



THE ESCAPE.

hose is of leather, or of cotton woven into a tube by special machinery. One tube is fitted inside another, and they are fastened by a preparation of India-rubber, which makes the tube strong, flexible, and perfectly water-tight. Rivets are of the strongest metal, and nozzles of all sizes. On coming back from service, the hose are all thoroughly cleansed, and hung up in a high tower to dry.

The Chemical Car has its huge tank of water, all filled and ready. Chemicals are carried above. By one single hand-pressure the stuff is dropped into the water, which is then ready for use. It is dangerous, however, to the men's eyes, and but for its efficiency against fire, should hardly be used.

The Salvage Car is a curiosity. In small compass, and convenient places, there are folding ladders to climb with; tarpaulins to cover up goods and furniture for protection; strong levers to force locks open, without breaking doors; huge mammoth scissors to cut tin roofs; brooms and pails to sweep up water; rubber scrapers to save carpets from injury; and the most modern and expeditious appliances for every form of salvage that could be well thought out.

The Escape Car brings up the rear, with its long telescope of ladders, nets, bags, mattresses, and general safety.

There is an opening in the roof, for a pole to pass up. It takes too long to run, to skip, to jump, even to fly, downstairs. When the fire signal strikes, each man upstairs puts his knee round the pole, and hardly gets out of the way at the foot before he is followed by the others, all sliding down.

Now, the horses. I am not sure but I should let them have a page to themselves, the great, sleek, nimble, on-the-alert creatures, day and night snorting for the race. Each has his name. If the men are chiefly English, the names may be Stanley, Dufferin, Victor, or Pride. If the most of the men in the Station are French, the choice may show their individual likes and preferences. Each horse has his stall, and the stables not only form part of the station, but they are part of the same building, and on the same floor. Each stall has two entrances, or rather an entrance and an exit. His relations with the stable are all through the entrance. But his relations with his work are through the exit. The end of his stall, at his nose, is the exit. It opens in two doors. A small whip is suspended over each horse. When the gong strikes, such a multitudinous succession of things happens, that if you do not look out well you have seen the last of your senses. The doors, the exits, of the stalls fly open; the bridle is unfastened; the whip touches the horses' neck; they spring with almost one leap into the place waiting for them in their own special

car; they back in; they stand motionless; the men slide down the poles and jump on; the driver seizes the reins; as he seizes the reins, the harness suspended drops into its place; he pulls the reins; everything is buckled on;

and all in much less time than it has taken you to read it. In five seconds from the gong they are flying along the streets. First they rush to the box from which they were signalled; then to the scene of their labour, and set to in earnest. Fires are lighted for the steam pumps. Connections are made with the hydrants. Orders are given by the Chief. Positions are taken up. The fire had better look out now. Everything is speed. A few minutes saved in the early stages are of more value than tons of water after. An unlimited and constant supply of water, with an efficient brigade, may be trusted with the worst conflagration. Little water, however, is, in some cases, worse than none. Indeed, it has been proved to help on the fire. The skill of an experienced fireman, his courage, in the midst of flames and falling walls, to direct hose and save life and property, are not far short of a miracle.

Our Canadian Fire Brigades are the best in the world. But, alas! we have too much need for them. Our heating appliances, our winter stove pipes, our fires over night, our hard winter for the removal of half-cooled cinders, our hurry in building, may account for much. But accounting for a misfortune is not always remedying it. We should do something to remedy it. What? Well, we must find out.

Until then, there is much we can do to reduce the loss. No house should be erected without some safe and certain escape in the event of fire. We never mean to have our property burned. None of us do. But it is burned. Neither do we mean to have our lives taken from us by fire. None of us do. But some are nevertheless taken in this way. I am not going to sleep another night in a room without a strong cord attached to the window. I shall hide it under a box, or a table, or a lounge. But I shall have it there. It will be from one-quarter to three-eighths in diameter. It will bear three or four hundred weights if I keep it in good order. I shall have knots upon it all the way down, say twelve inches apart. I shall, every week, go through my own self-imposed drill—get it out from under the lounge, toss



THE SALVAGE.