

ITION

MANY EXPLOSIONS AND GREAT SMOKE

Prest-o-Lite Fire, Spectacular
and Alarming. Causes
Loss of \$40,000.

ONLY ONE PERSON INJURED

Grave Danger Threatened by Blaze in
Factory Supplying Automobile
Light Tanks and Acetylene.

A spectacular fire, which started shortly before noon to-day in the compressor-room of the Prest-O-Lite Company, a concern at East and Pearl streets, manufacturing and charging acetylene gas tanks for automobiles, caused an estimated loss of \$40,000 and the injury of one employe, Miss Katie Metz, who suffered a sprained knee by jumping from a fire escape.

No one was in the compressor room when the explosion which started the fire occurred, but it is known to have been one of the small acetylene tanks that had



in the compressor-room at the time and the explosion of the first caused a sheet of flame to shoot forth.

That flame became a spreader of trouble and soon the room became the scene of a miniature Port Arthur. The tanks exploded in rapid succession and a still alarm was sounded for hose company No. 11, in Maryland street. Before that company reached the place the building was in flames and a black column of smoke was curling to the clouds and visible all over the city.

A general fire alarm was soon sounded and every piece of apparatus in the downtown district was soon wrestling with the flames in the bombarded building.

Employees' Quick Exit.

It was fortunate that all of the twenty-five employees of the concern were in other parts of the building at the time of the explosion. The first explosion was a signal for escape, and there was a rush for the street. Three women employed on the third floor were given first place on the fire escape and they descended.

August Tamm, Jr., who was passing the plant at the time of the first explosion, saw the sheet of flame and the rush that followed for the fire escapes. He ran to assist the women to alight from the fire escape, the lower ladder of which hung above the sidewalk about eight feet. Before Tamm could reach her Miss Metz jumped and injured her knee. She was able to move out of harm's way, however, and was sent to her home.

Several of the men on the second floor made their escape by descending a rope hanging from the roof on the Pearl street side of the building. All got out safely before the general bombardment began. The rapid descent of fire escapes and ropes caused a report to circulate that several employees had been left in the building and had not escaped because they had not been seen.

SOLEMNLY IN NEED OF A STRONG RULER

MAY FOLLOW DOW.
S. ABDICATION.

S. CRITICALLY ILL

August 17.—Private dispatches
Pekin forecast a gloomy
to the unsettled state of the
caused by the absence of