERS.
Chief of Police O'Neill today supervised the work of helping friends and relatives recover their dead. Hundreds of persons, grief and anxiety written in their faces, thronged about Chief O'Neill's office, seeking information. The pressure grew so great that Secy. Markham mounting a chair, read off the descriptions to the multitudes. Frequently persons in the crowd recognized the descriptions read by the secretary and started in horror for the particular morgue named as the words fell from the secretary's lips.

AT THE MORGUE.
At the morgue the inadequacy of the means of inspecting bodies was evident. Only a few persons at a time were allowed to pass before the bodies, and places in the line of admission were marked by a number of men, who by means of escape were when the theater was burning.

Messrs. Davis and Powers, managers of the Iroquois have called a meeting at the Illinois theater of all members of the "Blue Beard" company and a full statement will be made after a complete investigation. Davis and Powers emphatically deny a report that there was a fire in the Iroquois three weeks ago, and that the asbestos curtain then refused to work on account of being controlled by ropes instead of wires. They also state that the curtain was controlled by the strongest wires that it was possible to use. The facts are, according to them, that the curtain, awayed the moment the 10 or 12 exits were thrown open, owing to the rush of air.

DAY AFTER THE GREAT CALAMITY.
Husbands Sought Their Wives and Mothers Their Little Ones, Too Frequently All in Vain.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—Today brought with it only the legacy of yesterday's monumental calamity, and a prediction that the list of fatalities in the Iroquois fire will run over 600 when information is complete.

LATEST ESTIMATE OF DEAD.
The latest statement of dead at the various morgues is 564, and it is stated that the various hospitals and homes to which the injured were removed, that of the 157 persons who were injured, probably not one-third can live. The missing is reported at 314, but it is expected that many of these would be accounted for or probably a large majority of them.

CHICAGO IS STUNNED.
It is no exaggeration of language to say that the city is stunned by the overwhelming tragedy which was enacted when the theater which housed "Mr. Bluebeard" became a chamber of horrors indeed. There is the deepest woe in hundreds of homes today, deep sorrow that a thousand others, and a pity beyond the potency of words to convey, in all.

The first streak of daylight which shone in the east found the streets filled with the bodies of the dead. The first searchers found the bodies of many a searcher. There were husbands for their wives, wives searching for husbands, frenzied parents seeking their children, so many of whom lost their lives, and in some instances wide-eyed children, still dazed from the horror of their experience, crying bitterly about in search of father or mother.

SYMPATHY FOR SORROWING ONES.
Possibly nothing could better typify the depth of the sympathy which is felt for those who suffered directly by the calamity than the action of the striking livery drivers. By a vote which was without a dissenting voice, it was decided to establish a truce of 10 days. President Albert Young of the union, reporting the meeting, issued the following decree which was distributed broadcast:

"Owing to the great disaster to the public caused by the fire at the Iroquois theater, I do hereby declare a truce in the present strike of undertakers and livery drivers for 10 days, and do further request that every man upon striking report at once to their respective places of employment, and do everything in his power to assist his employer in caring for the wants of the public. Wages are to have no consideration."

SEEKING FOR CHILDREN.
All night long search was kept up for Mary Dorothy Gartz, 12 years old, and Barbara Gartz, 4 years old, who attended the theater with their aunt, Mrs. Adelaide Hopf. Today their bodies had not been found and there seems to be no doubt that the children have perished. They are the daughters of A. F. Gartz and the niece of R. T. Crane, the millionaire manufacturer of this city.

Mrs. Gartz was taken from the theater severely burned about the head and shoulders. The children are believed to have been caught in the balcony, coming down from the balcony and have been trampled to death on the staircase leading to the main floor.

Walter Zeisler, 17 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sigmond Zeisler is among the missing. He is nephew of Panny Bloomfield Zeisler, the famous pianist.

A WHOLE PARTY DEAD.
A party consisting of Mrs. Lucy Gern, her two children, Frank, 10 years old, and Willie, 6 years old, Harriet Wolfe, 10 years old, daughter of Ludwig Wolfe, a millionaire business man and Mrs. Burke, a dressmaker, is missing. Mr. Wolfe's entire family searched all night through the hospitals and morgues but failed to find a trace of any members of the party.

Greene Stewart, Republican national committeeman from Illinois, spent the entire night hunting for Mrs. F. M. Fox, of Winnetka, Ill., and her three children. Mrs. Fox is the daughter of William Hoyt, who was president of the William Hoyt Grocery company, one of the wealthiest concerns of the kind in the west. Mrs. Fox was taken home by none of the children was found. Mr. Stewart said the handkerchief of Hoyt Fox, 12 years old, had been found in the pockets of a suit upon the body of one of the children. There is no doubt that it is the boy, although the features cannot be identified.

A PATHETIC SCENE.
There was a pathetic scene at Rolston's morgue when the body of John Vaningen, 18 years old, of Kenosha, Wis., was identified. Friends of the Vaningen family had spent many hours searching at the request of Mr. and Mrs. Vaningen, who were injured. Today four of the Vaningen children who are believed to have perished in the fire had not been accounted for. They are: Grace, 2 years old; Doty, 5 years old; Mary, 13, and Edward, 20 years old. One of the saddest of the many scenes enacted in Thompson's restaurant, near the theater where many of the dead and injured were taken immediately after the fire, was the search by a body of priests and nuns, headed by the Rev. J. L. Hollings, of Ontonagon, Mich., for Edith Horton and her sister, young girls, who, in company with one of the convent sisters, had attended the performance. The body of Edith Horton was found in the restaurant, many of the nuns breaking down and weeping bitterly at the sight. The other Horton girl and the sister who accompanied them were not found.

SAVED BY FOY.
Charles Dexter, of the Boston Baseball club, and Frank Houseman, the old Chicago second baseman, with their families, escaped the theater by jumping out of the balcony, and landed on the roof of the building. The people from the balconies had already commenced jumping to the ground, and the Houseman and Dexter forced upon their doors and they were compelled to lift away the maimed and the dead in order to permit of exits from the ground floor. Houseman, caught in the crowd, took a position at his door and kept it from choking up by assisting people through. Finally, he jumped and Houseman, catching her to the best of his ability, broke her fall to the ground and she walked away unharmed.

Clifton C. Meeker, a clerk in the registry division of the postoffice, living in the suburb of Irving park, has probably lost in the fire his entire family, including his wife, two daughters and two sons.

A friend called Mr. Meeker on the phone at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and asked him if any of his family had gone to the theater. He answered that, so far as he knew, none of them had left home. When he reached the house, however, he found only his mother-in-law there.

PRAYED TO GOD.
"Where are Mable and the children?" he asked.

"They have gone to the Iroquois theater," was the reply.

"I dropped right down on my knees," he said.

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MANY PEOPLE EXPRESS SYMPATHY

President Roosevelt, in a Message to Mayor Carter Harrison Voicing the Nation's Grief, Extends to Chicago's People, His Deepest Sympathy in the Terrible Catastrophe That Has Befallen Them.

lery and balcony arches, which were built in the usual manner.

FIRE CHIEF TALKS.
Chief Musham, of the fire department, when asked today what would best prevent a repetition of the horror, said:

"I don't know as I can answer that question until investigation has been made as to the causes of this fire. On the whole, I think it would be a good thing for the department to have active uniformed men prepared to station in every theater, through every performance, to understand that New York has them and that they are paid by the management of the theaters."

"They had a man in the Iroquois who was an ex-member of the Chicago fire department. He should have known what to do. It seems to me that there is nothing in the world, at least nothing that I can't think of at the present moment, that can save lives when a great many people try to pass through one doorway at one time. It was the rushing, the crowding and the trampling that was responsible for the majority of the deaths that have occurred. Anybody who views the dead in the morgues can tell that at a glance."

A CROWD OF PHYSICIANS.

It was a cause of wonder to many people around the theater building how so many physicians and so many trained nurses could arrive on the spot within so short a time. Dr. Horner Spalding, senior official in the city health department at the time the fire broke out, made all the arrangements for medical attendance.

"I telephoned to all the physicians in the downtown district," he said, "and then to hospitals, nurse associations and schools for persons to assist in the care of the injured. Employees telephoned to all the principal office buildings and told the operators at the switchboards to notify every physician in the city building while other employees telephoned to the nurses. There were over 100 physicians whom I personally knew at the fire and probably 150 nurses."

ORDERED TO GIVE ALL AID.

Mayor Harrison was on his way to the south for a hunting trip and Comptroller McGinn was acting mayor. The finance committee of the city council was in session when the extent of the disaster became known at the city hall. Mr. McGinn was authorized by Chairman Maxwell of the committee to direct the fire marshal, the chief of police and the commissioner of public works to proceed in the emergency without any restriction of any kind as to expenses.

MAYOR HARRISON INFORMED.

A telegram was sent to Mayor Harrison informing him of the fire and it is expected that he will return from Oklahoma on the first train.

When the Rev. F. O'Brien, of the Holy Name cathedral, learned of the fire he hurried to the old Tremont house, where he converted into a temporary hospital, the western university law school, into which many victims had been taken, to administer the last sacrament to members of the Catholic church. He was followed by Bishop Muldoon, the highest Catholic prelate next to Archbishop Quigley, in the diocese of Chicago.

GENERAL ABSOLUTION GIVEN.

Finding that they were unable to attend the great number being brought in, Bishop Muldoon announced that he would give a general absolution to all the Catholics among the victims. During the brief moment that the two priests, with uplifted hands besought God to pardon all the fruiting of the dying servants, the poor mangled men and women who lay in dozens on the floor seemed to realize that they were face to face with the last scene in their lives. Many, though crazed with pain, ceased to moan and fastened their fast dimming eyes on the two priests. After the absolution was given some of them, barely able to move, feebly stretched out their hands imploringly to the priests for one hand clasp and one word of sympathy before they passed away.

Many clergymen administered absolution, remaining until the dead were removed to the morgue and the injured to various hospitals.

TRYING TO RESTORE LIFE.

Over one girl in Thompson's restaurant the doctors labored for one hour. They loosened her dress and two of them waved her arms over her head and slowly moved them down again in an attempt to induce artificial respiration. Every moment or two one of them listened with his stethoscope for her heart beat. There was not a sign of a burn on her. She could not have been more than 16 years old and when they forced her eye lids apart, her brown eyes were yet bright.

"She is too perfect a creature to give up," said one doctor. Stimulant after stimulant was tried, and last of all nitro-glycerine, but proved useless, and in the end the doctors gave up.

"WATCHER DOIN' TO ME?"

Not far away a nurse and two doctors labored over a boy. After ten minutes he opened his eyes.

"Watcher doin' to me?" he questioned.

"Taking care of you," said the doctor. "Tell us your name."

"I ain't got to have any name tellin' my mother about this. I'm all right; I am. It was a fire. That's what it was."

A GRATEFUL MAN.

"I'm the most grateful man in all Chicago," said John A. Thompson, who owns the restaurant. "My sister was in the theater with two children, aged 9 and 7. She almost got to the door with both of them when Ruth, one of them, disappeared. My sister told me she knew that the child must be safe, but I ran around like a maniac for an hour before I found her. How it happened I do not know, but she ran back into the theater and out under the stage through the stage entrance."

knowledge of the fire should reach the audience. Wilton Lackey, the star of the play now being presented at the Garrick, stepped before the curtain and entertained the audience for over five minutes with a witty speech, which kept his hearers in continual laughter. The curtain rose for the next act without anybody other than the theater employees knowing that hundreds of lives were being sacrificed almost next door.

LOOKING FOR FRIENDS.

When the people fled out of the Garrick, they were greeted at the door by hundreds of frantic men and women who anxiously scanned their faces, looking for members of their families and acquaintances who had gone down town simply to attend a matinee without stopping to what theater they had intended to go. They were many scenes of joyful recognition and astonished members of the Garrick audience were hugged and kissed in frantic delight by relatives.

FIRE SWEEPS OVER THEATER AUDIENCE.

The Iro