

"NO SMOKING."

"The horse has been stolen." An unguarded window or chimney may have been responsible for the loss but, to prove the proverb, it is now ordered to "lock the door." Here is the order:

"It has been decided to prohibit smoking in all buildings in Ottawa occupied by officials and employees of the Dominion Government, and with that in view I will be obliged if you will notify the different officials of your department accordingly. Notice to this effect will be posted in the different buildings and officers of the Dominion police have been authorized to see that the regulation is enforced."

This order is signed by J. B. Hunter, Deputy Minister of Public Works, and copies have been received by the deputy heads of other departments. In most, if not all, cases the order was countersigned by these officials and posted on notice boards forthwith.

A new order against smoking, spitting or loitering in corridors is also displayed at police posts.

The new regulation was greeted with general approval throughout the Service. The danger of fire from unextinguished matches or butts abandoned by smokers is admitted and conditions in some of the buildings are such that a fire would involve heavy loss to property and jeopardize many lives. The men of the Service determined to obey the order strictly, both because it is an order and because it is in the interest of safety to do so. It is this spirit that makes the rules effective, for violations would be easy to accomplish and hard to detect.

During the first few days there were many funny incidents. One chap endeavoured to violate the order when no one was observing him. A surprise visit forced him to thrust

his pipe into his pocket without emptying it. A few minutes later he was fighting a fire which had made a large hole in the side of his coat. Men filled their pipes, struck matches and,—thought of the new order. Then the matches were carefully extinguished and the pipes put away. Others remembered too late; then there was a hasty disposal of the burning weed and an opening of windows to let out the tell-tale smoke.

A certain clerk is said to have lighted a cigarette while talking to his deputy minister. Another deputy head was observed carefully emptying his pipe before he re-entered the West Block after lunch.

There are men to whom the order brings real hardship,—those who can think better or work more effectively when smoking, and those who habitually soothe their nerves after a hard spell of work by a few draughts of smoke.

Casual comment often manifested resentment, but sober expressions were almost unanimously in support of the order. It is generally felt, however, that the rule should be enforced upon all persons in the buildings. High officials, ministers, members of parliament and visitors should have to conform to it. Otherwise the order will be unjust and of no value as a safeguard against fire. It is recalled that one of the fires of comparatively recent occurrence originated in the office of a minister and was believed to have been started by the minister's own cigar, left behind on his desk when he went to lunch.

In some offices, even those tenanted exclusively by men, the new order will work no practical hardship because they have had for years a rule against smoking in office hours. The lunch-hour cigarette or the pipe kept alight for a few minutes after arrival in the office and before the be-