FIRE IN THE METROPOLITAN.

SLUMBERING GUESTS AROUSED AND ALL SAFELY RESCUED.

Women Assisted Down the Fire Escape from the Fourth Story—The Dining Room that was Furnished by William M. Tweed Ruined for the Second Time—Loss about $50,000

The rappings of policemen's clubs, shouts, and the slamming of doors filled the corridors of the Metropolitan Hotel at 5½ o'clock yesterday morning. To each aroused guest there was hastily given the warning that the hotel was on fire. In a moment each of the three hundred guests and the large army of employees were seeking their way out of the building.

At the hour named, one of the four night watchmen employed in the hotel, while on his usual round through the Prince street end of the second story of the hotel, was confronted with a volume of heavy smoke that poured from the rooms over the Crosby street entrance of Niblo's Garden. He rushed to the office to give the alarm, and then hurried back to the hallway of the third story over the Crosby street entrance, off from which are the rooms of some of the employees. Fortunately the connections of the fire-alarm instrument in the office of the hotel were perfect, and the Fire Department of its circuit responded promptly. Hook and Ladder Company No. 8, whose house is in North Moore street, near West Broadway, was the first truck to arrive. The efforts of its force, under direction of Capt. Reeves, were directed to rescuing about forty persons who had reached the lower platform of the fire escape on the Crosby street side of the building. Meantime the engines summoned by the first and second alarms had their streams upon the fire from all directions, and in five minutes after the firemen began work the flames were extinguished. They had raged long enough, however, to completely dismantle one of the most costly hotel dining rooms in the city, and cause a total loss of over $50,000.

Many of the guests had interesting experiences to narrate of their escape from the house. L. H. Dalhoff of Burlington, Iowa, had a narrow escape. He rushed through the smoke only to find himself in a part of the building where, so far as he could see, there was no exit. He therefore ran back again. When he at last found himself, he hardly knew how, on the second floor in a place where the air was free enough to be was half suffocated.

Mr. Shaw of Toledo had a room which was scorched by fire. He got out of it barely in time to get down stairs safely in scanty attire. Mr. Hall, another guest of the house, also suffered from the smoke in the hall.

Mr. Myron Bangs, who occupied a room in the Prince street wing, near the place of the fire, said that the officers who aroused them was emphatic in his warnings that they should not use a moment in getting out of their rooms. When he opened the door of his room he found the hall filled with a heavy, oily smoke that blinded and nearly suffocated. He pulled on his trousers and a vest, and scrambled his way out of the building. He said that his partner, a gentleman named Gayner, who occupied the room with him, ran out with his trousers under one arm and a cage with a pair of pet mocking birds that he had just brought from the South under the other arm.

Yesterday afternoon a lady, accompanied by her husband, looked out of a door leading to the fire escape on the third story, and shuddered. She explained that her husband had left their room after they had been awakened by the smell of smoke, to see what was the matter, and before he returned she became alarmed and fled through the hall with a few pieces of clothing which she had hastily put on. She found herself at the fire escape, and was helped down it by a fireman. When she was safely landed in the street she hurried around to the front entrance of the hotel, and ascended to the second floor, where she found her husband, who had been vainly searching for her in the smoky halls after discovering that she had left her room.

About twenty chambermaids of the hotel have their rooms in the fifth story of the wing extending to Crosby street on Prince street. Bridget Slattery is obliged to get up every morning except Sunday at 5 o'clock to perform some special duty. This caused her to be wakeful yesterday morning, and as she was trying to go to sleep she smelled smoke. She, too, had to room to the fifth story of the wing. She got up, and, seeing smoke in the hall, realized the danger. She hastily ran from room to room of the hall where the chambermaids slept and aroused them. About half of these women escaped down the stairway. The rest were frightened by the dense smoke and ran back to the Crosby street end of the hall, whence a narrow iron stairway leads down to the fourth story. The foot of this stairway was near a door which opens on to the fire escape balcony. In this story there were nearly a score of firemen. Each of the women was helped down the dizzy fire escape by a fireman. The most of them were in their night dresses. None of them was dressed. Some of those in their night dresses carried clothing on their arms. One of them, who clutched a dress to her arm as she was helped down the succession of ladders, lost a pocketbook containing $4. It fell from the pocket of her dress.

"I went down very comfortably," she said. "A big fireman was outside of me on the ladder. He reached around me and got hold of the sides of the ladder with his hands, and I trod on his feet. I was barefooted, and didn't hurt him."

The men and women who escaped down the ladders were conducted into Reinhardt & Schling's undertaker's supply establishment, whither were brought their clothing. Frank Phillipse, a young man who sleeps in the store, went out and got bundy for his shivering guests.

George Du Bois, 19 years old, one of the last persons to escape from the fourth story of the hotel down the fire escape, ran across the street and got only in an undershirt. He was trembling with cold. He had brought nearly all his clothes down the ladders on his arm. Another man who entered the store clad only in undershirt, trousers, and socks afterward went back to his room in the hotel for the rest of his clothes. He found that in the meantime somebody had pilfered the jewelry from his shirt front, but had failed to find his gold watch under the bolster of his bed.

So far as could be learned, three firemen were the only persons injured. Immediately upon arriving at the fire, Chief Bonner of the Second Battalion went to the hotel on the Prince street side to take charge of the fire. Chief Bonner had been called from Hook and Ladder No. 8. Their efforts were to get at fire between the ceiling and the roof. To this it was with difficulty, by axes, that the ceiling fell upon them, throwing most of the men to the floor. The men were compelled to return to the street. It was then found that Lewis S. Hoagland of Hook and Ladder No. 8 had been severely burned about the hands. He slightly fell into the fire. He was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital. William H. Bennett of the same company, suffered a severe blow in the back from a falling timber. He was in the engine house last evening, and said he thought he would be ready for duty again in a day or two. Chief Bonner had his left hand burned, but not so severely as to prevent him from continuing on duty. He was also slightly burned about the face.

Fireman Hoagland said in the St. Vincent Hospital yesterday, that he did not know what hurt him. The last he remembered was that he was busy picking a hole through a partition with a hook. He was brought to consciousness by the burning of his hands. He crawled out from where he had fallen, and escaped unaided through the window and down a ladder, by which he had entered the building. He will probably have to lose a joint of one of his fingers, this so badly burned. The fall of the timbers above him brought down a part of the brick work in wall, and let the heat in from the burning room.

Capt. Reeves of Hook and Ladder Company No. 8, which was the first truck to arrive at the fire, said that his first work was to put up ladders to the lower platform of the fire escape extending along the Crosby street end of the Prince street wing. He went up the ladder first and met a strapping fellow who had one leg over the railing ready to leap upon the ladder. Of the forty or more persons upon the escape the majority were women, and the Captain did not propose to allow the men to come down first. He warned the fellow not to jump upon the ladder, as it was not in place. This deterred him, and the captain reached the top of the ladder, when he found the man who was inclined to monopolize the right of way. The women climbed down with calmness and without accident.

An aromatic deodorizer was burned in all the halls, and when the hotel guests went to the dining room at the Prince street end of the second story at breakfast time, the only evidence of the disaster they could discover was the disarrangement of the broad passage leading to the dining room. Inside the doors at the further end of this passage there were plenty of proofs that the fire had done serious work, and had been prevented from causing greater destruction only by prompt and efficient efforts.

In the centre of the north wall of the dining room are three flues running to the kitchen in the basement. It is surmised that these caused the fire, but it is not clear whether it originated in the ceiling above or the rooms above it.

Up to 1862 the dining room was Niblo's saloon. It was used for supper, concerts, and lectures. It was a part of the hotel and theatre property and in that year A. T. Stewart converted it into a dining room. This was its use when William M. Tweed leased the hotel. He fitted up the dining room in French plate glass. The walls at the end were 27 feet high by 7 wide, and those on the side were as wide but not quite as high. The tops of the side mirrors were semi-circular. The mirrors cost $23,000. In addition to these were introduced three home-shaped skylights of colored glass from each of which there hung a large chandelier of pendant prisms. There were several other smaller chandeliers and six side lights, also ornamented with pendent prisms. The ceiling and walls were frescoed at great expense. All of these adornments were destroyed by the fire of a year and a half ago, but were more than replaced by the present management. More chandeliers were introduced, the frescoing was more elaborate, and the sideboards, tables, and chairs were in keeping with the decorations. Five wide strips of costly carpeting, each 110 feet long, were laid between the tables. The only part of the mirrors remaining yesterday was in one of the recesses at the end of the room. About one-fourth of the ceiling was gone, affording a view of the sky between the charred rafters. The elaborate fresco work was covered with smoke and water. Huge piles of tables and chairs more or less damaged stood around the sides of the room. The inlaid floor was covered with dirt and water. The rich carpeting had been hastily rolled up, but not in time to escape damage. In the billiard room beneath it a shower of water dripped upon the flooded floor, and every few moments a piece of richly-frescoed ceiling fell with it. The piano of the theatre was damaged by water, which also flowed into the auditorium.

The Metropolitan Hotel and Niblo's Garden are a part of the A. T. Stewart estate. The lessee of the hotel is Mr. Henry Clair, who furnished the following statement relative to the disaster:

New York, Jan. 23, 1881.

A fire broke out in the dining room of the Metropolitan Hotel at 5:30 this morning, destroying the interior. The night watchmen gave the alarm, and the police and firemen responded so promptly that the hotel sustained no serious damage. The guests were all aroused in a moment of panic, but none of them suffered in person or property, and the business of the house went on as usual, breakfast being served in the tea room and restaurant. Loss about $50,000, covered by insurance.

Mr. Clair said that the fire would in no way interfere with the evening entertainments, as no available room was damaged, and the large tea room in the Prince street wing was ample for the table demands. Mr. Clair said that his guests, especially the ladies, behaved admirably under the circumstances, and that nothing approaching a panic occurred.

It is understood that the hotel and theatre property are insured for about $300,000. Mr. Henry Hilton, who represents the Stewart estate, visited the hotel in the afternoon. Repairs will be commenced at once.

Mr. E. G. Gilmore, who manages Niblo's Garden for Mr. Haverly, said that the fire would not interfere with the production of the "Black Venus" this evening.

THE IRISH MENACE.

A Comparison of the Forces of the Government and the Revolutionists.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* If the present agitation in Ireland should lead to a rising of the people in armed resistance against the Government, the consequences would be sanguinary. It is needless to say that it would be a most unequal contest.

Let us compare the forces. England has already 30,000 troops, the flower of the army, in Ireland. It certainly is not too much to say that she could easily put 250,000 men in the field if forced to draw upon her militia and volunteer corps. In addition to this she could bring over from India say 50,000 more troops. This would put the number of the British forces in Ireland up to 300,000 men, by no means an overestimate of what the number might be.

To oppose this army, furnished with a numerous artillery and with all the modern improvements in the art of killing, let us see what the Irish have, or rather what they expect to get, if they must fight, which is doubtful. Without attempting to base calculations upon the impossible or to go into dreamland, let us look at their forces in the most favorable standpoint, extending their line of battle to the extreme limit of probability and giving them all, possibly more, than their hopes can reasonably compass.

In the first place, we are told that there is an organization for revolutionary purposes in Ireland which numbers 65,000 men. Assuming that this is an armed force which may possibly be assuming too much, the question naturally arises, How did they get their arms? In answer to this it is asserted by some of the English papers, and by outspoken Irish revolutionists, that a secret society has been in existence for years, and that for the past twelve years were actively engaged in the business of purchasing arms. This society, which grew up from the ruins of Fenianism, is said to have been largely assisted by a kindred organization in this country, quietly engaged in the same business—both religiously following John Mitchell's advice to "get guns." Very well; this gives the Irish an army of 65,000 men. To this may be added the Irish militia, numbering from 15,000 to 20,000 men, thoroughly drilled. They have not been called out this year, owing to the well-known ardor with which they embrace the national cause. In other words, they have not been armed by the British Government, but have been armed, it is said, by this secret society, and some of their present officers are believed to have seen service in this country during the war of the rebellion. The Irish constabulary are slowly but surely drifting with the national current. They are related by ties of blood and friendship to the tenant farmers of the Land League, and they can hardly be depended upon to do the Queen's work against their own people in the event of coercion and eviction. Throw the militia with the Nationalists, and we get 15,000 more troops for the Irish army. Here this recruiting on paper must come to an end. We have reached the extreme limit. Now let us add these forces together, and what do we find? We find an army of 65,000 drilled volunteers, with 20,000 in all; 15,000 constabulary, making a grand total of 100,000 men armed with the modern rifle, but without artillery. This force, contending with all the drawbacks in the way of mobilization, and the countless difficulties and hardships inseparable from a country where are protected by the Government, is all that can possibly be brought against the 300,000 men of England, with a powerful artillery. To provoke such a contest would be to invite defeat, with its horrors.

When these things are brought to the notice of Irish revolutionists they say that they don't intend to give pitched battle to the British troops; that their only effort will be to harass them, especially at night, to hit and get away; that for the kind of warfare which they propose to carry on artillery would be *impedimenta* in the truest sense of the term, more so even than organized cavalry. Ireland, with its fields completely ribbed with solid earthworks in the shape of innumerable ditches and double ditches extending over the greater portion of the country, is a poor place for the use of artillery; that the Irish regiments of the line are thoroughly disciplined, or at least so Phipps tells us, to cause panic or confusion in some of the divisions of the British forces; that if the rebels can cope with the regulars, they need have no fear of the volunteers or the militia; that it will be a glorious day for the Irish when England will find herself reduced to the necessity of introducing Sepoys into Ireland, for then she will be already hopelessly beaten; that before the war breaks out one thousand Irish-Americans can easily be sent to London, not for the purpose of fighting anybody, but simply to act regularly, each one in a different house, by watch arrangement, lay one thousand fires can be started at a given time. They propose to burn English cities and towns, and to make things lively all over Great Britain. Some of them also propose to do, or rather talk about doing, still more alarming things, such as blowing up the Parliament House, smuggling dynamite on board transport ships, and sending whole armies skyward; in the British Channel, after every battle, to "settle the wounded" a dose of his own medicine, and finishing the remainder of the Cabinet Ministers.

But, after all, it does not look as if war would grow out of the present excitement in Ireland. The Irish are really too shrewd to play at a game in which the odds are so much against them. To be sure it is conceivable that they love a fight; but warfare now does not tempt the vanity of men as it used to in times past. In this age there is but little chance for the display of prowess. By far the greater portion of our fighting is done by machinery, and men are but the servants of machines. Moreover, the reason the glory of war is faded, and the temptations to fight appear small, even to firemen. The Land League is wisely endeavoring to check the nonsense of some of the fools, while it frowns upon excesses. It does not oppose the arming of the people, for it is well for a people to be armed. Its quarrel is not with the people of England, but with the landlords of Ireland and with the Government that upholds the Irish system of land tenure. Laughing at military parades in potato gardens, and warlike preparations around cow houses, it entreats you to lay the cause before the tribunal of public opinion in England, and to test John Bull's boasted love of fair play.

HIBERNICUS.

The Dignity of the Senate.

From the Herald.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22.—That fearful and wonderful phrase "the dignity of the Senate" has been taken from its place in Webster's and Worcester's and Bailey's and Webster's and Worcester's and Webster's and Worcester's and Webster's and Worcester