

**THE STOVEL COMPANY'S FIRE.**

The Winnipeg Fire Commission, which has been investigating the origin of the fire which destroyed the Stovel Company's plant on May 2nd has heard evidence that the local gong outside the Stovel building was ringing at 11.35 while the alarm on the system was not given in to the fire department until ten minutes afterwards. Mr. J. B. Skead, chief inspector for the underwriters, stated that in his opinion the delay in the alarm being transmitted to the fire hall was caused by a "very careless connection attached to the transmitting batteries," while W. Miller, operator of the system for the May-Oatway Company, deposed that the delay could only have been caused by "someone tampering with the instrument." Mr. F. A. Cambridge, city electrician, said that on May 10 he had inspected the system at Stovel's along with three members of the May-Oatway Company and Mr. Skead, and during the inspection the wires came loose and the batteries were disconnected. Mr. Cambridge added that on examination he found the contact to be very poor, and the consequent small current at low voltage action might have caused the delay in the alarm as under such conditions it would be uncertain as to just when the contact would be made.

Asked if he had any criticism to offer, Mr. Cambridge said the connection on the transmitting batteries was a very poor job. He had no criticism to offer of the May-Oatway system. It was just that particular piece of attaching which he found fault with.

Mr. Skead stated that the condition of the connection was extremely poor.

Mayor Waugh: "Have you any other suggestion to make regarding the delay assuming that nobody tampered with the system?"

Mr. Skead: "Yes. There are ten terminals on the system. A loose wire on any one of them might temporarily retard the sending of a signal to the fire hall. Two of these terminals are attached to batteries which were placed under the stairs. Now the vibration caused by people running up and down the stairs, and the vibration of the presses, might have caused one of the wires to become loose."

The inquiry was further adjourned.

The Mutual Life of Canada announces its agents' convention to take place at Niagara Falls on the 29th, 30th and 31st August. "The officers," says the Company's journal, "realise under what serious disabilities the agents of the Company have been working during the last two years, but at the outcome, we will turn the dark cloud inside out."

**FOREST PROTECTION PROPAGANDA.**

The aggressive educational campaign of the Canadian Forestry Association in the cause of forest conservation has been supplemented by a new issue called "A Matter of Opinion." The booklet is an attractive one and strikes at the subject of forest guarding from a unique angle. Seven characters are introduced—Settler, Camper, Banker, Railway Man, Power Engineer, Fire Ranger, and Tax Payer—each telling his personal story of the need for living forests and the increasing menace of burned and wasted forests. The booklet makes easy reading and a mass of information is packed into the twenty-four pages. Copies may be had free by addressing the Association's office, Booth Building, Ottawa.

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