

DULUTH DISASTER.

A Destructive Fire There Yesterday Morning.

THIRTEEN BUILDINGS BURNED.

Spilled Whisky Aids in Spreading the Flames Along the Street.

INEFFICIENCY OF THE FIRE DEPT.

The Loss in the Neighborhood of \$50,000; Insurance the Same.

[Special Telegram to the Globe.]

DULUTH, Minn., March 24.—Probably the most destructive fire that has ever been witnessed in Duluth started this morning about 10:30. It originated in a little building owned by Dr. Austin on Superior street between Lake avenue and First avenue west and occupied by Miss Merrill as a dress-making establishment. The fire caught from a coal stove which exploded, and quickly spread. When it reached the laces and straw goods in the place, almost in a moment the flames were leaping through the door and the window.

An alarm was sounded, but it must have been fully fifteen or twenty minutes after the alarm was given that the hose was laid. Some difficulty here arose about getting at the water tank in front of Bunnell block, and it was fully fifteen minutes more before water was thrown. Before the engine got to work the hook and ladder truck made its appearance, but was unable to accomplish very much, as the fire in the meantime had spread with such lightning rapidity, and almost as quickly as they would get to work at one building, it would take fire.

From Miss Merrill's place the fire spread to Sullivan's restaurant, also owned by Dr. Austin, and it was soon enveloped. By this time Superior street was blocked with spectators and persons who ran to and fro trying to save goods. One thing happened here which tended to spread the fire much more rapidly than it otherwise would have done, when in trying to save Sullivan's stock, some men, by some means, spilt a barrel or two of whisky on the sidewalk, and the fire getting into it, ran down as far as Poirier's corner on Lake avenue, thereby cutting off all means of saving goods except by the back doors or passing through the flames.

By this time, perhaps 11 o'clock, the fire had spread to Peter Dean's store on the west and Weiss' clothing store on the east. The salvage corps had in the meantime done good work in saving property, especially in Dean's store, where a large quantity of stock was saved, but in a badly damaged condition.

The first building which the hook and ladder company hitched on to was Dean's, and in pulling out the front a boy was struck on the head but not very badly injured.

The fire had now spread to Morison & McGregor's grocery store, and almost immediately after to the New York boot and shoe store, occupied by Nils Hoff, caught while the hook and ladder company were trying to tear it down. It was but a short time before this that the water was finally got to play on the flames. The roof of Sullivan's restaurant fell in, quickly followed by Gerst's jewelry store and the harness shop, owned by Ed. Wright. The stone walls of the Clark block arrested the flames on the west side, but on the east side they swept all before them to the corner, including Poirier's boot and shoe establishment. In Dambrock's restaurant a good deal was saved. Even before Mr. Poirier's building had taken fire the flames had cleaned out all the small buildings in the rear as far as the alley, until they came to Nils Hoff's residence, which they quickly consumed. The fiercest blaze was that caused by Poirier's building, it being the highest, and great fears were entertained for the buildings opposite on Superior street; also across Lake avenue it was so intensely hot that it was at times thought the east side of Superior street would not be saved, although water was kept playing on them all the time. It might have been possible to save Poirier's building, had it not been for the water supply giving out, which necessitated a delay of fifteen or twenty minutes, to move the engine down to the slip.

As soon as it was discovered that it would be impossible to save Poirier's place, then the fight was made to save the buildings north of Hoff's residence and the stores opposite on Superior street, which was done, but not before the Central house, owned by John A. Smith was pretty well destroyed. It was here that the most effective work was done.

It is understood that work will be commenced on three or four fine brick blocks immediately. No serious accidents are reported. A. F. Leopold, furniture dealer, was slightly injured. Thirteen buildings in all were destroyed, with losses and names of insurance companies as follows:

- A. Miles' building, occupied by Geist's jewelry store and Hill's confectionery \$8,000; insurance \$4,000. The owner did not know the company and the agent would not give its name.
- Dr. A. Austin, five buildings, occupied by Wright, harness and saddlery, Birdsall, saddlery, Miss Merrill, millinery, Sullivan, saloon, and Weiss, clothing, \$3,000; insurance \$1,000, in the Springfield of Massachusetts.
- Chris Hang, building, occupied by Hang Bros., \$2,500; insurance in the Western Assurance, \$600; Milwaukee Mechanical, \$300; Imperial of London, \$300.
- Peter Dean, \$2,500; insured in the Underwriters of New York, \$1,000.
- MacDougall & McLennan, two buildings occupied by Morison & McGregor and N. Hoff, \$4,500; insurance in the North American, \$1,300; Pennsylvania, \$700.
- A. R. MacFarland, occupied by W. Dambrock, \$2,500; insured in the North American or Pennsylvania, \$1,200.
- C. Poirier, \$7,000; insurance in the London Assurance, \$2,000; Northwestern of Milwaukee, \$500.
- Mrs. Amelia Smith, Central house, \$3,000;

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