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Water Sprinklers in Theatres a Suggestion.

While the asbestos curtain between a stage and the audience will hold back a fire from reaching the auditorium for a time, the time of its service is very limited. Certainly, in half an hour, were a fire raging on the stage and in the wings of a theatre, an asbestos curtain of the best quality would break down. The municipal by-law ought to compel sprinklers to be placed all around the proscenium arch. Were this done, the most dangerous part of the interior would be protected. A special type of sprinkler could readily be fixed in the position named, that would send out streams of water quite sufficient to swamp any fire threatening to reach the auditorium. Such sprinklers ought to be a regular fixture in every theatre, and be so arranged as to be put in operation by a tap near the stage exit to the street, if there is any delay in the sprinkler acting automatically.

How a Singer Stopped a Theatre Panic.

Some years ago when Santley, distinguished vocalist, was engaged at the Royal Italian Opera, London, England, the decorations on the stage took fire while he was singing. He watched the flames for a moment, still continuing to sing, when he noticed signs of a panic in the auditorium. Stepping to the footlights, Mr. Santley, in tones of indignant remonstrance, exclaimed: "Don't make fools of yourselves!" then continued his vocal performance without a sign of nervousness. The effect was electrical all over the opera-house. Those who had risen to go and those on the move resumed their seats, while the fire on the stage was suppressed. But for Santley's nerve there would have been a frightful panic. As the audience embraced a large number of the nobility and leaders of high society in England, it required heroic courage to bid them bluntly not to make fools of themselves.

School Fire Drill.

The advantage of what is termed "fire-drill" in a public school, was recently illustrated at Toronto. A fire broke out in one of these buildings where several hundred pupils were at their desks. At a signal from the Principal the children rose and marched out in perfect order, not the slightest accident occurring, and with no loss of clothing. The building was destroyed by the fire. Had the scholars not been drilled, there would have been a panic and it is almost certain a loss of life would have taken place. This drill is practiced regularly in Toronto Schools, so that, when an alarm is given, there is no confusion, no scuffle for the struggle to get ahead of the weak, and no loss of hats, caps, or wraps. This admirable system should be adopted in all schools. It is not only valuable in preventing loss of life and accidents, but is a lesson to the value of discipline and order which pupils, who have practiced fire-drill at school, will be all the better for in later years. On the occasion of a recent test being made, a school containing 500 pupils was emptied in 1 minute and 10 seconds.

Crops in Manitoba, 1903.

During 1903 Manitoba produced a total crop of all grains amounting to 82,576,519 bushels. Such is the official estimate issued by the Provincial Department of Agriculture. As compared with previous years, this season's crop shows a falling off in total production of 17,475,824 bushels, by far the larger portion of which is made up by wheat and flax. The total yield of each cereal is as follows: Wheat, 40,116,878 bushels; oats, 33,035,774; barley, 8,707,252; flax, 5,644,440; rye, 49,900; peas, 34,154 bushels. Total—82,576,519.

The yield of wheat is 12,060,389 bushels less than the previous year, and 10,385,207 bushels below that of 1901. The average yield per acre was 16.42, against 26 in 1902 and 25.1 in 1901.