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already discovered many shortcomings. One glaring in-
 stance is the St. Helen School, where the lives of a hundred
 little girls, mostly under seven and eight years of age,
 are daily in jeopardy. The school occupies the
 third floor of a four-storey building, the ground floor of
 which is used as a hardware and fuel alcohol store. The
 only egress from the class-room is by a tortuous stairway
 leading through a narrow hallway to the single front door,
 common to all the upper part of the building. The door
 opens inwards, the stairs being just wide enough in to per-
 mit it to do so. In the event of a rush, it would be im-
 possible to hold it open; but through it the children would
 have to come as there is no other means of escape. Hap-
 pily, the school expects to move its quarters next month.
 But the fact that such criminally hazardous conditions have
 been allowed to exist at all is further proof of the urgent
 need for reforms which should have been undertaken by the
 local authorities long ago.

The Montreal Society for the Protection of Women and
 Children has taken up the fight for better protection of the
 schools of Montreal against fire, and adopted resolutions
 provided for petitioning the Provincial Legislature for the
 passage of laws compelling the authorities to properly equip
 all school buildings with outside fire escapes.

From all parts of the country come reports telling of
 investigations made by municipal authorities of the condition
 of their schools. St. Catharines, Ont., is already preparing
 a by-law to enforce the placing of fire escapes upon all public
 buildings. Other municipalities in the Province will,
 nolens volens, have to follow suit under the Government
 order. From other points is heard a great deal about the
 efficiency of the fire drill. With few exceptions, no hint is
 given as to the existence of galleries and other appliances.
 At Point St. Charles, Que., where a demonstration was made
 a few days ago of the working of the fire chutes provided
 there, the fire escape law was read, and it was plainly evi-
 dent that that large institution was devoid of the fire pro-
 tection that the law called for.

Whether or not the various kinds of fire escapes are the
 most suitable appliances for school buildings is a matter
 for experts to determine. But all authorities are agreed
 upon the efficiency and necessity for outside galleries, wide
 corridors, broad stairs, fire-proof basements, and outward
 opening doors. When these conditions have been fulfilled,
 all that modern science can do will have been accomplished,
 and the possibility of disaster reduced to a minimum. Public
 opinion demands reform along these lines.

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ham. Although consisting of several storeys, that building
 is wholly unprovided with fire escapes. Chatham is not the
 only offender. In Toronto, which has experienced three
 school fires of recent years, a similar condition exists. Few
 cities could be named where they do not. The order for
 reform has assuredly been sufficiently long delayed. It is
 regrettable that so terrible a warning was necessary to
 produce it.

The compulsory equipment of fire escapes and adequate
 exits is undoubtedly a step in the right direction, but it is
 one that must be followed by others before the authorities
 will be relieved of the grave responsibility now resting upon
 them. When asked as to the effect of the new regulations,
 the superintendent of the Toronto schools expressed doubt
 as to the practicability of fire escapes in schools.

"As fires in schools," he said, "usually occur in weather
 such as that fire escapes are likely to be slippery and the chil-
 dren would be liable to fall and get injured, fire escapes are
 of very little use. It is well known that sidewalks may be
 cleared off in the morning and be quite slippery by noon,
 so it may be imagined what difficulty there would be in
 trying to keep fire escapes or galleries safe. Of course, fire
 escapes are of use on other buildings, where there are
 adults, who are better able to climb around. But their use-
 fulness on schools is a very debatable question."

In conversation with the Monetary Times, the Toronto
 fire chief spoke in no hesitating terms of the necessity for
 outside galleries and stairways in all three-storeyed school
 buildings. His view is also shared by the city architect,
 who will presumably make recommendations to the local
 board of control to that effect. The Chief of the Montreal
 Brigade, another strong advocate of outside galleries, is
 making a tour of inspection of the schools there, and has