

LATEST CABLE NEWS.

Roberts Defeats the Afghans on Cabul Heights.

SHARPUR STREWN WITH CORPSES

De Freycinet Plays Into the Hands of Gambetta.

AVEZZANA'S FUNERAL.

Rumor that the Aragon Has Sunk in the Atlantic.

TERRIBLE RAILROAD DISASTER

Five Hundred Persons Said To Be Drowned in the Tay.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 29, 1879. The Chilean Legation at Paris announces that it has received a telegram stating that the President of Peru has arrived at Panama, en route to the United States and Europe.

The Times Berlin despatch states that Prince Bismarck has an acute stomach complaint as well as rheumatism, so that it is perfectly impossible for him to go to Berlin at this moment.

The funeral of General Avezzana was a very imposing one. The police, amid a tumultuous scene, seized an Italia Irredenta flag in the procession, but their attempt to seize a republican flag was evaded.

Constantinople despatches announce that, in compliance with the demand of the Greek members of the Turco-Greek Frontier Commission, there will be another meeting of the commission on the 29th inst., when the Turkish Commissioners will make definite proposals. The Greek Commissioners are still disposed to break off negotiations.

RUSSIAN Nihilists in Berlin.

The Daily News Berlin correspondent telegraphs:—"The police during the last few days have been making a thoroughly organized search in the lodgings of Russian and Polish students. Several arrests were made besides those of the socialist printer and his two assistants mentioned yesterday."

KING HUMBERT'S HUNT.

The Fanfulla says, in reference to a report of an assault made by a crowd, on Tuesday last, on the gendarmes who accompanied King Humbert on a hunting expedition, that there were only four persons concerned in the affair—probably poachers—who fled after discharging their guns. One of them was subsequently captured.

BISMARCK AND DISARMAMENT.

On December 9 the Fanfulla of Rome published a statement that Prince Bismarck had written a letter to Senator Jacini expressing the opinion that an agreement of the Powers devoted strictly to a conservative and pacific policy can alone bring about a partial disarmament, and that this is the only remedy for the prevailing depression in finances and the miseries of the people in various countries. The North-German Gazette now authoritatively denies that Prince Bismarck has written to Senator Jacini on this or any other subject.

RUMORED LOSS OF A STEAMER.

THE ARAGON, FROM NEW YORK TO BRISTOL, SAID TO HAVE FOUNDERED AT SEA—THE RUMOR POSSIBLY UNFOUNDED.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 29, 1879.

Reports were current in Bristol yesterday, and published in this morning's papers, that the steamer Aragon, Captain Brown, which left New York on the 26th of November for Bristol, had foundered in the Atlantic, and that all on board were lost. Her owners at present know nothing of any disaster to the vessel. [The steamer Aragon was reported on December 11 to have arrived safely at her destination. She was to have left Bristol again on the 18th of December and it is possible that the disaster, if any, took place on the trip coming this way. The cable rumor needs confirmation. The Aragon was consigned to W. D. Morgan. She was of 1,317 tons register, built of iron, at Glasgow, 1869, and owned by the Great Western Steamship Company of Bristol.]

ROBERTS VICTORIOUS.

BATTLE ON THE HEIGHTS ABOVE SHARPUR—TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH ARMS—FLIGHT OF MAHMUD JAN AND MUSKHI ALIM—PROPOSED OCCUPATION OF THE BALA HISSAR—YAKOUB'S WIFE AND MOTHER IN CAMP.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 28, 1879.

The Viceroy of India, under date of the 27th inst., announces that telegrams from General Roberts report the defeat and dispersion of the enemy around Cabul on the 23d inst., before the arrival of General Gough. A despatch from General Roberts, dated the 23d inst., confirms the above and gives details as follows:—"Desultory attacks were kept up all of yesterday. During the day information was received that a general attack would be made at daybreak to-day. A large number of the enemy were seen occupying the distant villages and approaching nearer as it became dark. At six o'clock this morning a fire was lighted on Ashi Heights. We had been apprised that this would be the enemy's signal for the attack, and immediately afterward the attack was commenced on three sides. We were already prepared for it. On the south and west the enemy did not show much determination, but on the northeast corner of Behmaroo Heights some thousands collected, and evidently contemplated an assault. General Hugh Gough, ably assisted by Colonel Jenkins, commanded here. As soon as the enemy's intention was fully developed I determined on a counter attack with cavalry and artillery. These issued by a gorge between Behmaroo Heights, opened fire on the enemy's flank and

speedily dislodged them. The cavalry pursued and sabred numbers of the enemy, who retired from all points and hastily retreated to the city. We have now occupied some advanced villages, particularly those on the Butkak road. General Charles Gough's camp is visible six miles to the east."

AFTER THE BATTLE.

A despatch from General Roberts, dated Cabul, December 24, is as follows:—"Our success yesterday was complete. The enemy's loss was severe. Our losses were five killed, including Captain Dundas and Lieutenant Nugent, of the engineers, by a premature explosion when blowing up the towers of a neighboring village, and thirty-three wounded, the majority of whom are doing well. Those of the enemy living in Cabul went straight to their houses after the defeat. The Kohistanis and Logaris remained in Cabul a few hours, but all fled during the night. Two of the enemy's leaders, Muskhi Alim (a priest) and Mahmud Jan, fled early in the day. Another prominent leader is reported to have fled, with Yakoub Khan's eldest son, toward Wardak. The cavalry have gone in pursuit. The Bala Hissar and the city will be taken possession of this afternoon. The former will be occupied, if it appears certain that there is no danger from hidden mines of powder. Yakoub Khan's wife and mother, and a daughter of the late Akbar Khan, who are reported to confer peace flight, and who have done all in their power to incite the Afghans, will be brought to Sharpur to-day. I have telegraphed General Bright to push forward detachments from Jagdulluk to Lehanda and Lataland. I send a force to occupy Butkak to-morrow. Communication with India will thus be rapidly restored. General Charles Gough's brigade arrived this morning. A slight snow fell last night. All well." Akbar Khan, referred to by General Roberts, was the principal opponent of the British in 1841, and his daughter is reported to have distributed £20,000 among the Afghans to incite them to the present rising.

A Lahore despatch to the Daily News says the Afghans who attacked General Roberts at Sharpur on the 23d inst. numbered 6,000. The ground around Sherpur is thick with the corpses of the slain. The special correspondents in India state that General Roberts has recaptured the Bala Hissar. The Times Candahar despatch says the Cabulese troops plundered Herat for three days. Ayoub Khan, who is a puppet in their hands, has sent his father-in-law here to treat for peace.

HOW THE THIRDS ROSE.

[The London Times summarizes the events which preceded the victory of the 23d inst. It believes that the rising was a general one. From Kohistan in the north to Madan, Zaimukht and Logar in the south, fanatical Afghans swarmed forth at the bidding of their still more fanatical mullahs, and Sir P. Roberts, deeming it wise to nip these gatherings in the bud, took steps to prevent a junction of the malcontents, and then to scatter them before a serious combination could be effected. His plan of operations was simple enough—one which has been tried times without number in Oriental campaigns, and usually with success. On the 9th Brigadier General T. Baker, C. B., with a weak brigade of all arms, consisting of four mountain guns, the Fifth Punjab Cavalry, under that brave veteran Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Williams; 450 of the Ninety-second Highlanders and 450 of the Fifth Punjab Infantry, moved by a circuitous route, with the intention of placing himself between the southern insurgents and their stronghold, Ghazni. At the same time Brigadier General Macpherson, V. C., C. B., moved out with a stronger brigade, consisting of a squadron of the Ninth Lancers, a squadron of the Fourteenth Bengal Lancers, the Sixty-seventh foot, 450 men of the Third Sikhs and 450 of the Fifth Gorkhas, with four guns of the B Battery, A brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, to attack the insurgents in front. His orders were to entice the enemy on, drawing them away from Ghazni, thus giving Baker time to form up in their rear, and then, suddenly moving forward, crush the hapless foe between the two British forces. The plan failed, and the reason is not far to seek. It is the old story—faulty intelligence. The Kohistanis were unexpectedly met with and apparently succeeded in drawing Macpherson off from the real scene. They were driven northwards with ease, our casualties being few, including one officer, Lieutenant Colonel Fitzhugh, Fifth Gorkhas, wounded. It would appear that Macpherson pursued these men for some distance, finally meeting Sir P. Roberts, who had ridden out from Cabul. The brigade was now ordered to retrace its steps and carry out the original plan of defeating the Maidan, Zaimukht and Logar men, Brigadier General Danham Massey taking the cavalry and Horse Artillery guns by the valley road, Macpherson with the infantry following the line of the hills. There is no reading between the lines in the telegram we publish. Massey deliberately walked into a trap.

MASSY'S BLUNDER.

It is difficult to conceive that a smart cavalry officer should move without proper precautions. He was advancing "too confidently" through a most difficult country, studded with walled villages and much cut up with water courses, when he suddenly found himself confronted by an overwhelming force of the enemy. It is to be feared that necessary precautions must have been neglected. There could have been no careful feeling of the way, but rather a blind, haphazard advance in column of route into the meshes of the web which the astute Afghans had woven. Having blundered into the trap Danham Massey showed the gallantry which earned for him the sobriquet "Redan Massey" a quarter of a century ago, and at once opened fire on the enemy, thinking to check him by his artillery. The Afghans showed no quailing now. On they came steadily for the guns, and repeated charges of the small cavalry escort only had the effect of developing their attack. In attempting to retire, the guns got into difficulties in the water-cuts and were finally overturned and abandoned, the gunners joining with the cavalry in a rapid retreat. It is idle to mince matters, the movement was mismanaged from beginning to end, and the direct statement that Massey's cavalry were rallied by Sir P. Roberts in person and that the retirement was covered by the Fourteenth Bengal Lancers shows only too plainly why it was that the casualties among the officers of the Ninth Lancers were so heavy. Colonel C. M. Macgregor, the chief of the staff, an officer known as well for his personal gallantry as for his other attainments, and who bears on his body the scars of nine wounds and on his breast eight decorations, led forward the rallied men and recovered the lost guns. This is not the first time this officer has so distinguished himself, for in the China war with a troop of Fane's horse he charged the Tartar hordes who were surrounding a battery of our guns, and earned not merely a recommendation for the Victoria Cross, but what is a more rare honor, personal mention in the speech in which Lord Herbert proposed a vote of thanks to the army for their services in the war.

MACPHERSON'S ASSAULT.

In the meantime the enemy, exultant at their success, and finding the road clear—or Macpherson was groping to the west and Baker waiting the moment in the south—pushed boldly on to Cabul. Roberts, foreseeing this move, held the Dohlim-zang gorge to the west of the city with a detachment of the Ninety-second Highlanders, reinforced by the rallied cavalry. Checked in front, the insurgents found themselves pressed in rear by Macpherson, who, discovering his mistake too late, had counter-marched his brigade, and was now near the scene. The insurgents, between two cross fires, betook themselves to the high hills in the vicinity of the city, whence Macpherson determined to dislodge them. His troops, however, were too much exhausted for him to attempt the assault that day, a delay which the enemy took advantage of by making a series of attacks on the picket of the Seventy-second holding the gorge, which barred their entrance to Cabul. By

this means the tranquility of the city was assured. On the 12th Macpherson delivered his assault. It was led by Lieutenant Colonel Noel Money, of the Third Sikhs, and consisted of 200 men of the Sixty-seventh foot, 150 of the Third Sikhs, a wing of the Fifth Gorkhas and two mountain guns. The ground to be covered was extremely difficult and very extensive, yet one can scarcely credit the fact either that the resistance was very desperate or that such advance was made by the force, for their total casualties out of a strength of over five hundred was but two killed and twelve wounded. As night fell Noel Money bivouacked on the lower slopes he had won, and Macpherson determined to await the return of Baker, who was hourly expected. This officer, after waiting anxiously for three days, must have learned the true state of affairs from messengers. Pushing rapidly up the Ohar-Asiab road he drove the insurgents in front of him, and these men swelled the total of the defenders of the mountain position to the southwest of the city. On the 13th Baker and Macpherson delivered their combined attack. Money presented his delayed frontal movement, while Baker swept round the flank, and intrusting the lead to Major George White, of the Ninety-second Highlanders, speedily cleared the ridge of the enemy, when Money's men occupied it unopposed. The conduct of the Ninety-second was, as might have been expected, worthy the fame of the Gordon Highlanders.

DE FREYCINET'S MINISTRY.

WADDINGTON AND LEON SAY RETIRE—PORTFOLIOS GIVEN TO MM. CAZOT, MAGNIN AND VARIOUS—GAMBETTA'S HANDS STRENGTHENED—FRANCE EXPECTANT.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

PARIS, Dec. 28, 1879.

A new Ministry has been constituted as follows:—

M. De Freycinet, President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

M. Lepers, Minister of the Interior and of Worship.

M. Cazot, Keeper of the Seals.

M. Magnin, Minister of Finance.

General Farre, Minister of War.

Admiral Jaureguiberry, Minister of Marine.

M. Jules Ferry, Minister of Public Instruction.

M. Varray, Minister of Works.

M. Tirard, Minister of Commerce.

M. Coehery, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

WADDINGTON AND LEON SAY.

M. Waddington has refused to accept the post of Ambassador to England. The Temps asserts that M. Gambetta had a long and cordial conference with President Grévy to-day. [Both M. Waddington and M. Léon Say have long been anxious to retire from posts which they only held on sufferance. Of the former M. Dufaure's journal, Le Parlement, says that recollections of purpose and even business talents are not sufficient for a Prime Minister. It continues:—"M. Waddington has qualities which we are far from underrating, but they are not qualities of that commanding kind (if we may use that expression) that enable a President of the Council to exercise over his colleagues the influence arising out of acknowledged superiority, and it is no exaggeration to say that M. Waddington has given to the Cabinet over which he presided very little but his name. He has not given it a personal impulse and character of his own, which we think is deeply to be regretted." Léon Say's retirement is in great part due to the crushing defeat he sustained in the Chamber on the 15th inst. Under the Commune the Bank of France, by order of M. Thiers, advanced large sums to the insurrectionary government; but before the requisite authority could be obtained from Versailles the bank authorities, to avoid being plundered, made an advance to the Communists of 7,000,000F. M. Say proposed that this sum should be refunded. The Budget Committee opposed the motion on the extraordinary ground that the bank had derived a large profit from its pecuniary transactions with the government and was "able to afford a loss of 7,000,000F., which it might regard as a ransom paid to the Commune," and the House defeated M. Say's motion by a show of hands.

NEW BROOKS.

M. de Freycinet is the intimate friend and ally of M. Gambetta. He directed the operations of the Army of the Loire, and his great talent as a mathematician and engineer were very nearly rewarded by success. He belongs to the group of the republican Left which the President believes to constitute the core of the majority. He represents a policy of peace and material advancement. Of his new colleagues M. Théodore Cazot, replacing M. Le Royer, to whom the present crisis is due, is well known as an ardent Gambettist. In 1870 he was Secretary of the Home Ministry, accompanied the delegation to Tours and Bordeaux, and followed the Dictator in his retreat. He won his spurs as a barrister and is a member of the Extreme Left. M. Magnin, Léon Say's successor, was elected Minister of Commerce and Agriculture on the 4th of September, 1870, and rendered valuable services to Paris during the siege. After the armistice he re-vitalized the capital, giving abundant proof of his patriotism and high sense of duty. He belongs to the Republican Left. M. Varray, who takes the place of the Premier, is, like him, an engineer. Indeed, M. Varray is far more distinguished as an engineer than as a statesman. He votes consistently with the Republican Left. The rest are well known. Their administrative qualities have already been tested.

The Times Paris correspondent says the elements composing the new Cabinet are more moderate than might have been expected.

THE COUNTRY STILL WAITING FOR GAMBETTA—THE TWO PRESIDENTS—GEORGE II. AND THE ELDER PITT.

The London Standard thus deals with the great question which the Ministerial crisis has raised:—"It is obvious that the time has now arrived for M. Gambetta to come to the front, and many well-informed people think circumstances will force him into office whether he likes it or not. Gambetta's belief must not be placed in the stories of his persistent refusal to take office. These stories are, as a rule, manufactured in quarters very unfriendly to him. As a rule they amount to this, that M. Gambetta wishes to remain President of the Chamber in order to preserve his prestige unimpaired until such time as he can take the place of President Grévy. Those who invent these stories lose sight of two facts which entirely upset their calculations. In the first place, President Grévy is a man of strong constitution, robust health and well ordered life, and there is really no reason for supposing that illness will cut short his Presidential career. But it will be said that he might resign. No doubt, but it is not easy to see what circumstances would bring about such a contingency. M. Grévy is the embodiment of the principle of self-government. He has ever held to be the duty of the Chief of the State to carry into effect the decisions of the majority, and therefore it is out of the question to suppose that any vote could possibly induce him to lay down office. These things being admitted can any rational being imagine M. Gambetta to form a deliberate resolution to remain for six years President of the Chamber of Deputies, and to do so he being essentially a great speaker and a man of action in a position where he is perceived deemed to silence and inaction, with the idea of preserving his prestige? He has not been quite a year in the chair and his prestige has already suffered considerably with a portion of his followers. He has, moreover, to stand the ordeal of a re-election every twelvemonth, and he

cannot be sure of a constant majority. On these points alone the story of his persistent refusal to take office seems incredible; but, in addition, we have the repeated assurances of his friends that he has no such intention. Then comes the other story that M. Grévy objects to him just as George II. objected to the elder Pitt. This is quite as untrue. M. Grévy governs quite constitutionally, and when his Prime Minister resigns and recommends M. Gambetta to be sent for he will send for him without hesitation. Of course some reconciliation will have to be gone through; but all the existing symptoms concur in pointing to the formation of a Gambetta Cabinet early in the ensuing year."

DISASTER AT DUNDEE.

A TRAIN FALLS THROUGH A BRIDGE OVER THE TAY—EFFECT OF A DESTRUCTIVE STORM—TWO HUNDRED LIVES BELIEVED TO BE LOST.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 29, 1879.

A portion of the bridge across the Frith of Tay was blown down while a train from Edinburgh to Dundee was crossing, at fourteen minutes past seven o'clock last night. The gale was so strong that steamboats were unable to reach the scene of the disaster, but several mailbags have been washed ashore four miles from the bridge, and there is no doubt that the train is in the water. The passengers, who are certainly all drowned, are variously estimated at from 150 to 200 in number. The gale having moderated somewhat, the Provost of Dundee and a number of leading citizens started in a steamer to the scene of the disaster but have not yet returned. The excitement at Taybridge station is appalling. Many thousands of people are congregated awaiting definite intelligence from the accident. The missing Dundee train was seen crossing the bridge, then suddenly a flash of fire became visible. The railway officials, in spite of the gale, walked along the bridge from Dundee until they found there was a large gap caused by the fall of two or three of the largest spans. Another despatch says that the train was bound for Dundee and had arrived safely at the south end of the bridge crossing the Frith of Tay shortly after seven. The bridge was intact at the time, for signals were given to allow her to cross. The wires were interrupted a few minutes thereafter, and no further communication could be obtained.

AFTER THE DISASTER.

Immediately after the disaster large quantities of wreckage and clothing, and six London mail bags for Dundee and Aberdeen, drifted ashore, and by nine o'clock all the beach was strewn with the remains of broken carriages and pieces of bridgework. It is not known how many passengers were on the train at the time of the disaster, but the number is estimated to have been from one hundred and seventy to two hundred. It is believed that half a dozen of the largest girders of the bridge were blown down, but the full extent of the disaster will not be known until to-morrow. Several parties are looking for bodies coming ashore, and the gale having moderated somewhat, an effort is being made by some of the people of Dundee to reach the scene in a steamer. The excitement is very great, and people are thronging from all parts of the neighboring country to hear something definite as to the catastrophe.

HERALD WEATHER SERVICE.

TERRIFIC GALES OVER THE BRITISH ISLANDS—FEARFUL RAILROAD DISASTER DURING THE STORM.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 28, 1879.

To-day the prediction cable by the Herald Weather Bureau on the 26th stating that "Unsettled weather will prevail over the British Islands, Norwegian and possibly northern French coasts between the 27th and January 2, snow and sleet showers, alternating with short periods of fine weather, will be experienced," was fulfilled in the most terrible manner. Since this morning a heavy southwesterly gale swept over these islands, and this evening was signalized by one of the most appalling railroad accidents ever known. The gale began to increase as the day wore on, and shortly after seven o'clock it reached its full height.

INSURRECTION IN MEXICO.

SAF FRANCISCO, Dec. 28, 1879.

The steamer Granada, from Panama, arrived last night. At Acapulco she took on board about five hundred Mexican troops, which were landed at Mazatlan and San Blas, en route for Lower California, to quell an insurrection there.

BARK W. H. THORNDIKE ASHORE.

VESSEL AND CARGO A TOTAL LOSS.

NEW BEDFORD, Mass., Dec. 28, 1879.

The bark W. H. Thorndike sailed from Port Johnson for Boston on Saturday morning with 343 tons of coal and when off Block Island at midnight the captain and pilot, H. S. Brown, of Boston, went below, leaving orders to be called cabin opposite Cutty Hunk Light. At three o'clock they were aroused, and just as they met on the deck the vessel struck on the outer Row and Pigs Reef, three miles north of the lightship. She struck several times, then jumped the ledge and struck on the mud bottom, where she bilged and began to leak. Signals were burned from half-past three to half-past five o'clock, but attracted no attention. Finally the captain, pilot and crew were brought to this city by the revenue cutter Samuel Dexter. The vessel will be a total loss. Her value when new was \$20,000, and now \$35,000. Amount of insurance unknown by captain.

ANOTHER FAILURE.

MONTREAL, Dec. 28, 1879.

The New York Standard English Opera Company, after a disastrous week's business at the Academy of Music in Montreal, is in financial difficulties. The wardrobe has been seized, and its manager will be removed by the hotel keeper where the troupe boarded.

A MYSTERIOUS ASSAULT.

Edward Jeffers, coachman at No. 234 West Thirty-fourth street, entered the Twenty-ninth precinct station house last night in a pitiable plight. His clothes were torn, and blood, flowing from gashes in his head, was streaming down his cheeks. Jeffers told Roundman Wallace, who was at the desk, that he had received a terrible beating in a liquor store on Third-street, when he was \$50,000, and positively refused to give any information that might lead to the arrest of his assailants. He was sent to the New York Hospital.

BOSTON ON FIRE AGAIN.

The Flames Break Out Near the Scene of 1872.

SEVERAL BLOCKS ALREADY GONE

Aggregate Loss Estimated at Over \$5,000,000.

EXCITEMENT OVER THE DANGER.

The Flames Reported Under Control at Two A. M.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.]

BOSTON, Dec. 28—Midnight.

Boston is threatened with another terrible conflagration. At eleven o'clock an officer of station No. 2 turned into Federal street, and saw the interior of the building No. 91 all ablaze inside of the second story. The premises were occupied by a firm of wool brokers, and were directly over the paper warehouse of Rice, Kendall & Co.

THE ENTIRE FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLED OUT.

An alarm was sounded at once, followed immediately by a second, and, an hour later, by a general alarm, calling out the whole department. In the meantime the fire worked upward rapidly and extended to the buildings on either side, threatening to baffle the efforts of the firemen to prevent a repetition of previous disasters. In fifteen minutes the flames had burst through the front in two of the stories, and were dancing over the roof and igniting the adjoining premises.

RAPID SPREAD OF THE FLAMES.

In half an hour they had seized upon the paper warehouse of B. H. Thayer & Co., No. 73 Federal street; the premises of Collins, a wool broker; those occupied by B. J. Peters, also a dealer in wool; the Union Express Company building, the rear of the premises occupied by Pond, Avery & Co., State printers. Still defying the firemen the flames spread to the buildings occupied by D. Faulkner, wool dealer, and the Ashton Vary Company. The main building, owned by Rand, Avery & Co., printers, fronting on Franklin street, can hardly be saved. Underneath Rand, Avery & Co. are John Carter, paper dealer; Lawrence & Co., bankers, and Taylor's restaurant.

AN ENTIRE BLOCK DOOMED.

It now seems as if the entire block must go, and there is danger of the fire crossing Franklin street and destroying the large establishments on the north side. The North National Bank building on Franklin and Devonshire streets is now enveloped, and will undoubtedly be destroyed. The loss is heavy, but cannot be estimated at the present time of writing.

SCENE OF THE FIRE.

The direction in which the flames are progressing tends toward the great banking and insurance business quarters of the city, but a slight change of the wind might turn them upon the large and costly cotton and wool warehouses. The place where this fire started is about one thousand feet north of that where the great fire of 1872 began, and the district now burned over consists of costly buildings, chiefly with granite fronts, erected since the great disaster never to be forgotten in Boston history.

EXCITEMENT IN THE CITY.

Alexander H. Rice, the head of the firm who are among the present sufferers, was Governor of Massachusetts during the three years preceding the term of the present incumbent, Governor Talbot.

The light of the fire illuminated the harbor and the whole of lower Boston, and is visible at Charlestown and Cambridge. Immense crowds of excited people are rushing down town, and so great is the crush that several of the streets leading to the scene of the fire are absolutely blockaded by masses of men. The police are, however, out in force, and the firemen are working nobly, though exposed to an intense heat.

HONGTOWN, OSGOOD & CO. BURNED OUT.

I learn that the roof of the North National Bank has fallen in, and the publishing house of Hongtown, Osgood & Co. is also destroyed. Their loss will be an immense one, owing to the great stock of books on hand. Fortunately their printing offices and binding establishments are at Riverside, in Cambridgeport, several miles distant, so their business will not be interrupted.

Of course no estimate can be made regarding the aggregate loss, but it is already estimated at between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000. This will be a heavy loss on our local insurance companies, as it is understood that since the rebuilding of Boston, after the big fire, our insurance men were free in taking risks.

LATER—THE FIRE UNDER CONTROL—DANGER OF A GENERAL CONFLAGRATION Averted.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.]

BOSTON, Dec. 29—2 A. M.

The flames are now reported to be under control, and there is no further danger of a repetition of our experiences in 1872. The fire is, however, still fiercely burning, and it affords a magnificent spectacle. As stated in my previous despatch the loss is enormous, though the space of ground burned over is comparatively small.

DESTRUCTIVE INCENDIARY FIRE.

GALVESTON, Dec. 28, 1879.

A special to the News from Palestine, Texas, says:—"An incendiary fire this morning destroyed the entire west side of the public square and the block north of the square. The loss is estimated at \$20,000; insurance, \$18,000. During the progress of the fire the prisoners in the jail attempted to escape, but were prevented."

DWELLINGS ON FIRE.

The two story frame dwelling No. 114 North Fifth street, Williamsburg, caught fire yesterday morning from a defective flue, and was damaged to the extent of about \$2,000. Robert Dixon and his family, the occupants, were unceremoniously forced to vacate in consequence at the early hour of five o'clock. Their loss on furniture is said to amount to \$200. The building is owned by a Mr. Grubin, who is insured for \$1,000. From these premises the fire spread to an adjoining three story dwelling, occupied by two families, who jointly sustained a loss of \$500 by their effects. The damage to the house is estimated at \$2,500, insured for \$3,000.

DEATH OF A BROOKLYN LADY.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1879. Mrs. H. G. Carpenter, of Brooklyn, N. Y., dropped dead while walking with her husband on the street to-day.

THE EX-PRESIDENT.

AT DIVINE SERVICE IN WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28, 1879.

The ex-President and wife, accompanied by General Beale, attended divine service this morning at the Metropolitan Church, occupying his old pew. At eleven o'clock, when the services began, every pew was occupied and the aisles were filled with chairs. The altar and surroundings were profusely and tastefully decorated. The Rev. Dr. H. R. Naylor occupied the pulpit and preached from the 16th, Colossians III.—"Christ is all and all in all." At the conclusion of the services the ex-President exchanged greetings with a number of friends who crowded up to welcome him, and, passing in front of the altar, shook hands with Dr. Naylor and departed through the pastor's study.

DINING WITH DON CAMERO.

The ex-President was entertained at dinner this evening by Senator Don Camero, at his residence, formerly known as the "Shepherd Mansion," corner of Connecticut avenue and K Street. Covers were laid for eighteen persons, including the host and family, as follows:—The ex-President and wife, Mrs. F. J. Grant, Ulysses S. Grant, Jr., General Sherman, General Beale and Miss Beale, General Mac-Pedley and wife, Senator Cameron and wife, Senator Logan and wife, Miss McKenry, Senator Camero, wife and two daughters.

NOT ABLE TO TRAVEL AT AUGUSTA, GA.

AUGUSTA, Dec. 28, 1879.

The ex-President has sent the following despatch in response to an invitation tendering him the hospitalities of this city:—

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 28, 1879.

To WILDERFORCE, Esq., of Augusta, I will not probably be able to stop longer than the train may be detained in your city.

ARREST OF A MURDERER.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Dec. 28, 1879.

A special despatch from Parkersburg, W. Va., says William Davis was arrested at Delpho, Ohio, to-day for the murder of Patrick Brennan near Petroleum, W. Va., yesterday, whom it is alleged he robbed of \$150 after killing him. Davis' story is that he was returning from Hughes River when he met Brennan and two Jackson boys and was attacked by them.