panies themselves were financially unable to carry the business of the country, which is not now the case.

STRENGTH OF FIRE COMPANIES' POSITION.

It might be noted in closing that it is chiefly in this country these problems exist, and this is probably due to the fact that in this country are greater value concentrations than in any other, combined with the maximum of hazard. The hazards are being reduced, the financial power of the companies is being increased, and it remains for the stock companies to furnish to the public a demonstration that they are prepared to give them virtually all they can get from any other system and much more even if it be in some cases at slightly enhanced cost, and to make their claim for support on these broad grounds.

Thus a calm review of the whole situation should steady our nerve with the conviction that the strength of the position lies with the method of stock fire insurance so that those embarked in its conduct as their life work need have no fear as to its continued stability and success.

EXTINGUISHING FIRES WITH SAWDUST.

Paradoxical as it may seem, sawdust is an excellent extinguishing agent for fires in volatile viscous liquids. Its blanketing action in floating on the surface of the liquid for a short time and thus shutting off the oxygen of the air renders it more successful with viscous liquids, because it floats better on these than on thin ones. The sawdust does not ignite readily and burns without flame, the temperature of the embers being too low to cause the liquid to re-ignite.

These facts were brought out by a series of experiments made by the inspection department of the Associated Factory Mutual Fire Insurance Companies with a set of tanks 16 in. deep which were filled with various liquids. A large-bladed snow shovel was employed to spread the sawdust upon the surface of the burning liquid, and the fires were easily extinguished in all cases. Soft or hard wood sawdust was equally efficient, and the amount of moisture contained in it made no appreciable difference.

The addition of ordinary baking soda shortened the time required to extinguish the flames and also decreased the amount of material required. Adding the soda also made the sawdust difficult to ignite from a carelessly discarded match, and thus the risk of fire produced by storing a large quantity of sawdust in a manufacturing plant was reduced. The sawdust was most efficient on lacquers, heavy oils, japan, waxes, and other viscous liquids, but burning petrol in a tank measuring 12 in. by 30 in. by 16 in., the size generally used in industrial establishments, was extinguished. The sawdust alone or in combination with the soda was not so successful in larger tanks, since it sank before the whole surface was covered and permitted the exposed liquid to take fire again. —*The Times Engineering Supplement.*

Although no action was taken at the annual shareholders' meeting of B. C. Packers this week regarding the long-talked of financial re-arrangement, it transpires that the plans are being proceeded with. A new company is being formed with a capital of approximately $5,000,000, which, it is proposed, will give two of its shares for one of the old company.

WANTED: A PENALTY FOR CARELESSNESS.

The necessity of powers to impose a fine or some other punishment on all those who through carelessness cause fires in their premises was again urged by Fire Commissioner Latulippe, of Montreal, when commenting on a fire which occurred at the store of Joseph Adelman, 484 Rachel street, on March 23rd. Commissioner Latulippe found Adelman guilty of gross negligence in having placed a table at no more than ten inches from a stove in his store, the evidence having proved that the stove became overheated and set fire to some clothes on the table, causing considerable damage to the building. Commissioner Latulippe remarked that in this particular instance there had been only material losses, but, had the fire occurred at night, it might have caused loss of lives, and this through carelessness on the part of the proprietor of the store, against whom there was no recourse.

Mr. Adelman, in giving his evidence, admitted that the table was too near the stove, but he contended that the fire had been set to the table by some hot ashes which were in a tin pail beside it. Commissioner Latulippe replied that in either case he had been careless, as he should have known that straw hats and linen placed at such short distance from a lighted stove or hot ashes were liable to catch fire at any time. Mr. Adelman also admitted that he lighted the stove every morning, and left it burning without anybody being in the store to take care of it. On the table beside the stove were piled clothes, straw hats and fur muffs, all of which were inflammable.

LOAN COMPANY LEGISLATION.

The banking and commerce committee took up consideration of the new Loan Companies' Bill at Ottawa on Wednesday. The net result of the discussion was to make the minimum capitalization of loan companies $250,000 and to prohibit a manager of a company from also holding office as president or vice-president.

SHARE WARRANTS EXPLAINED.

A provision authorizing companies to issue share warrants provoked queries from members of the committee who had never heard of them. The minister of finance explained that share warrants were employed in Europe instead of stock certificates and that title to the shares went with possession of the warrants. He explained that this provision was inserted to facilitate the sale of Canadian shares on the Continent.

TRANSMISSION OF INTEREST.

The last matter taken up was that concerning the transmission of interest in shares and debentures. Mr. White said it had been suggested to him as advisable that all Dominion legislation incorporating companies might contain a provision that shares in Dominion companies must be transmitted on there being filed with the company a certified copy of English probate of a will. At present if an English shareholder of a company with head office in Ontario died, his executor was required to obtain ancillary letters of probate from the Surrogate Court in that province, sometimes involving more expense than the shares were worth. It had been suggested that if the Dominion had jurisdiction in the incorporation of companies it could direct that shares might be transmitted and might dispense with the requirements of provincial law. Mr. White doubted whether the Dominion had jurisdiction to do this, however.