

ESTABLISHED IN 1803.

CHARLESTON, S. C., TUESDAY MORNING, MARCH 15, 1892

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

A BLAZE AT THE CITADEL.

THE MAIN BUILDING GUTTED BY FIRE.

An Unexplained Conflagration and Its Consequences—Scenes on Marion Square—The Brave Work of our Boys in Grey—Not so Bad as it Might have Been—There will be no Interruption in the Work of the Academy.

The fire alarm, which rang out from police headquarters yesterday morning will awaken a responsive echo of deep sympathy and regret in the heart of every South Carolinian. The grand old Citadel Academy, around whose walls closely cling a thousand glorious traditions and proud memories, hallowed in the hearts of the citizens of Charleston, whose pride the noble old Academy is, was in flames.

At 9:45 o'clock in the morning a dark line of smoke was seen curling up from the tower above the sallyport, and then the deep toned bells began to chime their ominous message over the city. The smoke grew denser, rolling up above the battlements and towers of the building, the great bells rang louder and the people began to realize the magnitude of the impending catastrophe. In ten minutes the Citadel Green, plaza and surrounding streets were filled with a dense mass of anxious watchers, who only gave place to the dashing engines, truck and hose carriages which were getting into position. The extent of the fire was not known for some time, only that black billowy cloud of smoke floating up from the central tower and hovering over the whole structure presaged the worst. Even the inmates of the building were for some time ignorant of the headway which the flames had made. They supposed the flames would be gotten under control in a few moments, and consequently made no effort to remove their effects until it was almost too late to do so.

RAPID HEADWAY.

In half an hour the flames were bursting out from the roof in several places, and were mounting far up into the sky. In the mean time the fire department was working hard to get in reach of the flames. Engines 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were on the ground, one stationed at the foot of the plaza, two in Meeting street, another immediately behind the Academy and one directly in front of the police headquarters. The fire had first been discovered between the room and ceiling of the third story just above the sallyport and when first discovered appeared to be of small importance, but subsequent events indicate that a large section of the roof at that point must have been burning before the alarm was given.

TRYING TO GET AT THE FIRE.

The firemen attempted to reach the fire from the inside of the building. The hose was dragged in through the sallyport and attempts were made to carry it up through the building. It was soon found impossible to reach the flames in this way, and the hose were again carried outside and the engines began playing upon the outer wall. The height of the walls and the parapets which rise above the room rendered it impossible to play upon the flames with precision.

THE FIRE WAS RAPIDLY SPREADING.

Starting in the centre of the main building it spread along the whole structure very rapidly, then down the side, the flanking side corridors, and through the back section of the Academy until the entire upper story of the quadrangle was burning. The windows were broken and through them on all sides the engines threw floods of water until the entire block appeared thoroughly drenched and rivulets gushed out from the windows and doors and ran like mountain torrents down the green and plaza. The flames, however, seemed to defy the water's deluge, spreading into every room and gallery, licking out at the windows and port holes, rushing up pillar and wall and wreathing the inner space of the building in

A SHEET OF FIRE.

At the rear of the Academy splendid work was being done. One of the city engines was stationed there and battled nobly against the fiery blast which roared and crackled along the inner walls. It was here that splendid assistance was rendered the fire department by the employees of the Charleston Biscuit Factory, just across the street. They clambered up on the roof of the factory, and from that point of vantage turned three streams of water on the flames. From the elevation thus attained, they were enabled to throw the water well over the high walls of the Citadel directly into the advancing fire, and the assistance they rendered was most valuable. But neither theirs nor the Herculean efforts of the city firemen were of any avail. The fire had gotten too much headway and was not gotten under control before nearly 2 o'clock, after the entire upper portion of the main building had been gutted, and the upper floor and part of the second destroyed by the flames.

THE BOYS IN GREY.

When the alarm was first sounded the cadets were in their respective lecture rooms. The last morning drum call had been sounded about three-quarters of an hour before the alarm, and the drummer was not present to collect the cadets. They were, however, marched out of the class rooms and an attempt made to line them up in rank in the corridors. This was, however, impossible. The smoke from the burning portion of the Academy was blown directly down into the rooms and halls and was so dense that there was great danger of suffocation to the inmates. Under this circumstance it was thought best not to march the companies out in order, so the order was given for ranks to be broken and each to do what work he could, thinking the fire of small consequence no effort was at first made to save the students' effects, and when it became evident that the fire was uncontrollable it was found impossible for many of the rooms to be reached. Very few of the cadets saved any of their property at all, and the majority of them escaped with the bare clothes which they wore.

HELPING THE SUPERINTENDENT.

Though unable to save their effects, however, the boys rushed to the assistance of Col. Coward and his family and worked with a will removing their furniture. Their efforts were rewarded with success, nearly everything in Col. Coward's quarters being removed in safety. From the main building of the Academy little was saved. Chief Martin had detailed a force of men not only to patrol the grounds, but to render any assistance in their power in the building.

EXCELLENT WORK.

They did excellent work, removing among other things all the ammunition from the arsenal. In this connection the conduct of Cadet Gwynn, of Spartanburg, cannot be too highly commended. Immediately upon the giving of the order for the cadets to break ranks and save themselves Cadet Gwynn rushed through the dense smoke which filled the halls of the building to the arsenals, grasping in his arms a bag of powder and powder, and with his coat and cap he bore it in safety through the falling sparks and bewildering smoke out through the sallyport on to the plaza in safety. Another of the cadets got his hand badly mashed and cut while ascending a ladder. He was struck by furniture which was being thrown from the upper windows.

THE LIBRARY SAVED.

From the rear of the Academy hurried nearly the entire library was saved, consisting of a large number of valuable works. This was the

work of the cadets. Two parties of them were formed, one going into the library and throwing the books from the windows, when they were collected and placed in safety by the second party. These books, together with much valuable apparatus from the scientific department, were the principal things saved. A portion of the guns and accoutrements of the cadets were brought out, but most of them were lost. All the text books, furniture, beds and bed clothing and private effects of the cadets in the upper galleries were destroyed. The articles in the second and third stories, which were slightly damaged by the fire, were nearly entirely ruined by the deluges of water which were poured upon them. The squad of police detailed to protect the goods as they were brought from the building, and likewise to keep an eye on the crowd of people who swarmed over the surrounding grounds, did their work well; but only one arrest was made of a negro boy who was detected while attempting to steal some articles in the building. He was at once taken in charge and marched off to the Station House. In the main the large crowd which witnessed the fire were orderly and willingly lent any assistance in their power.

PHOTOGRAPHING THE FLAMES.

While the fire was in progress a representative of Clarke's photograph gallery took a

splendid picture of the burning building, surrounded by the crowd and with the streams of water playing on it. The view represents the scene as it appeared from the foot of Marion square, and Mr Clarke had excellent proofs ready for exhibition by 2 o'clock, while the ruins were yet smoking.

THE COLORS WENT DOWN.

A striking incident of the fire was the burning of the flagstaff. When the building was about half burned the flames began to creep up the staff. The rope caught and then the flag. Just as the flag caught the staff fell, carrying the blazing colors of Carolina down with it.

The Damages.

The loss by the fire and water is very heavy and is variously estimated at from \$20,000 to \$30,000. It is believed, however, that it will be fully covered by insurance. The entire property is insured for \$52,000. The main building, including the library, is insured for \$35,000, the largest part of which is with Peltzer & Robertson, that firm, it is understood, having \$13,000 of the \$35,000 insurance. The remainder is distributed around in smaller amounts with a number of local agencies.

Notes and Incidents of the Fire.

The Sumter Guards' armory, which is conveniently situated, was thrown open to the cadets yesterday, as was indeed almost every house in the city.

The laboratory at the Citadel was saved, although slightly damaged.

There was no interruption to the dinner at the Citadel yesterday. The cadets rallied to the call of the drum, and met as usual in the mess hall.

The only part of the walls which fell were portions of the parapet.

Most of the cadets who occupied rooms on the top gallery lost their kits and contents.

During the progress of the fire yesterday Mrs Knobeloch and Mrs Ostendorff, who live on the corner of Vanderhorst and King streets, showed the cadets much kindness, inviting them to their bakery and furnishing them with an abundance of hot cakes and coffee.

THE MAN FOR THE EMERGENCY.

A Talk with Col Coward—The Academic Exercises will go on at the Same Old Stand.

The most energetic, hardest worked man at the fire yesterday was Col Coward, the superintendent of the Academy. He was here, there and everywhere, and by his coolness and foresight did much to assist Chief O'Neill to fight the flames intelligently.

During the entire day he knew not an idle moment, and not until late in the afternoon could a few minutes' conversation be had with him. His erect, military figure showed not the faintest signs of the great strain that he had undergone; his bronzed face was begrimed with smoke and dust, his collar was wilted and disconsolate looking, but otherwise he showed no traces of the trying ordeal through which he had just passed.

All those qualities which in the dark days of the civil war had made him a gallant soldier and a successful commander had been called into play, and sinking all thoughts of self he had devoted his energies and powers to the work before him. Like a soldier he showed a brave front to the foe, and exhibited no symptoms of discouragement over the disaster which had overtaken the Academy.

When asked if he contemplated closing the Academy temporarily on account of the fire he replied: "No, sir; under no circumstances will that be done. Many of the class rooms in the east wing are entirely uninjured, others are only injured by water and by day after tomorrow (Wednesday) I hope to be able to resume the academic course."

Col Coward said that he wished to express his appreciation of the many kindnesses shown him upon this occasion by the people of Charleston. He said that he had received invitations from people all over the city to make their houses the resting place for his boys, and that if it had been necessary the entire corps could have found accommodations with private families who would have been only too glad to receive them.

It is very probable that the cadets will make their headquarters for the remainder of the session at the Roper Hospital, but otherwise the routine of cadet life will go on as though nothing out of the common had occurred. They will be marched to the Citadel every day for their meals and will have their recitations in the old familiar class rooms, the drills will take place as usual, and in a few days the machinery of the Academy will be working as smoothly as ever.

It is very likely that the board of visitors will hold a meeting on Friday, when some definite arrangements will be made for the immediate future.

Yesterday afternoon Col Coward received from Col C. S. Gadsden the following telegram:

SEAWANEE, TENN.—Accept my profound sympathy in your great calamity.

C. S. Gadsden.

He also received a number of letters from Charlestonians, expressing sympathy and offering aid in various forms.

OUR HEARTS AND HOMES.

All Charleston Anxious to Provide Temporary Homes for the Officers and Cadets.

The feeling displayed by the people of Charleston towards the cadets and the officers of the Academy was only what was to be expected. The sympathy which was displayed for those who were losers by the fire was heartfelt and freely given.

As Col Coward stood before the still burning ruins of the proud old Academy Monday afternoon many grasped his hand and tendered him every assistance in their power. The Rev A. Toomer Porter, of the Porter Academy, was one of the first to offer assistance. He tendered the Academy to Col Coward as a place of refuge, the cadets at once but Col Coward had accepted this offer the other of the trustees of the Roper Hospital came to tender that institution to the cadets and their instructors. The Hospital in Queen street, will consequently become the home for the cadets, probably for the remainder of the present session. The Hospital will offer ample accommodations for their instruction.

Col Coward was the recipient of数able letters and many personal offers of assistance from individuals who desire to aid in providing for the cadets the other officers and professors. Mr J. M. Connelley and Mr A. F. Gandy, each of their private residences, were

kindly offered to the cadets, and the boys would have been equally pleased to have been accommodated there. The boys themselves had a host of friends among the citizens, and each of them received one or more invitations to reside in their homes.

Most of the professors who lived in the west wing of the Academy, which was not injured, will remain there for the present, and will be available to the cadets.

Mr Coward, however, received invitations from Mr Gandy and Mr Gandy accepted them, and would remain in their home until their homes were repaired.

Yesterday afternoon telegrams were sent to General and to Major, chairmen of the board of the Citadel, and to Major, chairman of the board of the local members of the board, notifying them of the fire and stating the extent to which the city would be unable to accommodate the corps.

Major Coward, however, accepted the invitation of the board of the local members of the board, and would remain in their home until their homes were repaired.

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