

A MILLION-DOLLAR FIRE

Reed Brothers' Packing Plant in Kansas City in Ruins.

SIXTEEN ACRES OF FIERCE FLAMES

A Magnificent Spectacle Which Was Viewed By Thousands—Only One Important Build- ing Saved.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 24.—Fire which started from unexplained causes destroyed the greater portion of Reed Brothers' packing house, in Armourdale, this evening, involving a loss of about \$1,000,000. As a spectacle the fire was a magnificent thing. Thousands of people gathered on the west bluff of this city to view it.

The fire started at 6:30 in the third story of the hog building, a structure of three stories, probably 200 by 75 feet. It spread with remarkable rapidity, and quickly communicated to the engine room on the south. The entire strength of the Fire Department of the two Kansas Cities responded to the call, but the water pressure was totally ineffective. The best that could be done was to save the beef building.

The first wall fell at 7:10 o'clock, and then the fire spread to the icehouses, five in number, and 150 by 200 feet in size. All were destroyed. Next the flames attacked the storage building. This was an immense structure, four stories high and 200 by 250 feet. It was packed from top to bottom with pork. One of the Reid Brothers said to-night that the firm never before had so heavy a stock in the building. Desperate efforts were made to save this structure, but they were futile. The floors and walls were soaked with grease and burned like tinder. It was only by concentrating the strength of the Fire Department and Armour's water tower that the beef building was saved.

Reid Brothers carried about \$750,000 worth of insurance on buildings and stock. Of this amount, \$300,000 was in the Indemnity Exchange, an organization formed by local packers and merchants for self-protection and co-operative insurance two or three years ago.

The house was established in 1887, by Kingan & Co., (Limited,) the Indianapolis and Belfast (Ireland) packers, as a branch, under the management of William P. Reid. The name was changed to the Reid Brothers' Packing Company in July, 1893. It is one of the oldest and wealthiest houses in the country. Kingan & Reid, the founders of the house, were well-known packers in Brooklyn, N. Y., as early as 1850, and later did an extensive business in Cincinnati, moving from there to Indianapolis, the present home of the parent house. The Reid brothers succeeded to their father's interest, and were raised in the business from their youth up.

The plant was on sixteen acres of ground just across the bridge, in Armourdale. The daily capacity of the house was 700 cattle, 250 sheep, and 3,000 hogs. The average number of hands employed had been 1,100.

The Reid Brothers' Packing Company has supply depots at Chicago, St. Louis, New-York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Trenton, N. J., in the East, and also at San Francisco, Denver, Pueblo, Joplin, Oklahoma City, Memphis Tenn.; Dallas, Texas; Peoria, Sedalia Topeka, St. Joseph, Leavenworth, Atchison, and Wichita.