



Horton, photo.

### A DISASTROUS BLAZE IN WELLINGTON.—WHITCOMBE AND TOMBS' STATIONERY AND PRINTING PREMISES DEMOLISHED.

The destructive character of the fire is graphically indicated in the photograph reproduced. From Lambton Quay the firemen carried on a plucky fight. The two leads with weak jets were later dented, and the pressure improved. For a time the men who held leads on the ladders or who forced their way in through the front windows of the first floor met a heroic withering heat which they faced as firemen should. In the end the fire was extinguished, but the building stood a more roofless box with four walls, the fire-swept steel girders shaken but still spanning the gap; all the rest of the upper floors and their contents had been consumed. The destruction of ornamental masonry and bricks flanking one of the great Corinthian columns, the front wall, with its bold column and imposing ornamentation, was a work of art. There was no substance behind it. The fire had eaten the kernel, and left the scathed husk. The ground floor only remains.