

Toronto Firemen's Wages.

The Fire and Gas Committee met yesterday. Present—Ald. Farley (chairman), Love, Adamson, Crocker, Ryan, Treas, Baster and Piper.

A petition was presented signed by over 600 ratepayers, for an increase of pay to the firemen. 1-5 cent per hour more being asked for the foreman of each station, and 2-5 cents for the men. This would be an increase of \$105 per year for the former and \$121 for the latter, giving them in all \$705 and \$603 per year respectively.

A number of gentlemen were present to support the petition, and were asked to address the Committee.

Mr. Walter S. Lee thought the men were trustworthy and efficient, and would like to see them well paid. He would not give a decided opinion as to the sufficiency of their present pay.

Mr. James B. Huestead asked the Committee to look into the matter thoroughly, and to grant the increase if they thought there were grounds for doing so. He would not recommend the increase, but thought the question deserved consideration.

Mr. Pearson addressed the Committee in favor of an increase.

The deputation then withdrew and the Committee proceeded to consider the matter. Ald. Baster would not agree to an increase at the present time, and moved that the petition be not entertained.

Ald. Close moved in amendment that it be left over until the salaries by-law come up for consideration. He saw that Messrs. Manning, W. B. Butler, John Morrison and other members of the Property Owners' Association had signed the petition, and he would like to ascertain how these gentlemen could sign it and then advocate the general cutting down of salaries.

Ald. Love suspected that these property owners wished to ingratiate themselves with the firemen.

Ald. Ryan was altogether opposed to the increase and would support Ald. Baster's motion.

After some further discussion Ald. Close's amendment was carried.

Among the many anomalies in the relation of men to each other, that of the employer to the employee furnishes more matter for thoughtful reflection than most. If this may be maintained in individual cases, it is sometimes more manifest in corporations, which are said to have "nether bodies to be kicked nor souls to be saved." It is indeed noted that men who would separately shrink from action of a mean or oppressive nature, become, in their corporate capacity, oblivious of the respect due to any shred of generous character they may happen individually to possess, and are thereby led to results which, calmly considered, may well cover them with shame.

To the interests especially under our care the effects of parsimonious dealing with the firemen's pay are so plainly disastrous that the advocacy of an opposite course would seem superfluous. Instances, however, are constantly occurring to demonstrate the contrary, and it becomes necessary to deal with them as they arise. It usually happens that men in office, yielding to a general feeling, carry it to extremes, and at present a sort of retrenchment fever possesses our corporations, so that now you will see alder-

men and councillors ready to out-Herod Herod in the race for economic glory.

A strange sight truly, though not one to be discouraged—but let them set bounds to their zeal. There is surely "ample room and verge enough" without grudging a reasonable wage to men who, day and night, are held at call for perils of service, and whose life is circumvented to the limits of duty. Does the city father, who may be presumed to fare sumptuously and "sleep well of nights," realize the discomforts, not to say dangers, of a fireman's life? Surely not, or the heart that lives quietly in an easy body would readily yield to these men wages more compatible with their arduous labors than the amount at present paid them.

Explosion in a Paper Mill.

This is the second explosion, within a short time, that has taken place in a paper mill. A little over a year ago a pulp boiler exploded in the Dominion Paper Mills, and last week another similar one has taken place in the Canada Paper Company's premises, near Sherbrooke, Quebec; attended with loss of life and maiming others for life. An adjustment of the loss will be a difficult matter, as the Fire Insurance Companies are only liable to damage not caused by explosion, which is very great, but the burning after.

Fire Insurance Business in New York for 1879.

The losses chronicled in our last issue for Canadian Fire Insurance Companies' business of 1879 have had their parallel in New York.

Only nine of the eighty-one companies of that state increased their surplus last year, and the capital invested has been reduced by over \$1,300,000. The following six companies having retired from business, viz. Adriatic, Amity, Atlantic, New York Central, Ridgewood and Safeguard.

Nitro-Glycerine Explosion.

At six o'clock this morning, January 16th, the citizens of Prince Arthur's Landing were awakened from their slumbers by a most terrible shock. Some thought the world had come to an end, while others took in the situation at once, and thought it must have been the Ontario Powder Company's works, situate nearly a mile from the main part of the town. Such it proved to be. Less than half an hour after the report there were over one hundred men on the scene. The cause of the explosion was fire in the main building. The buildings comprising the works are situated as follows:—On the right is the engine-house, in connection with which is the composition room. In the rear of this is the residence of Dr. Volney, the proprietor, where some of the men in connection with the works board. To the left of the engine-house is a storage building, and to the left of that again is the main building, where the nitro-glycerine and Volney powder is manufactured. Again to the left of this is the magazine where the nitro-glycerine and powder is kept after being manufactured. From the

engine house to the factory are extended water and steam pipes, the place being heated by steam from the engine-house. A heat of 80° is required to be kept up all the time, therefore they have a night watchman to keep up the fire in the boiler. The watchman was looking out of the window facing Thunder Bay, when he saw a reflection on the snow. He went over to the other window and saw a light shining from the window of the main building. He took his lantern and went over, and upon opening the door, saw the building was on fire. He grabbed some old clothes hanging near, and threw them upon the fire, but could not put it out. He then rushed out to the house to tell Dr. Volney, who, seeing how matters stood, told him to turn on the water and get out of the way. He turned on the water, and when ran outside and lay down behind a woodpile. He had barely got there when the terrible explosion occurred. It so happened that the building and its contents went in the direction of the engine house, rattling that and the residence into splinters and carried the debris for several hundred yards out into the bay. Large masses of frozen earth, weighing at least fifty pounds, were carried for a quarter of a mile in various directions. The engine was removed out of place, and everything else turned upside down. The shock must have exploded the glycerine in the magazine for not a particle of that remains to be seen. Where it stood is a round hole fifty feet across and about twenty feet deep. The ice in Thunder Bay cracked and a short distance out can be seen open water.

The escaped occupants of the residence seem almost miraculous. Dr. Volney, Mr. Cole, and a lady, who was housekeeper, were in the building at the time and escaped without injury.

Dr. Volney reckons his loss will be in the neighborhood of \$3000, while the damage in town and at Fort William is considerable. On the principal streets of Prince Arthur's Landing no end of windows are broken. The places that received the most damage are O'Connor's drug store, windows broken and bottles emptied on the floor; Mark's windows. Crush's saloon, bar and windows; also the windows of Messrs. Vignar, Kennedy, Daniels, Pratt, Pelier, Bonin, Claver, Clark, Street, Park, Griffin, Wilcox, Cook; the Queen's Mining Exchange, and American hotels; town hall and school house, some of the churches and private residences without number. In the *Sentinel* office the type was upset and made into pit, and the front of the building almost torn out.

There was a great demand for glass in the stores next morning. The fire in the factory cannot be accounted for.

Godrich fire alarm has been found inefficient.

A WRITER in Haper's Magazine tells us that in 1771 George Washington was a member of the "Friendship Fire Company."

THE Corporation of Perth, having determined to place their Fire Department in the front rank as regards appliances, have ordered a quantity of the Eureka Seamless Cotton Hose from Mr. Blackwood, the agent for Canada.

THE two highest and best throws of water of which there is definite record are the following: At Burlington, Ia., at the time of the recent Grant reception, a solid three inch stream was thrown to a height of 304 feet; at Rochester, N. Y., a solid four-inch stream to a height of 297 feet.