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Notes On Old-Time Fires.

In an old book picked up on a bookstall in this city, by Dr. Strong, on "The Clubs of Glasgow," we found the following note, the spelling of which has been modernized.

On the 25th Sept., 1725, the Corporation of Glasgow paid £50 sterling for a fire engine got in London. On 22nd Jan., 1726, the following Minute shows the anxiety felt by the Corporation regarding fires:

"The Magistrates, in pursuance of a former Act, had met with the proprietors of the sugar houses and had received from them some proposals, viz.: That upon the towns exempting the servants from keeping of the town guard, in respect of their labour and work in the sugar house, necessarily requires their working in the night time as well as through the day, they, in lieu thereof, agree and condescend that the sugar boiler of each of the sugar houses, with their servants, which will be ten at least from each sugar house, shall be ready at all times when fire happens in the city, on their being advertised by the drum, or bell, or first alarm thereof, to attend the Magistrates and give their best helps and assistance, the town providing each sugar house with four slings and stands and buckets, so that upon the first occasion of fire they shall come to the place with them filled with water, and thereafter observe the orders and directions of the Magistrates and others whom they shall appoint." On 17th June, 1652, a great fire at Glasgow wrought such distress that the English Parliament was appealed to for help and supplies, and collection was made throughout the kingdom for the sufferers from the fire. On November 2, 1677, another conflagration took place in regard to which there was a Minute made in which occurs the following: "Because such fires are more incident to burghs and incorporations by reason of their joining house to house, and on being inflamed is ready to inflame one another, especially being contiguously joined and reared with timber and deal boards, without so much as the windskew of stone, therefore they do statute and ordain that when it shall please God to put any of their neighbours in any capacity and resolution to build *ne novo*, or repair their ruinous houses, each person shall be obliged to do it by stone work from head to foot, back and front." To that ordinance

Glasgow owes its first start as a city of stone buildings.

While speaking of old-time fires, reference is in order to the destruction of Government House, Wellington, New Zealand, on 22nd June, 1848, which called out a remarkable demonstration by the natives. A large body of them caused a letter to be written to the Governor, Sir George Grey, which read:—"Salutations to you! Great is our love and sympathy to yourself and Mrs. Grey, because your dwelling has been destroyed by fire. Do you hearken! We offer to build a new house of stone for you, as we have learnt the art of building. But there must be no payment given us! etc., etc." This spontaneous display of loyalty and personal affection towards Governor Grey was inspired by gratitude for the beneficence of British rule in New Zealand. There will be similar demonstrations in South Africa when the Boers begin to realize that they have been released from the tyranny of an oligarchy to the freedom of British subjects.

Profits From Banking Not Insurance.

The statements of many fire insurance companies would assume a different aspect were a distinction drawn in them between the net profits on the insurance business and their income from investments and casual profits in handling them. The Standard remarks: The dozen or so fire company statements that have appeared thus far bear out the opinion formed several months ago, that precious little money would be made upon underwriting in 1901 and that the profit must accrue from the banking feature of the business. Those familiar with the conduct of fire insurance affairs in the metropolis have not failed to note the ever-growing attention paid by companies to their strictly financial concerns. Several of the larger institutions have an officer whose sole duty it