DESERET EVENING NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1903. SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR.

You are in Good Company When you Place Your Name on These Pages. The Leading Firms of the City are All Here.

Iroquois Theater Horror Without a Parallel.

Striking Cry of "Fire !"-After That Panic and Pandemonium - Mothers and Their Little Ones

Were Crushed to Death, Their Faces Torn and Mangled Beyond All Recognition-

Over Mounds of Dead and Dying the Living Clambcred.

THE VICTIMS NUMBER HUNDREDS.

Already Nearly Six Hundred Have Been Taken from the Building At First, Audience Calmly Watched the Flames Creeping Along the Stage - Then Came the Terror--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.

afternoon the estimate of the dead in yesterday's fire at the Iroquois theater 564. Of the 157 persons known to have been injured, probably one-third it is believed, cannot live. The missing esimated 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 Iroquoise. The inspector, Edward Laughlin, reported that no provisions of the ordinance were violated. It was generally considered to be an absolutely fre-proof structure. The Iroquois was provided with 27 double fire exits, but wood was used and stairways were employed. JURY OF CITIZENS. With the announcement that one jury with the announcement that one jury of representative citizens would listen to all the evidence regarding the fire and return a single verdict for all the victims, Coroner Treager today prompt-ly empaneled a jury. National Repub-lican Committeeman Graeme Stewart, member of the firm of William H. Hoyt & Co. wholesale process was told by & Co., wholesale grocers, was told by the coroner, that the death of Mr. Hoyt's daughter, Mrs. F. Morton Fox, and her three children, would be taken as a ba-sis for the investigation.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—At 1 o'clock this fternoon the estimate of the dead in resterday's fire at the Iroquois theater s 564. Of the 157 persons known to A STRANGE IDENTIFICATION.

One of the most peculiar of the iden-tifications today was that of the head-less body of Boyer Alexander, 8 years old. The lad's father, Dr. W. D. Alexander, 475 Washington boulevard, had sleeplessly sought his son all night long, and today, in examining the head-less corpse of a child. the physician identified his own boy by a watch, a birthday present from the father, found upon the remains. One of the most peculiar of the iden-

A P TIFUL SCENE.

A pitiful scene attended the identifi-cation 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 ter-

ribly burned body from a sample 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 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 grow so great that Secy. Markham mounting a chair, read off the descriptions to the multitudes. Fre-quently 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 evi-dent. Only a few persons at a time were allowed to pass before the bodies, and places in the line of admission were as engerly sought and fought for as means of escape were when the theater was hurning. was burning.

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 Hoptfelt, 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 pleces of R. T. Crane, the millionaire manufacturer of this city.

Vine, who lives at 2618 Prairie avenue, William McLaughlin, 19 years of age, a nephew of Mrs. Gunsalaus was one of those severely burned. He was taken to the Presbyterian hospital, where the attending physicians entertained no. Mrs. McLaughlin's home is in Buenos Ayres. He is a member of the sophor versity at Delaware, Ohio, and was found in the result of the Maining his holiday vacation at the fre had not been accounted for. They age that Delaware, Ohio, and was found in Thompson's restaur the theater where many of the theatrical members of the soliday vacation at the result of the saddest of the saddest of the many scenes enacted in Thompson's restaurant, near the theater where many of the theatrical members of the soliday vacation at the fre had not been accounted for. They add the takes place at the Prairie avenue, which takes place at the Prairie avenue to mory have been recalled and only the model are the fre. L. Hollinger, of Ontona strom will be present. fire had not been accounted for. They are: Grace, 2 years old: Dotty, 5 years old: Mary, 13, and Edward, 20 years old: One of the saddest of the many scenes enacted in Thompson's restau-rant, near the theater where many of the dead and injured were taken im-mediately after the fire, was the search by a body of priests and nuns, headed by the Rev. J. L. Hollinger, of Ontona-gon, Mich., for Edith Horton and her sister, young girls, who, in company with one of the convent sisters, had at-tended the performance. The body of Edith Horton was found in the res-taurant, many of the nuns breaking

taurant, 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 Base-ball club, and Frank Houseman, the old Chicago second baseman, with their families, occupied a box. Both claim-ed that but for the presence of mind families, occupied a box. Both claim-ed that but for the presence of mind of Eddle Foy, the death roll would have been doubled. When the panic began Dexter and Houseman each made for and manned a door, lead-ing into the alley on the north side of the theater. The people from the balconies had already commenced jumping to the ground floor when 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, having es-corted his party out, took a position at his door and kept it from choking up by assisting people through. Finally, forced away by the flames, Houseman got into the alley just in time to hear the agonized volce of a woman from the window in an upper gallery shrikk "Catch me." As the woman screamed she jumped and Houseman, catching her to the best of his ability, broke her fall to the ground and she walked away uninjured.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIGHT FOR LIFE. MANY PEOPLE EXPRESS SYMPATHY

"There never would have been any "There never would have been any fre," he said, "if proper care had been exercised in handling the lights. The electric plant of the theater was in-stalled, as I happen to know from per-sonal observation, in accordance with every modern requirements for safety. The plant was not to blame. If the facts I have given are correct, the whole blame rests on the person who placed, or who was operating, a light so close to the curtain." The failure of the expected fire pro-tection is attributed by insurance men to trouble with the asbestos curtain. STACE IN DANGER POINT

STAGE IN DANGER POINT.

people around the theater building how so many physicians and so many train-The stage is always recognized as the danger point in the theater, and the de-sire to have it cut off from the audi-torium as thoroughly as possible. The for medical attendance.

sire to have it cut off from the audi-torium as thoroughly as possible. The insurance men declare that the curtain at the Iroquois never had worked per-fectly and that the mechanicism had not been repaired. E. R. Wetmore, of the insurance firm which placed the Iroquois theater, de-clared today that the loss would not ex-ceed \$20,000. He also asserted that the spread of the flames to the auditorium was due to the failure of the asbestos at the fire and probably 150 nurses."

the commissioner of public works to proceed in the emergency without any restriction of any kind as to expenses.

Voicing the Nation's Grief, Extends to Chicago's People, His Deepest Sympathy in the Terrible Catastrophe That Has Befallen Them.

President Roosevelt, in a Message to Mayor Carter Harrison

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

thing for the department to have active uniformed men prepared toact stationed in every theater, through every per-formance. I understand that New York has them and that they are pald 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 noth-ing that I can't think of at the present moment, that can save lives when 1,000 ing that I can't think of at the present moment, that can save lives when 1,000 persons try to pass through one door-way 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 mogues can tell that at a glance."

A CROWD OF PHYSICIANS.

It was a cause of wonder to many ed nurses could arrive on the spot within so short a time. Dr. Herman 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. Employes tele-phoned to all the principal office build-ings and told the operators at the switch-boards to notify every physi-cian in the building while others telephoned to the nurses. There were over 100 physicians whom I personally knew

ORDERED TO GIVE ALL AID.

Mayor Harrison was on his way to the south for a hunting trip and Comp-troller McGann was acting mayor. The finance committe of the city council was in session when the extent of the disaster became known at the city hall. Mr. McGann was authorized by Chairman Mayor of the committee, to direct the fire marshal, the chief of police and

lery and balcony arches, which were built in the usual manner. FIRE CHIEF TALKS. Chief Musham, of the fire depart-ment, when asked today what would best prevent a repetition of the horror, said: "I don't know as I can answer that "I don't know as I can answer that

ployes knowing that hundreds of lives were being sacrificed almost next door.

LOOKING FOR FRIENDS.

When the people filed out of the Garrick, they were greeted at the door by hundreds of frantic men and women 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 with-out stating to what theater they had intended to go. There were many scenes of joyful recognition and aston-ished members of the Garrick audience were hugged and kiesed in frantic de. were hugged and kissed in frantic delight by relatives.

FIRE SWEEPS OVER THEATER AUDIENCE.

The Iroquois in Chicago the Scene of Que of the Worst Holocausts In History.

Chicago, Dec. 30.—Nearly 600 people were killed in ten minutes this after-noon during a fire in the Iroquois thea-ter, 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 of dead is 536. The estimate of the newspapers is 562. There are 55 people missing at mid-night, the majority of whom are prob-ably among the dead in the morgue and various undertaking establish-ments. Eighty-six of the dead have been positively identified, and 32 per-sons are known to be injured.

NUMBER OF DEAD UNKNOWN.

It will be many hours before the num-ber of dead is accurately known, and many days before all of them will be identified. 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 that dentify to those

hospitals, from which hearly 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 fied for safety. The fire broke out during the second act of the play,"Mr. Bluebeard," 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.

Crane, the millionatre manufacturer of this city. Mrs. Hoptfelt was taken from the theater severely burned about the head and shoulders. The children are be-lieved to have been caught in the crush, coming down from the balcony and to have been trampled to death on the staticcase leading to the main floor.

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 fuil statement will be made after a careful 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 swayed the moment use. The facts are, according to them, that the curtain swayed the moment the 10 or 12 exits were thrown open, owing to the rush of air. DAY AFTER THE **GREAT CALAMITY** he asked. A PATHETIC SCENE. There was a pathetic secene at Rol-ston's morgue when the body of John Husbands Sought Their Wives and Mothers Their Little Ones, Too Fre-

SEEKING FOR CHILDREN.

foor. Walter Zeisler, 17 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sigmund Zeisler is among the missing. He is nephew of Fanny Bloomfield Zaisler, the famous pianist.

"If any persons are responsible for this fire," said Coroner Treager, "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 urniture company. Dr. Peter Byrnes, salesman for Lyon

& Healy. Walter Clingman, salesman for the Tobey Furniture company.

doseph A. Cummings, manager of Browning, King & Co. George W. Atkins, creditman for Mar-shall Field & Co.

John W. Fine, salesman for A. H Revell & Co. Reveil & Co. Thousands of the curious today tried valuly to reach the scene of the fire. The police, however, permitted no loit-ering on either side of the street near-by. The exterior of the building was the same as before the fire. The giant stone head of an Iroquois Indian over the grand entrance, fitting symbol of the cruelty of the deserted structure, stood forth from a front unstained by smoke or water. loke or water.

A WHITED SEPULCHRE.

Though serene without, the interior of the theater marked it as a true whited sepulchre. Upon the marble staticuises at the left and right within were the mess and confusion of the grim march of the bearers of the dead. Among the thousands of bits of bril-liantly colored glass shattered in the fight against the flames lay many Jiantly colored glass shattered in the fight against the flames lay many scorched bits of clothing and occa-sional fragments of charred bodies. From the upper galleries the view today seemed a reminder of a burned out vol-cano crater. In a saloon near the thea-ter was being guarded a huge pile of garments and furs gathered up in the theater after the fire. Five bushel bas-kets were filled with the purses, gloves and handkerchiefs of the fleeing mob of terror-stricken women. Two barrels terror-stricken women. Two barrels were needed to hold the overshoes and shoes found.

CENTER OF EXCITEMENT.

The greatest center of excitement to-lay was not at the theater but Roistons All the morgue, to which the dead were taken. All the morgues were surrounded—but at Raistons where more bodies were taken than to any other, the scenes of aneniab more worth thout the of anguish were worst. About the doors of the place were massed hun-dreds 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 extra details were hurried to the be-sleged morgue. On a lesser scale the same fearful siege was in progress at the various other morgues. anguish the various other morgues.

FOUND HIS DEAD.

E. C. Frady, president of the Stroh-ber Piano company, today after un-ceasing search, found five dead of a theater party of six, headed by his wife. Each one was found at a different mor-gue. One is still missing. Those iden-tified were Mrs. William M. Frady, Mrs. J. H. Spindler, Mr. Frady's sister;

quently All in Vain.

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

LATEST ESTIMATE OF DEAD. The latest statement of dead at the various morgues is 564, and it is stated various morgues is 564, and it is stated at the various hospitals and hotels to which the injured were removed, that of the 157 people who were injured, prob-ably not one-third can live. The miss-ing were estimated at 314, but it was expected that many of these would be accounted for or probably a large ma-tority of them jority of them.

CHICAGO IS STUNNED.

It is no extravagance of language to It is no extravagance of language to say that the city is stunned by the over-whelming tragedy which was enacted when the theater which housed "Mr. Bluebeard" became a chamber of hor-rors indeed. There is the deepest woa in hundreds of homes today, deep sor-row in a thousand others, and a pity beyond the potency of words to con-var in all vey, in all, The first streak of daylight which

shone on the snow-covered streets the morgues still the sorrowfound the morgues still the sorrow-haunted center 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, groped distressedly 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 strik-ing 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, following the meeting issued the folfollowing the meeting, issued the fol-lowing decree which was distributed broadcast:

"Owing to the great disaster to the public caused by the fire at the Iropublic caused by the fire at the Iro-quois 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 now on strike report at once to their do everything in his power to assist his employer in caring for the wants of the public. Wages are to have no consider-ation.

"ALBERT YOUNG." In the return the employes issued a call to their striking employes to re-turn to work "irrespective of any pre-vious affiliations with any and all or-ganizations." and promising to protect them in all contingencies which may arise in the future arise in the future.

CROWDS CAME AND WENT.

All night long the crowds came and went around the morgues where the bodies of the victims of the disaster lay. There were the heads of families, prothers, sisters, and men and women brothers, sisters, and men and women looking for those from outside cities who had been their guests. For hours they passed up and down before the long rows of the dead searching for the faces of their missing.

SORROW IN MANY HOMES.

Sorrow reigned in the residence of Dr. Frank W. Gunsalaus, the noted di-

this magazine to be defective because metal lath was used in what is known as exposed construction where heat would easily affect it. In modern fire-proof buildings this lath is buried in concrete. It was the buckling out of this metal lath and iron rods giving the impression that the galleries them-selves were falling that is belived by some contractors to have been partic

"They have gone to the Iroquois the-

some contractors to have been partly responsible for the panic. There was no criticism of he strength of the galater," was the reply. "I dropped right down on my knees,

→BEAUTIFUL AND ILL-FATED IROQUOIS.

Was the Pride of Chicago's Theatrical Public-Description of the Magnificent New Play House From Observations Made by a Member of the Deseret News Staff Who Was

Present at its Brilliant Opening Five Weeks Ago.

"A Deseret News representative who happened to be in Chicago about five weeks ago attended the opening of the Iroquois theater, which was the most important event in Chicago theatricals in many years. The opening had long been eagerly anticipated and the public appetite was only whetted by the several postponements of the event forced by the inability of the mechanics to complete the intricate and expensive decorations. When finally it was positively announced that the Iroquois would be christened by a performance of "Mr. Bluebeard" "next Wednesday" (this being Monday) there was a frantic rush for seats and the result was the greatest "crush" audience that ever attended a theatrical performance in Chicago, except in one house, the 'Auditorium, which has a much larger seating capacity. Had the tragedy of yesterday afternoon been enacted at the opening performance the death list would have been very much heavier.

The Iroquois was the pride of Chicago's theatrical public. No theater in New York excelled it in magnificence. It partook of the Mosaic, French and Roman styles of architecture, its exterior presenting a view from the distance not unlike a huge cathedral. But inside the lobbywhich, by the way, was as wide and as long as the width of Main street-the visitor might imagine himself in a pillared Roman temple. In other parts, the theater was Colonial in appearance, but there was always a harmony refreshing to the eye. The furnishings and decorations of the Iroquois baffled description. To walk through the place was in itself worth the price of a ticket.

The strangest part of all was the strong belief that the Iroquois with its many exits was the safest of all theaters. McVickers theater has always had as its motto-"40 exits-the safest theater in the world," and it was the boast of Will J. Davis that he would yet make Jacob Litt, proprietor of McVickers, "drag in that sign."

Snydicate people, with Davis and Harry Powers, own the Iroquois, as well as the Illinois and Powers theaters, two other first-class Chicago houses. The old adage that trouble never comes singly was illustrated when only three nights ago the Illinois was forced to close on account of Jerome Sykes' death, and directly on top of that comes the Iroquois horror. While it seems crude to mention the financial loss in the same breath, it is also a curious fact that Klaw and Erlanger own the two attractions which closed the two houses, and doubtless have lost the "Mr. Bluebeard" production, which cost not less than \$150,000. It consisted veritably of acres of scenery and costumes, 340 people being on the stage in one scene.

Rather an interesting point has arisen among theatrical men regarding the responsibility for the Chicago disaster. It is stated in the dispatches that the Iroquois was in an unfinished condition, inasmuch as the fire escape ladders had not been put in; and that the platforms were not connected and therefore escape by way of the usual means under such appalling conditions was entirely cut off. If this is the case, doubtless there will be tremendous damage suits against the owners of the theater for the terrible loss of life.

The interesting point, among professional people, at least, is here. The Iroquois was owned jointly by Klaw and Erlanger, Nixon and Zimmerman, Will J. Davis and Harry Powers, the latter two holding only small parcels of stock. If the usual thing happens the wealthiest owners will be compelled to satisfy the indemnities and certainly Klaw and Erlanger will have to bear the greatest burden. "K. & E." means the syndicate, which is generally unpopular in theatrical circles. One visiting manager declared today: "I hope it breaks Klaw and Erlanger absolutely. It would be just retribution for the manner in which they have drawn the cinches on the rest of the profession for the past 15 years."

MAYOR HARRISON INFORMED.

A telegram was sent to Mayor Harrison informing him of the fire and i 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, now converted into the Northwestern 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 at tend 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 frailties of His 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 these houses are seen as the second second second second second the second second second second second second second second the second s 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. Both clergymen administered absolu-tion, 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 stethescope for them listened with his stethescope for her heart beats. 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 doc-tors labored over a boy. After ten minutes he opened his eyes. "Watcher doin' to me?" he question-

eđ. "Taking care of you," said the doc-

"Tell us your name." "I ain't goin' to have any one tellin' my mother about this of me. Im 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 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 hap-pened I do not know, but she ran back into the theater and out under the stage through the stage entrance."

A COOL HEADED MANAGER. One of the largest audiences ever seen in the Garrick theater, which is on the same street as the Iroquois, less than one block distant, sat in complete ignor-ance of the awful tragedy being enact-ed 200 feet away. When the intermission between acts came, Manager Schu-bert ordered the doors closed and refused to allow any one to pass in or out, as he was determined that no CAUSE OF FIRE UNKNOWN.

The accounts of the origin of the fire are conflicting, and none are certain, but the best reason given is that an electric wire on the lower part of a piece of drop scenery suddenly broke and was grounded.

The fire spread rapidly toward the front of the stage, causing the members of the chorus who were then engaged in the performance to flee to the wings with screams of terror.

ASBESTOS CURTAIN STUCK.

The fire in itself up to this time was not serious and possibly could have been checked had not the asbestos curtain failed to work. As soon as the fire was discovered Eddie Foy, the chief come-dian of the company, shouted to lower dian of the company, should to lower the curtain, and this was immediately done. It descended about half way and then suck

The fire thus was given practically a flue through which a strong draft was setting, aided by the doors, which had been thrown open in the front of the theater. With a roar and a bound the theater. With a roar and a bound over flames shot through the opening over the heads of the people on the first floor, and reaching clear up to those in theor, and reaching clear up to those in the first balcony, caught them and burned them to death where they sat.

A TERRIFIC EXPLOSION. Immediately following the solution, pre-flames there came an explosion, pre-Immediately following this rush of sumed to be the gas reservoir, which lifted the entire roof of the theater from its walls, shattering the great

skylight into fragments. As soon as the flames first appeared beyond the curtain a man in the rear of the hall should, "Fire, fire!" and the entire audience rose as one person and made for the doors.

WHAT MANAGER DAVIS SAYS.

Will J. Davis, manager of the theater, said after the catastrophe that if the people had remained in their seats and had not been excited by the cry of fire not a single life would have been

This, however, s contradicted by the statements of the firemen, who found numbers of people sitting in their seats, their faces directed toward the stage. as if the performance were still going as it the performance were still going on. It is the opinion of the firemen that these persons had been sufficient at once by the flow of gas which came from behind the asbestos curtain.

THIRTEEN HUNDRED PRESENT. As near as can be estimated about

MESSAGE FROM

