

LITTLE ITALY'S FIRE PANIC.

Interferes with Celebration of Religious Festival.

"Little Italy" made holiday yesterday on the annual feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, patron saint of Father Dolan's church in East 115th Street. The dark, dismal streets, with their towering tenements, were transformed into a riot of color, and gayety reigned everywhere.

From every window of these human beehives were displayed Italian and American flags, from the size of a postage stamp to one that would have done honor to the dome of City Hall. Arches were built from curb to curb bearing designs of a religious and national character worked out in many-colored glass cups. Posters glared from every fence, barrel, and box throughout the district announcing the celebration.

Long before the sun rose Italians from all parts of town and suburbs began to flock to the district in order to attend early mass. Many of them carried huge candles, some six and eight feet long, to be offered at the shrine of the patron saint.

When the doors of the church were finally opened it took the combined efforts of seventy-five policemen under command of Capt. Corcoran to prevent the throng of thousands from crushing one another in their anxiety to enter the edifice. Every one had an offering of some kind to make, many of the women in their religious fervor tearing jewelry from their clothing and rings from their fingers and casting them at the feet of the Virgin and Child with fervent prayers for protection.

Masses were said hourly till the celebration of the high mass at 11 o'clock. This was attended by the various Italian societies in full regalia.

The event of the day was the parade of the Societies of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, St. Michael the Archangel, and St. Anthony of Padua, led by Grand Marshal Giovanni Cancro and Vincenzo Barba, the Presidente of the feast. There were fully 5,000 in line, and at least a dozen bands, but this imposing aggregation was destined to be scattered in all directions by an unforeseen event.

Carried in the front ranks of the Mount Carmel Society was the famous banner of the local church, bearing a life-size picture of the patron saint. As it passed through the densely crowded streets men, women, and children rushed out and pinned money upon it, so that the march made slow progress. First Avenue was finally reached about 10 o'clock.

As the head of the line was passing 108th Street there was a slight explosion, and a puff of smoke burst forth from the junkshop of M. Mello, at No. 418. In an instant the ranks were shattered, and within five minutes the neighborhood was in an uproar.

Stocked as it was with paper and rags, the two-story structure burned like tinder. Then the flames spread rapidly to the blacksmith's shop of John Devlin, at 416, and from there to the stable of John J. McMahon, a boss truckman, at 414, threatening the coal yards of David Hirsch & Son, to the west. There were huge gas tanks directly across the street from the fire, and when the wind began to blow the flames in that direction the celebrators were thrown into a state of panic.

Two alarms were sent out after the arrival of the first fire companies. The flames raged fiercely, threatening to wipe out the entire block, which is filled with small sheds, shops, and stables in which there were many horses.

Few, if any, were at work in the block on account of the parade. Uniformed men broke from the ranks and rushed to the stables to get out the horses, and within two minutes a hundred maddened animals were tearing through the streets, endangering the lives of the thousands who thronged about. About the same time the cry was raised that the big gas tank was about to explode. The wildest kind of a panic followed. The police fought desperately to hold the crowds in check, but the people seemed to have lost their heads.

Trucks were dragged out of the yards, blocking the streets and hampering the firemen who came on the second alarm. Finally the district was cleared, and after half an hour's hard work the fire was got under control. Battalion Chief O'Connor said he thought there was no danger from the gas tanks. The Italians thought differently, however, and in order to pacify them the big tank nearest the fire was emptied. This restored courage. The line formed once more and the march continued.

It was estimated that \$5,000 was pinned to the banner, and that from eight to ten tons of candles were carried into the church. Last evening there was a display of fireworks in Jefferson Park, at the foot of 113th Street, which marked the close of the celebration.

BUILDER HOOKEY FAILS.

Has \$1,000,000 Assets He Couldn't Realize On—Liabilities \$300,000.

William T. Hookey, one of the largest and best known dealers in building materials in New York City, was declared bankrupt by creditors yesterday, who filed a petition in the United States court. The liabilities are between \$300,000 and \$350,000, and assets upward of \$1,000,000.

The assets are composed largely of first and second mortgages, which he was compelled to take from builders in payment for materials. The continued tightness of the money market and the unwillingness of the banks to take over these mortgages is given as the main reason for the failure.

The bankruptcy petition against Mr. Hookey, whose place of business is at Third Avenue and 120th Street, was filed by these creditors:

W. H. Barnes & Son, \$9,142; John B. Rose Company, \$1,916, and George S. Shultz, \$1,666. It is alleged in the petition that he is insolvent, and on July 10 made preferential payments to these creditors: Hiram Snyder & Co., \$4,252; Henry R. Brigham, \$4,975; Consolidated Rosendale Cement Company, \$3,991; Morse Lime Company, \$919; H. B. Murchia & Co., \$1,739; John J. King, \$2,274; Robert Main, \$2,337, and Reveley & Emmons, \$3,237.

These payments were made on extension notes given to creditors on April 10, when he obtained an extension of three, six, and nine months.