



SEVENTY THOUSAND POUNDS OF DAMAGE BY THE FIRE DEMON IN THE HEART OF WELLINGTON CITY.

Barton. photo.

The business premises of Messrs. Whitcombe and Tombs, a four-storey brick building situated on Lamington Quay, and the centre of a serious outbreak in 1946, was the scene of a disastrous conflagration on Wednesday morning, when the building was completely gutted, leaving only girders, and a heavy stock of stationery, books, and printing material destroyed. The fire was first noticed about 7.30 a.m., but by the time the brigade arrived a few minutes later the devastating flames had a fierce grip of the upper part. Despite the efforts of the fire-fighters, a lamentable sight soon presented itself. A great column of smoke rose above the roiling flames, bursting from the roof, and this column rose straight up, laden with sparks and light tinders distributed southward. Burnt paper from the fire fell at Brooklyn, and as far south as Island Bay. But the wind was not on the fire. This was fortunate, as in the opinion of some insurance men nothing could have saved the stock had a gale been blowing. Good work was done in preventing the spread of the fire to adjoining buildings. The photographs give views of the rear and front of the building.

J. N. SUNDI, Water and Gas, Commercial Hotel.