

THE IROQUOIS THEATRE FIRE.

The coroner's jury, after an investigation lasting nearly three weeks, placed the responsibility for this holocaust upon the shoulders of eight city officials and theatre attaches. The mayor of the city, the manager of the theatre, a fire marshal, a building commissioner and a building inspector are included in the list. The causes of the fire are stated as follows:

By the grand drapery coming in contact with an electric flood or arc light situated on an iron platform on the right hand of stage facing the auditorium.

The city laws were not complied with relating to the building ordinances regulating fire alarm boxes, fire apparatus, damper or flues on and over the stage and fly galleries.

We also find a distinct violation of the ordinance governing fireproofing of scenery and all woodwork on or about the stage.

The asbestos curtain was totally destroyed, and was wholly inadequate considering the highly inflammable nature of all stage fittings, and owing to the fact that the same was hung on wooden buttons.

The building ordinances were violated by inclosing sides on each side of lower boxes and in not having any fire apparatus, dampers or signs designating exits on orchestra floor.

The building ordinances were violated in that section regulating fire apparatus and signs designating exits on dress circle.

The building ordinances were violated in that section regulating fire apparatus and signs designating exits on balcony.

Generally the building is constructed of the best material and is well planned, with the exception of the top balcony, which was built too steep, and therefore difficult for people to get out of, especially in case of an emergency. We also note a serious defect in the wide stairs in the extreme top east entrance leading to the ladies' lavatory and gallery promenade, the same being misleading, many people mistaking this for a regular exit, and going as far as they could, were confronted with a locked door which led to a private stairway, preventing many from escaping and causing the loss of fifty to sixty lives.

It is to be hoped that the officials of Canadian cities will feel their responsibility and not wait for the verdict

of a coroner's jury. What is being done to remedy the defects in theatres and other public buildings in Toronto and elsewhere discovered as the result of visits of inspection made immediately following the disaster in Chicago? The newspapers of Toronto, which remained mum in the face of the statements published in this journal regarding the unsafe condition of one of the Toronto theatres, were forced by the Chicago horror to make a show of defending the public safety, but for weeks past they have not published a line on the subject. The Theatre and Music Halls Committee of the London County Council recommends that all places of amusement should compulsorily be placed in telephonic communication with the fire brigade; not only should this be done, but members of the fire brigade and police force should be detailed to attend every performance. The buildings should be made as nearly fire-proof as possible and so planned as to afford ready egress from all parts of the interior. In addition to all this, some carefully thought out method of preventing a panic should be adopted.

What is called a heat-proof putty is made by mixing burnt lime with linseed oil and boiling down to the usual consistency of putty, and allowing the plastic mass to spread out in a thin layer to dry in a place where it is not reached by the sun. It can be warmed over a lamp or otherwise for use, and on cooling is hard again.

A VISIT TO THE CANADA FOUNDRY COMPANY'S WORKS.

A luncheon was recently tendered at the King Edward Hotel, by Mr. Frederic Nicholls, general manager, on behalf of the Canada Foundry Co., to some two hundred gentlemen prominently identified with the business interests of Toronto. Arrangements had been made to afford these gentlemen the opportunity of inspecting the company's extensive works at Davenport, and special cars were in waiting for the purpose. Unfortunately, however, as the start was about to be made a severe blizzard set in, and it was decided to postpone the visit until a future date, of which due notice will be given.

NEW IDEA IN HOT WATER DISTRIBUTION.

Oscar F. Peterson, of Des Moines, has secured a patent on systems of hot water distribution designed to keep the hot water hot while circulating in the mains, without expensive main construction. He places the hot water pipes in common clay tiling, through which, surrounding the hot water pipes, he forces hot air, which keeps the water in the pipes at the highest possible temperature. It is said that with a 40-horse power engine to pump the water and a 6-horse power engine to run the fan with which the hot air is forced through the tube, the plant can be operated advantageously and at a minimum cost. The air which is used is heated by the waste heat which otherwise would go out the smokestack. The use of the hot air is elementary in reducing cost of production, in two ways: It keeps the hot water hot, thus reducing the fuel required to keep it at 250 degrees, and it does away with the expensive asbestos and wooden lag main construction. Where the water pipes in the ordinary system radiate and lose much heat throughout their length, in the Peterson device it is claimed that it is the hot air which radiates and loses heat instead of the hot water. Mr. Peterson says that he has tried the device in a mile of mains and it worked satisfactorily. On account of the economy of the scheme the heat can be furnished at a much lower price than the heat of other plants, it is claimed.

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