FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION.

A very interesting report on fire protection is presented in the transactions of the American Society of Municipal Improvements by Mr. Alcide Chausse, formerly City Architect and Superintendent of Buildings for Montreal. Mr. Chausse is chairman of a special committee of the Society to enquire into Fire Protection and Prevention and the following excerpts taken from his report should be particularly helpful at this time of economy, when every dollar that can should be saved by proper fire protection and prevention.

"The National Fire Protection Association, assembled in Washington for its twenty-first annual meeting, in May, 1917, called attention to the new and unusual hazards to life and property created throughout America by the world war, which demand the utmost vigilance and initiative not only from those in authority, but from the private citizen as well. Every individual should consider himself a fire warden of the nation at this critical time and should equip himself to serve his country by safeguarding to the extent of his intelligence and ability every form of natural and created resource. The elimination of waste, at all times the duty of good citizenship, is at this moment our profoundest public and private responsibility.

In its warfare against the needless sacrifice of human lives and property by fire the Association advocated the following measures:

1. The adoption by municipalities of the Standard Building Code of the National Board of Fire Underwriters to the end that fire-resistive building construction may be encouraged, the use of inflammable roof coverings prohibited, adequate exit facilities from buildings assured, and interiors so designed and fire-stopped as to make easy the extinguishmetn of fires therein.

2. The adoption by all states of minimum building requirements for the protection of state and county hospitals, asylums and similar institutions outside city limits and of small communities in which the establishment and enforcement of a building code is impracticable.

3. The enactment by each state of the fire marshal law advocated by the Fire Marshals' Association of North America to the end that official investigation may be made of the causes of all fires, preventable fires may be eliminated by public education, and the crime of arson stamped out.

4. The adoption of the Association's suggetsed ordinance providing for the systematic inspection of all buildings by city fire marshals or local firemen, to insure the vigorous enforcement of rules for cleanliness, good housekeeping and the maintenance of safe and unobstructed exits, fire-fighting apparatus and other protective devices.

5. The enactment of ordinances similar to that of Cleveland, Ohio, fixing the cost of extinguishing preventable fires upon citizens disregarding fire prevention orders, and a more general legal recognition of the common law principle of personal liability for damage resulting from fires due to carelessness or neglect.

6. The wider general use of the automatic sprinkler as a fire-extinguishing agent and life saver and the more general adoption of the fire division-wall as an important live-saving exit-facility.

7. A careful study of the technical surveys of cities made by the engineers of the Committee on Fire Prevention of the National Board of Fire Underwriters covering the items of water supplies, their adequacy and reliability, fire department efficiency, fire alarm systems and conflagration hazards, and of the possibility of co-operation among neighboring cities through metal aid and the standardization of hose couplings.

8. The adoption of the Association's suggested laws and ordinances for state and municipal regulation of the transportation, storage and use of inflammable liquids and explosive.s

9. The universal adoption and use of the safety match and legislation prohibiting smoking in all parts of factories, industrial and mercantile buildings except in such fireproof rooms as may be especially approved for the purpose by fire departments.

10. The education of children and the public generally in careful habits regarding the use of fire.

11. The co-ordination of all these activities, through a central administrative officer or body of the state or city having primary jurisdiction, for the purpose of promoting uniformity of action and efficient co-operation.

In the furtherance of these objects the Association appealed for the co-operation of all citizens. It asked them to help in the dissemination of its valuable literature and in the use of the standards of fire protection so carefully worked out by its committees to the end that the lives and substance of our people shall not continue to be dissipated by a reckless and easily preventable waste.

The following resolutions have been adopted by the Fire Marshal in Chief of the Fire Department of Texas:

"Experience has taught us that carelessness and ignorance are responsible for the origin of the majority of fires in cities, and that a large per cent of such fires can be prevented. We hereby resolve to enforce to the letter all fire prevention laws, ordinances and regulations, and remedy conditions in our city by making frequent inspections of the business and manufacturing districts, including the residence district, whenever and wherever possible, and insist upon the removal of all rubbish and inflamable material from the premises. We resolve further to take every precaution for the prevention of fires, protection of property and the safety of the public, realizing that the responsibility rests upon our shoulders as fire marshal and chief of the fire department.

"The average yearly fire loss in this country, to say nothing of the wages lost by the people thrown out of employment, the rents loss and the profits gone, is around \$225,000,000. The fire loss in the United States and Canada every year is greater than of all the other countries of the world combined. This surely is an enormous tax on the people of this country, and I have come to the conclusion that, to a considerable extent, I am responsible for this loss. Therefore, I hereby resolve that, in the future, I will not issue a fire insurance policy to a person unknown to me without first making an investigation as to his character and reputation. I will personally see that the property upon which I issue a policy is not over-insured, as I realize that many fires are set because of over-insurance in an attempt to sell out at a price above the value of the property, and, in this manner, defraud the insurance company, when as a matter of fact, in the end the honest