

A very slight foundation this was for any subsequent action, but quite sufficient to cause the detective to inquire into Mr. Ero Stratus' own movements on the night of the fire, an inquiry which resulted in his arrest and commitment for trial, as it showed him to have been absent from his usual haunts, and to have been seen in the direction of the factory, although he had not been seen in its immediate neighborhood by any present evidence. His inability or disinclination to account for his whereabouts, together with the facts as to the re-insurances, were held to be sufficient to warrant his commitment, but we trust that when his trial does take place he will be able to account in a satisfactory manner for these seemingly damaging circumstances.

We understand that the Companies who issued the policies of re-insurance intend to demand their return as void, and have instituted proceedings to this end in the Chancery Division of the Superior Court, on the ground that they were procured by fraudulent concealment of facts, and also that the loss was in consequence of the acts of the agent of the Company re-insured.

We shall watch with some interest the proceedings in the case, as it will doubtless be a battle of lawyers, and will be an interesting exhibit of those technicalities of which the "Aurora" has such an abhorrence.

WINNIPEG.

On March 13th the anticipations of many fear-ful underwriters were realized, and a conflagration in Winnipeg cleaned out the wooden row of stores, numbers 225 to 237 (Block 17, Sheet 4, of Insurance Plan), on the West side of Main street, in fact all between a gap left by the wooden buildings Nos. 223 and 223½ having been pulled down and the solid brick wall of the Bank of Montreal,—the solidity of which building and the great width of Main street being the main cause of the fire being confined to the wooden row consumed.

While we deplore the loss to all concerned, we can clearly see that substantial brick structures will take the place of those burnt, that the city authorities will no longer pass by-laws and defer their enforcement year after year, and that efficient means of protection will be procured and maintained.

A few more such burnings-up of wooden rows, paid for mainly by careless owners and by careless Insurance Companies (who write too heavy lines by not keeping Plan system in constant working order, and who, by carelessness, allow over-insurance to be carried), and then Winnipeg will be mainly a brick city, or with so many wide streets and brick fire-breaks, that, with an efficient fire-brigade, she may preserve herself from being frequently swept by fire.

The Manitoba Board of Underwriters met on the day after the fire (March 13th), and passed the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Board urge on the City Council the necessity of immediately repealing the By-law extending the time for the Fire Limit By-law coming into operation.

As the experience of this morning showed plainly that if it had not been for the Bank of Montreal building there is every probability that the recent fire would have at least swept the west side of Main street as far north as the market. Should one or two more such fires occur as happened to day there is a possibility that fire insurance companies may withdraw from doing business here except in first-class buildings.

Resolved, That this Board consider it advisable, in view of the rapid growth of our city, for the Council to secure the services of an experienced paid Fire Inspector, who would also act as Chief of the Fire Brigade, and they would suggest further that the Council take into consideration the advisability of securing another steam fire engine and an additional supply of hose; and that it is the opinion of this Board that it would be well to place a portion of the apparatus in the north and south wards.

Resolved, That the secretary be instructed to write to the Council requesting that Insurance Agents be furnished with badges in order that they may gain admission to burning buildings in the prosecution of their duty.

On the next day, these resolutions were laid before the City Council, who, in their turn, advertised for a new steam fire engine, for a chief and for an assistant engineer, and passed resolutions as follows:

The Fire, Water and Light Committee recommended:

That 2,000 feet of hose be ordered from the Canadian Rubber Company of Montreal at once.

That the city engineer prepare plans at once for two fire halls, one in the northern part of the city and one in the southern.

That eight tanks be put in at once—one near the Prairie saloon, and one at the corners—of St. Mary's and Edmonton, Queen and Donald, Notre Dame and Isabel, Isabel and William, Jemima and Nena, Logan and Prairie, Maria and Lusted streets.

Ald. Wilson moved for a suspension of the rules, to introduce a by-law to repeal the fire limits by-law, the operation of which had been suspended for a year. The suspension having been granted, the by-law was introduced and passed through its several readings. On the second reading it was considered in committee of the whole, Alderman McMicken in the chair.

Ald. McMillan took exception to the extent of the proposed limits, as being about double those proposed in the former by-law.

Ald. Wright thought the extent proposed in the old by-law large enough for the present. An enlargement could be made in six months or so.

Aldermen Moore, Wilson and Monkman spoke of the importance of establishing fire limits, the last mentioned pointing out that though the territory included might be a little large, yet the Board of Works could grant permits in the case of contracts already entered into.

By all which it will be seen that though as a newly built prairie city must needs have many temporary structures, yet that all classes in Winnipeg are fully alive to their duty, and are striving to carry it out.

We cannot sound a better warning note than that which appeared in the *Star* of March 14.

"FORTUNATELY the fire which broke out on Sunday night in Winnipeg was confined to much narrower limits than it was at first feared it would be. The damage done was sufficiently serious, however, to call the attention of the people of Winnipeg to the absolute necessity for caution in the matter of building and for the provision of adequate means for the control and suppression of incipient fires. In a city where speculation in real property runs riot as it now does in Winnipeg the tendency is constantly towards a defiance of the well-known laws which watch for the safety of the community. Rattle trap buildings are run up, and in the grand rush for a fortune no one has time to stop to prepare for the emergency which the very next day may bring forth. If the recent fire