The Lindell Hotel Destroyed-Loss Nearly Two Million Dollars-The Fire Breaks Out in the Roof-Its Origin Not Known-The Engines Powerless to Arrest the Flames-Several Lives Reported Lost-Wild Confusion in the Hotel, Etc.

From the St. Louis Republican, 1st. It is with the profoundest feelings of regret

that we prepare to record the particulars of the deplorable catastrophe announced in the head lines above. The Lindell Hotel is destroyed by fire. That magnificent architectural pile, one of the finest of its character in the world, and which only yesterday was the chief adornment of our city, is now an enormous mass of blackened ruins. It is almost impossible to realize the fact from the bare announcement. Yet even while we write (12 P. M. Saturday) the midnight heavens are illumined with the glare of the burning, and the whole city quivers with excitement and consternation.

THE ALARM.

The fire, according to the most reliable accounts, first made its appearance on the roof towards the southwest corner. It is said to have commenced in one of the servant's rooms, on the seventh story, but we could ascertain no definite particulars on this point. It is reported to have been discovered first by some of the employes of the hotel, who conveyed the startling intelligence to the office. When the announcement was first made that the building was on fire, it did not create that wild and sudden excitement which generally takes place under such circumstances. This was attributable to the fact that, the fire being on the highest story, there was little or no evidence of it in the lower part of the building. It is probable, also, that the report was at first discredited. This was about 84 or quarter to nine o'clock. Everything was going on throughout the vast building in the usual manner. The billiard and sitting rooms were crowded with guests and visitors; supper was not yet over; the large hall wore its usual animated appearance, and the lights in nearly every window in the front of the splendid building told that the almost innumerable apartments had occupants within. But in a few minutes a wild change swept swiftly through the crowded hotel. The appalling cry of "fire," at first whispered in undertones, began to be spoken aloud. The hurrying to and fro of employes, the agitation visible in the faces of the proprietors and others who returned hurriedly from visiting the upper stories, soon attracted attention and spread the exciting intelligence. But all doubt as to the fact was ended by the appearance of the flames bursting through the roof and showing through some of the windows on the upper story. Then the excitement gathered on the street with the sound of many voices, and the wildest consternation spread from room to room, along the wide corridors, and from floor to floor throughout the enormous hotel. The scene which ensued baffles all description, and yet there was not that desperate panic which is so generally associated with such occasions. Whatever efforts to conceal the fact may at first have been thought necessary by the gentlemen connected with the hotel, in order to prevent a widespread and unnecessary alarm, were at once abandoned when danger became evident, and measures were immediately taken for the safety of the occupants. But the alarm of fire needs but little propers gation by messengers. The trample and rush of hurrying feet and the roar of voices soon acquainted every inhabitant of the building in the most distant apartments with the news that the hotel was on fire, and then the frantic rush and scramble for escape commenced.

Owing to the early hour but a small portion of the guests had retired to their rooms, and hence there was not the crowd that there would have been had the fire occurred later in the night, but still the corridors and stairways poured forth a throng of bewildered and affrighted people, that streamed down to the lower floors, while the building rang with the shouts of men and the screams of scared

women and children.

As far, however, as the loss of human life was concerned, there was but little danger; the fire was at this time only on the roof of the building, and there was no obstacle to prevent escape, and all the people succeeded in getting out in safety. There were several sick persons in the hotel, who were carried out and conveyed to some of the houses in the vicinity. The alarm was conveyed to the Fire Department from the Missouri engine house on Washington avenue, and the various engines arrived without much delay.

THE PROGRESS OF THE PIRE.

The engines, when they went to work, proved powerless to stay the progress of the flames. The great height of the building rendered it almost impossible to throw water fairly on the roof, and even when this was accomplished it was of no avail, as it was evident the fire was spreading underneath where it could not be reached. The firemen carried the hose through the hall and up the stairs towards the upper stories, hoping to be able to play directly on the flames, but apparently were unable to do so, as no effect was per-

The large tanks of water constructed mainly for such an emergency in the upper story of the hotel were also of no practical use, for what reason we could not learn, and in fact we could not ascertain that the elaborate system of hose connections in the hotel was brought into use at all. Consequently the flames spread on all sides with great flerce-

ness and rapidity. A little before 10 o'clock they had seized upon the cupola in the centre of the roof, and completely enveloping the sides, made it resemble a twisted column of fire. Still, for nearly an hour the fire was confined to one section of the roof, and there were many who laughed at the idea that the whole building would be burned. It was a painful sight to watch the advance of the flery destroyer, and at the same time notice the utter uselessness of the efforts made to retard it. Gradually the fire gathered in power and intensity, and spread itself abroad all over the roof. Volumes of inky smoke began to issue from the windows of the seventh story, and little ribbons of flame flap around the heavy cornices

About half-past 10 o'clock the whole top of the great hotel was on fire, but the flames were principally developed on the west and east sides of the building near the cornice.

The conflagration at this point presented a most unusual appearance. From the sixth story downward, the hotel presented its ordimary aspect; the lights were still burning in the rooms, and there was neither flame nor smoke to be seen. But from the broad plane

The extension of the fire downward was gradual. On the Sixth street side the flames ran down the elevator, and seemed on the third story, but their progress appeared to be slow. As they spread over the roof, the cornices on the east and west sides commenced burning, and large fragments came thundering down on the streets, causing considerable danger to firemen and others.

It is said that as early as half-past 9 o'clock the Chief of the Fire Department announced that the building could not be saved, but it was not for more than an hour after that that the fact became apparent to the spectators. The fire then began to work downwards, and every moment gathered in fury. About halfpast 11 o'clock the flames were bursting through all the upper windows. From room ts room they passed; gathering strength every moment, until the whole building-no longer on the roof, but in the interior, was a blazing pile of fire. The scene at this time was of a character which none who witnessed will ever forget. The huge building looked like a vast furnace burning with intolerable heat and fury. The countless windows gave insight to a whirling vortex of fire that streamed up with a windlike rushing sound, sweeping into the still midnight air a perfect avalanche of sparks and flery particles that were scattered far and near. From the breaking cornice came showers of blazing fragments that strewed the streets with living fire; and every moment, from the inside of the building was heard the crash of breaking timbers and falling partitions. The streets, as far as the eye could reach, were a dense mass of humanity; and the "sea of upturned faces," showing in the red glare, looked as if countless multitudes were watching some dreadful catastrophe which appalled and afflicted all.

PALLING OF THE WALLS.

At about 11 o'clock it became evident that ome of the walls could not stand much onger, and the police commenced clearing a wider space on all sides around the burning building. The crowds swayed slowly back into the darker streets, and again pressed on the lines with upturned faces full of interest and wonderment. Now and then, at the falling and crashing of a floor or staircase, numbers were seized with a panic, and endeavored to rush away on a "double quick," but soon turned, and their gaze became again fastened in the scene with a sort of weird fascination. Pyramids of flame shot up from the roof to a great height; fiery tongues lapped around the cornices, and volumes of devouring fire poured forth from every window in the vast edifice. The air was still, and huge clouds of dark smoke (in which shone millions of sparks, like golden stars) hung over the scene. At every crash a column of blacker smoke shot upward, soon to be painted by the red glare.

The excitement was great, and the people awaited with intense interest the crumbling of the walls, which seemed inevitable. The light rendered distinct the skeleton of the interior. Partition walls were falling every moment, and all was one grand illumination from the basement to the roof. The Fire Wardens, firemen, and policemen flitted around in the immediate vicinity like demons in the bottomless pit. So they appeared to the spectators in the streets and on the housetops. At length there was a great crash in the centre near the main entrance, which filled the whole street (Washington avenue) with fire and smoke. There was a cry that the walls were falling. The whole east end on Sixth street, with a portion of Washington avenue front, swayed, toppled, and fell with a tremendous crash, which shook the buildings all around. This happened about 114 o'clock. The interest was now concentrated on the Seventh street wall. It must soon succumb. Some of the back walls on the Green street side had , and every particle of the wood work was rapidly being consumed. At about 12 o'clock the middle portion of the west wall crumbled down, a shapeless mass of ruins, and the fire now lighted up a scene of completed

It was rumored that several persons had been lost by the falling of the Sixth street front, but we presume it was without foundation, as the street had been effectually cleared of spectators half an hour previous to the crash of the wall. When we left the scene nearly the whole of the Washington avenue front was standing, but the fire had consumed everything combustible about the building. About the last thing that remained was a pair of lace curtains, which fluttered in a thirdstory window, on the Seventh street and Washington avenue corner, when everything else appeared to have been swept away.

INCIDENTS. As might be expected, during the progress of the fire many curious and noteworthy incidents occurred. Thieves were, of course, on the ground, and plied their occupation actively. A number of arrests were made by

In the hasty removal of luggage and furniture of all kinds not a few articles were lost.

occurred.

the police, and not a few scuffles, etc.,

SUPPOSED LOSS OF LIFE. It is not definitely ascertained that during the progress of the terrible conflagration a single life has been lost. There were rumors on the subject, but we could not trace them to any authentic source.

As the fire reached down to the first story, a number of explosions took place at intervals, whether from gas or caused by confined air, we do not know. It is said that when one of these explosions occurred, two men were throwing out goods from a second story window near Sixth street, and that they disappeared immediately after, but whether or not they escaped we are unable to ascertain.

It is indeed to be hoped that the greatness of the disaster is not to be still further increased by being connected with loss of life and we are happy to say at present there is no evidence that any occurred.

LOSSES, INSURANCE, ETC. The losses by this fire will amount to between one million and a half and two millions of dollars. It is estimated that the hotel could not be rebuilt much under twelve hundred thousand dollars. There was an insurance on the building of \$310,000, mostly in local companies, but involving many of the prominent Eastern Companies. The insurance distributed in \$5000 and \$10,000 policies. The furniture was insured for about \$250,000 -one-half its value. Is We are not yet able to make out a list of the Insurance Companies

suffering by the calamity. The hotel property was owned by Edgar Ames and the representatives of Henry Ames, subject to a lien of \$250,000, held by the Boatmen's Savings Institution. Both interests will, we suppose, come out without much actual sacrifice, the loss to the former being on prospective profits. The injury by the fire to the property in the neighborhood, by reason of the depreciation of value, cannot be estimated, but it is no doubt very conside-

It is difficult at present to estimate the exact loss occasioned by the fire, but including the property lost by persons having rooms at the

of the roof rose up a pyramid of flame, roaring and crackling with irresistible force and ing, and also the value of the wines, groceries, and other stores destroyed in the cellars, the aggregate amount must reach over one million and a half of dollars.

The loss on the building is stated by a competent authority at about \$900,000, and on the urniture between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

We did not learn the value of the property saved, but it must form but an inconsiderable fraction of that destroyed. In the absence however, of definite information, we postpone a detailed estimate of the total loss for the present.

It is stated that there were about four hundred guests in the hotel at the time of the fire. It is somewhat premature as yet to speculate as to whether the Lindell will ever rise from its ashes in its original splendor and beauty. The regret caused by the destruction is universal among our citizens, and there is a widespread desire to see it rebuilt. We heard yesterday not a few of our prominent citizens freely discuss the question, and the general conviction seemed to exist that ere long some definite plan would be set on foot towards restoring to our city the grand adornment conumed by flames.

We certainly hope such may be the case. There are few of our citizens who could view with satisfaction the broad square once occupied by the stately Lindell devoted to paltry houses and stores. Should the edifice not b rebuilt, it is impossible to estimate to what extent property may depreciate in that section of the city, and the effect on the community at large. A great deal of the iron work, etc. would be available were the house to be rebuilt, and we heard it stated by a competent authority yesterday, that, with the material thus remaining, the foundation being intact, the hotel could be rebuilt for between \$600,000

This, however, is a question for those directly interested to determine. Ere long we resume the enormous ruins of the burned milding which now disfigure one of our chie thoroughfares will disappear before the recuperative energy of our citizens. But whether the Lindell rises again on its former site or not, the great fire of the night of the 30th of March, 1867, will never be forgotten. It is sad to think of the dire havor done in a single night—of the grace and beauty ruined. But, coupled with such misfortunes, there is a teaching which goes to make the community wiser, and to insure against the recurrence of such a disaster in the future.

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