

FIRES CAUSED BY STEAM THRESHERS

The *Harrison Review*, of October 17th, gives the following graphic description of a fire caused by sparks from a threshing machine:—

"A number of men were engaged filling a large cement silo. . . . A threshing engine placed contiguous to the barn furnished power. . . . A spark from the engine was blown through a crack into the barn. . . . In less time than it takes you to scan this description the whole interior was a mass of flames. Two men barely escaped with their lives; one was badly burned. . . . It was only by heroic efforts that the substantial residence was saved. Many barns are being burned by similar accidents, and the Provincial Fire Marshal might with propriety suggest some safeguards against their recurrence."

Yes! many reports are received of somewhat similar instances of *gross carelessness*. Such occurrences are not "accidents." Simple precautionary measures as provided by law would prevent fires of this character.

Rails, jack pine, soft coal, etc., are used for firing the engines, and every man who runs a threshing machine knows that they send out sparks. He also knows, or ought to know, that a screen placed on the smoke box, if kept in good order, will prevent the engine from emitting sparks and starting a fire.

The Law Provides the Safeguard

"Every manufacturer of steam threshing engines shall provide each engine with an efficient spark arrester before selling or disposing of the same; and no person shall use or run any steam threshing engine unless it is provided with such spark arrester, and every owner or other person using or running the engine, shall keep the spark arrester at all times when the engine is in use in proper working order.

"(1) Every manufacturer who sells or disposes of a steam threshing engine without an efficient spark arrester shall incur a penalty of not more than \$20 or less than \$5.

"(2) Every person using or running a steam threshing engine not provided with such spark arrester, or wilfully using or running a steam threshing engine not having the spark arrester in proper working order, shall incur a penalty of not more than \$20 or less than \$5 for every day he so uses such steam threshing engine.

"All penalties imposed by this Act shall be recoverable under the provisions of the Ontario Summary Convictions Act.

"One-half the fine when recovered shall belong to the informer and the other half to the treasurer of the municipality where the offence is tried."

The law also requires the owners of threshing and other machines to guard against accidents, and stipulates what provision must be made to prevent injury to the operator or persons who may be near the machinery.