



The onetime doorway of business.

and as volume after volume of fire and smoke came pouring out, it was at once evident that the building was jammed to the ceiling with goods of a most inflammable and combustible character.

Here within eight feet of this raging conflagration fifteen men from the Bay Street fire-hall pluckily kept two streams of water playing upon the flames. At times the water would be played directly against the roaring, seething volume of red, which surged over towards the fifteen feet of space intervening between the two buildings, licking with its forked tongues the water-soaked masonry. The high wind and the draught from the fire drove the water scalding hot back into the very faces of the firemen. The streams would be alternately turned on either building. For about two hours this great fight continued, and to thousands watching the struggle it seemed that the destroying element must conquer, as it was felt that no human being could live in the heat which the flames threw out. A section of five men desisted long enough to carry a length of hose

into the receiving house, and from a window a stream was soon playing on the fire. The other section however held to their posts.

On every hand could be heard "Isn't it a plucky fight?" So intense was the heat that the great walls of the doomed building fairly surged and swayed. Just at a juncture when it seemed that all hope of retarding the spread of the fire must be abandoned, an ominous crackling sound was heard, and a moment later the whole west side of the McMahon, Broadfield building fell outward with a resounding crash.

To the thousands of spectators it was a most awe-inspiring and dramatic incident. Just a moment before the whole neighborhood was illuminated by the most brilliant of lights, then there was a great crash, and as if by magic all was in darkness.

With the fall of this wall the great draught which was driving the fire towards the Customs building was withdrawn, and the flames, unimprisoned, wasted their energies in the air. This