



CENTRAL PARK AFTER THE FIRE.



THE FIRE IN MADISON STREET.

This dreadful tragedy was due to the careless use of gasoline by plumbers, who were engaged in thawing out frozen pipes. They were at work in a small unoccupied room communicating with the hallway at the foot of the stairs in the first story. The windows were closed, and the outside shutters were shut together. The men had also closed the door. They had just filled the gasoline machine, or lamp, with which the pipes were thawed, from a can holding about two quarts, and in doing so a little of the liquid was spilled upon the floor. The vapour that arose from it, it is supposed, caught fire from a candle that stood near, and quick as a flash the flames spread to the lamp and the can. It all occurred so quickly that neither of the men can tell exactly how it happened. The assistant dropped the can, and the plumber picked it up all ablaze, and ran to the window with it. The window would not open, and he followed the boy into the hallway. The door from the hallway into the alley would not open, and the boy crossed the hallway, and opening the door that led into a saloon in the front building, dashed through into Madison street, shouting "Fire!" The plumber had dropped the blazing can, and, with his clothing all afire, followed his helper. Persons passing in the street gathered about him as he reached the sidewalk, and aided in extinguishing the flames with which he was covered. After some delay a fire alarm was sent in, and in ten or twelve minutes from the time the fire started, the engines were on the spot. In that time, however, the fire had done most of its deadly work. There were seven families in the tenement-house. The stairway was in the middle of the building, separating the apartments of the respective families. Each apartment consisted of three rooms. One window from each apartment opened on a balcony, through the centre of which a stationary iron ladder extended from the eaves to the first story. The only other means of escape was up the stairway to the roof. The density of the smoke and the swift spreading of the flames barred both ways of exit before a majority of the tenants knew their danger. Those who lost their lives were all in the fourth and fifth stories. Below them the balcony floorings were ablaze, and past their doors the flames roared like a blast-furnace. Ten lives were lost, and there were some very remarkable escapes. The building was constructed on plans approved by the Building Department, and was provided with the fire-escapes that the law required; but the fire had no sooner spread through the doorway from the little room where it started, than the draught through the hallway sucked it upward to the stories above.



SCENE AT THE FIRE.



THE DEAD IN THE CORRIDOR OF THE STATION HOUSE.



PLACE WHERE THE FIRE ORIGINATED