

A new element of grandeur was now about to add itself to the scene. The fiery tide was lashing and surging around the room in which were stored fourteen thousand rounds of ammunition for the rifles of the cadets; besides these there was a considerable store of shells and powder for the artillery detachment. The commandant of cadets\*, seeing that an explosion was imminent, took a squad, and passing along near the building, pressed the crowd back to a safer position. Then above the volcanic violence of the conflagration was heard the explosion of the cartridges and the bursting of the shells. "The detonations," remarked an old soldier.† "were as rapid as the firing in a hotly-contested battle." At frequent intervals was heard the crash of some falling wall, and a great crest of flame would show where partition or floor had fallen in and given another morsel to the all-devouring elements.

Many persons stood watching the progress of the holocaust till a late hour, fascinated by the scene though chilled by the bitter cold. It was after midnight before the fire had swept across and destroyed the west wing of the University. A group of students sat at an upper window of the Agricultural College‡ and watched until the last wall on the north end swayed and fell outward with a loud crash. So intense was the heat in this wing that workmen, in clearing away the debris four months afterwards, unearthed heated stones and red-hot iron rods.

A detail of cadets remained on duty all night to guard the property of the state. Shortly after midnight there was another heavy fall of snow. The campus was almost deserted, and the ruined walls looked grim and spectral in their snowy mantles.§

On the next morning (Sunday, January 10, 1892) there was a called meeting of the Faculty at 9 o'clock. A telegram from Governor Francis was read, urging that "effective steps be taken to hold the student corps." A bulletin was issued to the students declaring that "the Faculty had unanimously decided to proceed as usual with the work of the University." A large and enthusiastic meeting was held at 10 o'clock in the Opera House, at which hopeful speeches were made by many professors, citizens and students. No services were held in the churches of the town, the ministers being present at the mass meeting. With one or two exceptions, the entire body of students enrolled at that time (584) stood firm and refused to leave the

\*Lieutenant B. B. Buck of the U. S. Army.

†Dr. Edward A. Allen, professor of English.

‡In the lecture room of Dr. Edward D. Porter.

§About \$350,000 worth of property was destroyed by the fire, and upon this there was an insurance of \$147,500.