

EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE

First Reports of the Terrible Disaster That Has Befallen the City of San Francisco

—Life and Property Loss Enormous

(Special to The Daily News)

Spokane, April 18.—A great earthquake at 5:10 this morning followed by great tidal waves and uncontrollable fires have literally wrecked San Francisco, demolishing thousands of buildings, and causing loss of life which will reach into thousands.

The disaster is an awful one, more terrible than anything of the kind that has ever befallen any city in the United States.

The water mains have been wrecked and the most serious feature of the situation this evening is the devastation by fire which is sweeping the city. The firemen are vainly trying to combat the conflagration by bringing water from the bay. The latest reports at 7 p.m. are that every business block in the city, nearly destroyed, may succumb to the flames.

Chasms several feet wide have opened in the city streets.

Every railroad depot in the city is wrecked and many trains have been wrecked by sinking tracks.

One report says that the United States Pacific squadron has been sunk.

Earthquakes were being felt in diminishing force as far north as Marshfield, Oregon, and as far south as Los Angeles.

Four hundred dead have been gathered in the Mechanics' Pavilion at 11 o'clock, and others were being brought in constantly.

Further heavy earthquake shocks, which did considerable damage, came at 9:20 and 10 o'clock.

The Palace hotel, the Claus Spreckels building, 17 stories high, the Phoenix building, O'Farrell street, is burning, and all the south side of Market street, between 4th and 5th avenues is on fire and the conflagration is spreading in all directions.

Mayor Schmidt has called for every pound of dynamite in the city to fight the fire with. The city is under martial law and the ferry landings are jammed with throngs of people seeking to leave the city.

The telephone operators have been driven from the building by the spreading conflagration but are displaying great heroism and are trying to keep communication open.

One report says that the lofty Call building is burning and swaying to and fro.

The city hall, which cost \$7,000,000, is in ruins.

The district between Market and Howard streets from the bay as far west as the city hall has suffered most so far.

Oakland, April 18.—Earthquake and fire today have caused the greatest calamity California has ever known. In San Francisco alone it is estimated that one thousand persons have perished, while as many more are suffering from injuries.

The entire business portion of the city is in ruins and the flames, which owing to lack of water, cannot be checked except by the blowing up of dynamite of the buildings in their path, are still sweeping through the city to the north, impossible at present to estimate the property loss, for the extent of the conflagration cannot be told until the fire has burned itself out.

Thousands of people are homeless and many are huddled in the parks and public squares, beside the household goods they were able to save. The city is under martial law and all the downtown streets are patrolled by cavalry and infantry. Details of troops are also guarding the banks. The city is under martial law and all the downtown streets are patrolled by cavalry and infantry. Details of troops are also guarding the banks. The city is under martial law and all the downtown streets are patrolled by cavalry and infantry. Details of troops are also guarding the banks.

Over all the scene of desolation hangs a dense pall of smoke and dust.

Communication with outside towns is almost entirely cut off, but a report comes from Palo Alto that all but one house in the city has been destroyed.

The fire is reported to be spreading in all directions. The Palace and St. Francis hotels stood the shock. People flocked to the telephone offices to send messages to friends and relatives.

The greatest damage to buildings was done south of Market street, where they are mostly frame buildings. The people were asleep and rushed into the street undressed. The buildings swayed and crashed, burying many occupants.

There was no water, the water pipes being broken by the earthquake, and fire broke out all over the city.

Panics occurred in the hotels. The Lick house was badly damaged but no loss of life is reported. The Palace and St. Francis hotels stood the shock. People flocked to the telephone offices to send messages to friends and relatives.

At 10:15 the whole north end of the city was wrecked and the flames were spreading in all directions. The absence of water the fire department has resorted to the use of dynamite and buildings are being demolished in the hope of staying the conflagration.

From present indications the entire business section, both wholesale and retail, will likely fall prey to the flames, which at 10:15 were increasing in intensity, fanned by a stiff breeze. Unless the wind comes up from the west and blows the flames toward the bay, nothing can stop the destruction of the city. At 11 o'clock communication with the outside world was cut off, the employees of the Postal Telegraph company, the only company having a wire outside the city up to that hour, being obliged to vacate the office on account of the fire.

The damage up to 11 o'clock was estimated at \$400,000,000. The city hall, which cost \$7,000,000, was completely destroyed. Three miles of railroad sank out of sight between Suisun and Benicia.

San Francisco, April 18.—10:30 a.m.—The facts so far as known at this hour may be summarized as follows. Hundreds of people killed and property lost. The city is under martial law. The city hall has been converted into a temporary hospital and already several hundred victims of the disaster are being cared for by a corps of volunteer surgeons. The postoffice has entirely collapsed. The fish market at the corner of Clay and Market streets, has collapsed, killing six people. Fire chief

Victims were drowned.

Severely had the earth ceased to shake when fire broke out simultaneously in many places. The fire department promptly responded to the first call for aid but it was found that the water main had been rendered useless by the underground movement. Eased by a light breeze, the flames quickly spread and soon several blocks were seen to be doomed. Then dynamite was resorted to and these explosions added to the terror of the people. All efforts to stay the fire, however, proved futile.

The south side of Market street from 9th street to the bay was soon ablaze, the fire covering a belt of two blocks wide. On this the main thoroughfare of the city, located many of the finest edifices of the city, including the Parrott, Flood, Call, Examiner and Montadock, the Palace and Grand hotels, and numerous wholesale houses. At the same time the commercial establishments and banks north of Market street were burning. The burning district on this side of the city extended from Sanson street to the water front and from Market street to the Broadway. Fires also broke out in the Mission, and the entire city seemed to be in flames.

San Francisco, April 18.—At 10:15 a.m. the fire extends from the Ferry to Front street on one side and pretty much all south of Market street and to about 7th street, with sporadic fires in the north section. There is no way of estimating the number of dead. It may be hundreds. It is almost impossible to learn details of the catastrophe. In general it may be said that the district lying between Market and Howard streets from the bay to the city hall has suffered most so far.

San Francisco, April 18.—9 a.m.—In the confusion which reigns everywhere there is almost impossible to learn details of the catastrophe. In general it may be said that the district lying between Market and Howard streets from the bay to the city hall has suffered most so far.

San Francisco, April 18.—8 a.m.—The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames.

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San Francisco, April 18.—4 a.m.—The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames.

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San Francisco, April 18.—1 a.m.—The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames.

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Sullivan and his wife have been badly injured. The Grand Opera house is burning fiercely. A ten story building at 10th and Market streets is burning.

The opera house is apparently doomed as well as other big buildings between the theatre and St. Patrick's church. Many people are fleeing from the theatre and taking to the streets.

This course was made by the sinking of a three-mile section of the railroad track between Suisun and Benicia.

The fire began at 22nd street and is rapidly moving eastward. Should the wind increase it may sweep the entire southern section of the city.

At Oakland, across the bay, five persons were killed by the collapse of the Empire building.

The Gore block at the junction of Market and Pine streets is in flames and spreading rapidly and the city is in flames.

The newspaper having had their power cut off have combined and will issue one paper from the office of the Chronicle, which has its own power.

There was a great rush at the different banks by depositors who wanted to draw out their deposits, but the banks decided to keep their doors closed.

By 8 a.m. the city hall has been badly wrecked. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames.

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dey, Spear, Main, Beal and Fremont. The Western Union has received a report from Sacramento that the Southern Pacific will attempt to get a train into San Francisco starting from Sacramento and taking a roundabout route to Vallejo, which is on the bay on San Pablo. From that place the passengers will be taken by boat to San Francisco. This course was made by the sinking of a three-mile section of the railroad track between Suisun and Benicia.

The 1st California army 200 strong, two companies, have been detailed to patrol duty on Ellis street. Two more companies are patrolling Broadway in the morning. Early in the morning, the prisoners confined in the city prison on the fifth floor of the hall of justice were transferred to the basement of the structure. Later they were removed to the Broadway jail, and if necessary they will be taken to the branch county jail on Mission road.

Commissioner Myron, announced at noon that the 80 old fire insurance companies interested had decided to pay dollar for dollar to everyone insured with them. The companies will not discriminate between fire and earthquake and every one insured will be paid to the extent of the loss. But two of the companies affected are Pacific coast concerns.

The seismic vibrations caused an unexpected clicking in the instrument. A large section of the city has already been wiped out.

The spread of the conflagration in San Francisco was further detailed in the following dispatch:

"Fire burning north of Broadway as far as Grand street. Everything is in flames in the section lying between 8th street and the water front and southward between Market and Mission streets. There are no present means of stopping the fire."

Impossible to estimate number of dead. Oakland, April 18.—2:25 p.m.—The latest report from San Francisco is that the situation is becoming desperate. The fire is still raging furiously in all quarters of the city. The Postal Telegraph office is likely to go at any time.

New York, April 18.—The Postal Telegraph company received the following from San Francisco this afternoon:

"We had to vacate offices, the fire is gaining rapidly. The Palace hotel has been badly wrecked. The hotels near Third and Market streets were badly shaken up but there seems to have been no loss of life. The Call and Examiner buildings, as well as the Western Union building have been badly wrecked. The large department stores in this section of the city are in flames. The earthquake occurred at an hour when they were empty and no loss of life was reported. Further east on Market street, the fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

Stockton, Calif., April 18.—The most terrible disaster in the history of San Francisco occurred at 5:13 this morning. An earthquake shock so violent and prolonged that it was felt all over the peninsula in some degree. The damage being from cracks in the walls, toppled chimneys and cornices, to complete destruction of buildings. The shock rocked the earth for fully ten minutes. It was like a catclaw. People cried out to each other, like the coming of the end of the world. The shock was felt north and south in a succession of creases and apparently renewed shocks, with a twisting movement that threw people and things into the air. The number killed will probably run 200 and the injured ten times that number. Experts estimate the financial loss from fire at more than \$100,000,000. The fire is under martial law, and precautionary measures have been taken to prevent disorder and looting. Four thieves were shot by soldiers this afternoon for looting. The soldiers have orders to shoot without warning any person acting in a suspicious manner. The city hall has been burned, also many of the principal business blocks and the hall of justice is threatened.

Measures have already been taken for the relief of the destitute. They will be taken to the city hall, where the public squares. The sheds over the city hall have been completely destroyed and thousands of tons of coal went into the street. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

The town of San Rafael, despite its own troubles, has sent a detachment of 200 men to San Francisco. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

The fire swept down the streets so rapidly that it was practically impossible to do anything in its way. It reached the Grand opera house on Mission street and in a moment had burned through the roof. The Metropolitan opera company from New York had just opened its season there and were reduced to a few scanty and costumes. The fire swept from building to building, and the fire department was unable to contain it. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

Chief Dignan in an interview, said: "The police are absolutely unable to cope with a disaster of this extent, and the soldiers are not a godsend. Ghoulies are already at work."

"This was 7 o'clock in the morning. The fire continued: 'It will require all the energy and vigilance of the police and soldiers to keep order and do the work of rescue.'"

The flames, fanned by the rising breeze, swept down the main wholesale business district within 100 feet of the Union ferry depot, the high tower of which stood at a dangerous angle. The big wholesale grocery establishment, the guests leaving in haste, many of them with only the clothing they were in. Finding that the hotel, being surrounded on all sides by streets, was likely to remain immune, many returned and made arrangements for removal of their belongings, though little could be taken away owing to the utter confusion. At about 8 o'clock the Parrott building, in which were located the chambers of the state supreme court, the lower floors being devoted to an immigration department store, was ruined, though its massive walls were not at all destroyed. A little further down Market street the academy of science, the book building and the history building were burned to much timber. Sparks carried across the wide street, ignited the

Palace building, and the army headquarters of the department of California, were burned. Still nearer the bay, the service, along the docks, the fire took the Riato building, a handsome skyscraper, and converted scores of solid business blocks into smouldering piles of bricks and mortar. The fire department was unable to contain it. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

Many thousands congregated and witnessed the awful scene. Great masses of flames rose high in the heavens or rushed down some narrow street, joining midway between the sidewalks and making a horizontal chimney of the former passageway. The dense smoke that arose from the entire business district could have been seen for miles out at sea. Occasionally as some drug house or place stored with chemicals was reached, the most fantastic effects were produced by the colored flames and smoke which rolled out against the darker background.

San Francisco, April 18.—The following is an incomplete list of the principal buildings destroyed or damaged:

Call building, entirely destroyed; Chas. Spreckels building, gutted by flames; Hearst building, collapsed; new Chronicle building, hardly damaged at all; White House, walls badly crumpled; all plate glass windows smashed; every piece of stock in building removed before 9 a.m.; Winchester hotel, 2nd street, totally destroyed; Grand Opera house, entirely destroyed; Spreckels building and stables on Van Ness avenue badly damaged; St. Luke's Episcopal church, Van Ness avenue, will have to be pulled down; Mechanics' library building, Post street, corner, fell, building slightly damaged; Crocker building, Market and Post, slightly damaged; Lick house, walls and rear of building largely caved in; Upham building, Pine and Battery, totally destroyed, loss \$500,000; fire house adjoining California hotel on Bush street, chief Sullivan and wife, sleeping in engine house, severely injured by bricks crashing through roof from hotel; California hotel, Bush street, upper walls collapsing and upper floors wrecked; the building in course of construction to be occupied by the Hamman baths, will have to be rebuilt; it is located on Post street near the Olympic club, the walls are badly warped and twisted and the roof has fallen in; San Francisco Gas and Electric company, Post street, slightly damaged; San Francisco hotel, entirely destroyed; highly crumpled and seamed; but not seriously damaged; Pacific Union club, Post and Stockton streets, front damaged and floors in rear war; St. Dominic's church, Piety street, total loss; the interior of this church is wrecked and there are large masses in the walls, the structure will have to be pulled down; the parish house in the same block is a partial wreck; loss to parish about \$30,000; the ornamental top on St. Dunstan's, the apartment house at Sutter street, corner of Van Ness avenue, fell into the street; the Concedia club building, on Van Ness avenue, has several floors in the side and rebuilding; the city of the hotel Grandia, badly damaged.

San Francisco, April 18.—4 p.m.—The latest reports at police headquarters show the entire district bounded by Vallejo, Howard, East and Sanson streets, embracing practically the entire wholesale base of the city, has been completely clean by the fire. The district, bounded by 2nd, Market, 8th and Folson streets, has been devastated. In the latter district are included some of the city's finest and most substantial buildings. The area covered by the flames up to the present time is about eight square miles, or seven times the area of the city. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames. The damage already inflicted is estimated roughly at \$400,000,000. The fire is spreading rapidly and the city is in flames."

San Francisco, April 18.—In the confusion which reigns everywhere it is almost impossible to learn details of the disaster caused by the earthquake explosion this morning. In general it may be said that the district lying between Market and Howard streets from the bay as far west as the city hall has suffered most so far.

The hotels in the vicinity of 3rd and Market streets were badly shaken up, but there seemed to have been no loss of life there. The Call and Examiner buildings, as well as the Western Union building, have been badly wrecked. The large department stores in this section of the city are in flames. The earthquake occurred at an hour when they were empty and no loss of life is reported.

Further east on Market street toward the ferry slips, a section occupied by cheap lodging houses and hotels, and here it is that the loss of life is reported to be very great, although the exact extent of it could not be ascertained at this hour.

Fires are burning in a number of places along Market street, and the main having burst, the authorities have resorted to dynamite to check the progress of the flames. The residence section of the city, while no bulletins report a loss of life or serious damage.

As reports come in the magnitude of the disaster grows. Fires are raging in all directions and people are moving out of the downtown sections. The loss of life may reach into the hundreds. Millions of dollars worth of property has been destroyed.

The Valencia hotel, between 17th and 18th streets on Valencia street, a five-story frame building, completely destroyed, burying 75 people in the debris, only the top story remaining intact.

A house on 34th street near the Valencia street, was wrecked, killing two people. Many of the fire houses are damaged so badly it