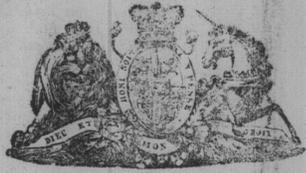


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(From the New-York Star, Dec. 17.)

AWFUL CALAMITY.

Since the conflagration of the City of Moscow, and the great fire of London, a more severe and destructive fire has not occurred than the fatal one with which the most valuable part of our city was visited, and which, even at this time, is now raging with violence.

Several hundred valuable Stores with their contents, and more than THIRTY MILLIONS of Property have been destroyed, including that noble pile, the Merchants' Exchange, together with the Old Ships is destroyed; even the piers on Post Office, and a variety of other buildings. To obtain an accurate account of this calamity, at a time when we are surrounded with smoking ruins and falling walls—with the streets filled with rich goods of all descriptions, and guards and patrols watching and protecting the property saved—is almost impossible. Most of the Insurance Companies which have underwritten on this property must be ruined; and the train of calamities which must ensue may be imagined, not described.

The fire broke out last evening, in the street of Messrs. G. & Andrews, in Merchant street. This is a narrow crooked street in the rear of the Exchange, formerly called Exchange street, and was altogether occupied by dry good merchants, auctioneers, &c. &c. The weather was intensely cold—the thermometer below zero—the wind blowing a gale, and the hydrants frozen, so that all the efforts that could be made to arrest the progress of the dreadful element were in vain. The fire burned with such fierceness that in 20 minutes the whole block was in flames, which extended to Pearl street, burnt both sides, then burnt through to Water street, Old Slip.

Pearl street, from Wall street to Old slip, on both sides, all destroyed.

Water street, from Wall street to Old slip, all destroyed.

Front street, from Wall street to Old slip, all destroyed.

South street, from Wall street to Old slip, all destroyed.

It is impossible to say how many lives have been lost. We hope for the best, but from the fact that so many stores and offices being on fire at the same time; the owners and clerks rushing on to save their property, books and papers—the falling of walls and timbers—and more than one hundred thousand people of all classes and conditions, moving in dense masses in every direction, we apprehend that many unfortunate persons have suffered. An immense quantity of valuable goods was carried into the Exchange, and into the Garden street Church for safety, but were subsequently destroyed. Several of the shipping were on fire, and hands could not be found to cut them loose. The firemen were soon exhausted while they were both shining on the with the severity of the labour and the deep blue concave, with an intensity of piercing cold; and volunteers were called for in every direction, up to the hour of going to press; the extent of damages their glory into the heap of chaos beneath could not be ascertained; the fire is still burning on South street, and from the direction of the wind we hope it will be arrested by the river.

The Common Council had a meeting and took measures for the public safety. The marines from the Navy Yard and troops from the island are promptly on duty.

Several houses were blown up by the marines, by order of the Mayor, with powder brought from the Navy Yard, which was necessary to arrest the progress of the flames.

To enumerate the particular individual losses is impossible—as an example, one merchant had in silks alone 300,000 dollars, which were destroyed—another 200,000 dollars, in teas and brandies. Many who were prosperous and happy last night are now ruined, utterly ruined.

It is impossible to tell what quantity of goods in bond are destroyed. Every item of property between Counties and Merchants' Exchange, together with the Old Ships is destroyed; even the piers on South street were on fire at 11 o'clock this morning.

It is computed that a quarter of a mile square of brick and mortar in the first ward, is entirely levelled to the ground.

At 7 p.m. yesterday, the thermometer had sunk to below zero and so continued the whole night, and was at zero this morning at 7 o'clock. In fact, a great part of this desolating and truly awful scene, is to be imputed to the intense degree of cold, by which the flames burnt with greater violence, and every one was in a measure incapacitated from rendering that assistance that he otherwise could have given. Many groups of poor women and children, residing in the vicinity of Broad and Beaver streets, and almost without clothing, except the blankets in which they were wrapped, were seen shivering near the heaps of furniture every where strewn in such masses through these streets.

All business is nearly suspended. The sun, as it broke dimly through the lurid clouds of black smoke, which hung like a funeral pall over all the lower part of the city, seemed, by its blood red glare, to betoken some portentous and dreadful event. Many were sensibly struck with this phenomenon, which added to the desolating scene of horror, shooting flames, crumbling walls, crushing timbers, impenetrable clouds of smoke, which rendered almost totally impassable the entire quarter where the conflagration was burning, presented an assemblage of heartrending objects which, even to the most indifferent spectator, was sickening and agonizing to behold.

Among the ruins, not the least to be lamented, was the loss of that splendid statue of Hamilton, which towering brightly amidst the sea of flames that dashed against its crackling base, cast a mournful glance on the terrific scene and then fell nobly, perishing under the crush of the edifice of which it had been as it were, the tutelary genius.

The handsome Church of the Rev. Dr. Matthews, Garden street, long while resisted the mass of flames in their course towards Broad street. The bright gold ball and star above it on the highest point of the spire, gleamed brilliantly, and still loose. The firemen were both shining on the with the severity of the labour and the deep blue concave, with an intensity of piercing cold; and volunteers were called for in every direction, up to the hour of going to press; the extent of damages their glory into the heap of chaos beneath could not be ascertained; the fire is still burning on South street, and from the direction of the wind we hope it will be arrested by the river.

A man was caught in the act of setting fire to the house at the corner of Stone and Broad streets. It is scarcely possible to conceive, that their could exist such a fiend as this in human shape, without supposing him to be either a maniac or drunk with liquor. It would seem, however, to have been done with a

diabolical design, when it is considered that the fearful apprehensions of the whole of that part of the city were directed to this point lest the fire would cross it and reach the battery.

Awful as the loss is, we must not suppose that the business operations of the whole city are ruined. On the contrary, deeply as the losses may be, we shall, with the blessings of God, be able to get on and sustain our credit.

(From the N. York Star, Dec 19.)

Things look much better to-day than yesterday. The spirits of the sufferers are beginning to revive, and their energies exerted and properly directed. The loss is probably from 10 to 12 millions, not more. Many of the insurance companies will be able to pay in full. It must be recollected that last season was a most profitable year—many houses cleared 80,000 dollars, and there are but few who will lose more than their profits of last year. No bonds will be put in suit without orders from Washington; and we are prepared to look for an extension of credit for one or more years, by a mere payment of interest. The Banks are doing all that can be safely done; and great as the loss is, we are certain that an active and vigorous revival of business will soon be manifested, and in a year we shall hear no more of the loss. It is believed that not one wholesale grocer will fail, though the losses of this important class of merchants are very heavy. All that is to be done at present is to afford relief to the Insurance Companies, to enable them to pay the sufferers forthwith. What remains to be done, must be done quickly; and with the alacry character of our citizens, their energy, their position, resources and enterprise, we shall rise from the ashes revived and regenerated; and with application, caution, and economy, things will soon get into their old, and successful channels.

In that usually large space, called Hannover square, where every body thought the goods piled there would be perfectly safe, there was accumulated from the stock of all the French stores a mass of silks, satins, laces, cartons of dresses, gloves, capes, cashmere shawls, and the richest kinds of fancy articles, forming a pile of sixty feet wide by twenty-five feet in height, or nearly one hundred feet square. In a few minutes afterwards a gust of flame, like a streak of lightning, came from the N.E. corner building, and shooting across the square, blown by the strong wind, and set fire to the entire mass, which in a few moments consumed to cinders, and then communicated to the houses opposite.

The weather was so intensely cold that the firemen were compelled to take the fine blankets saved, and cutting a hole through them, convert them into temporary cloaks, in which they were seen at daylight dragging home their engines; many of them so exhausted by fatigue that they were asleep as they walked. One entire company, thus accounted for, had artificial wreaths, and bunches of artificial flowers, of the richest kind, in their caps, taken from the wreck of matter, and presenting a very singular contrast with begrimed faces and jaded appearances.

(From the Florida Herald, Dec. 5.)

INDIAN AFFAIRS.—On Sunday last an express arrived from Camp King, bringing information that one of the principal chiefs of the Seminolee had been waylaid and shot by a party of the Micasukey tribe, headed by their chief Powell, under the following circumstances: Charley Omathla, had been out with a number of his friends collecting his cattle, for the sale which was to have taken place on the 1st instant, and was returning home to have a dance at his house. Charley being a little in advance of his party, was fired at and killed; nine balls were found in his body. His friends immediately retreated towards the agency, and a detachment of U. S. troops were sent to protect the family and tribe of Charley Omathla. Another express arrived on Tuesday last,—bringing the information that it had been ascertained that Powell fired the first gun at Charley, and that there was a general disposition among his tribe to create as much difficulty as they could.

Charley Omathla was one of the most intelligent and enterprising of the emigrating party, and in fact of the whole nation. We have received the following notice from the agent, Gen. Thompson, for insertion:

TO THE PUBLIC.

The Seminole Indians, hostile to emigration, have, for the purpose of embarrassing the execution of the Treaty of Payne's Landing, concluded in 1832, murdered Charley Omathla, the most intelligent and enterprising Chief in the nation. They threatened to shoot any one who shall attempt to surrender Cattle according to the Treaty. The Indians in the northern part of the nation, friendly to emigration, are panic struck, and will not attempt to attend the contemplated sales. Under these circumstances, an indefinite postponement of the sales is unavoidable.

We copy from the Norfolk Beacon the following information from the West Coast of America, furnished by Captain Valette of the United States ship Fairfield from Valparaiso.

EQUATOR.—The political affairs in the state of Equator, had greatly improved. Gen. Don Vincente Rocafuerte was elected President. Gen. Flores had retired and the best understanding was had with the President and peace and confidence seemed restored.

CHILI.—Political affairs in Chili were in a flourishing and prosperous state.—The government is well conducted, in good credit, and popular with the people, and there appeared to be no desire or prospect of change.

The trade of Chili is yearly improving, and has now become of great importance. Valparaiso, from its geographical situation, must be more benefited than any other port. About two-thirds of the whole amount of merchandise imported to the coast is landed or transhipped to coasters from this port. The transit trade, however, was, and had been dull for several months' past, owing to the unsettled state of affairs of Peru and Bolivia.

PERU.—Political disturbances still continue. Santa Cruz was at Aqueducho, 160 leagues from Lima, with 6000 troops, marching against Salaverry, who was still