BOSTON'S FIRE FIGHTERS;
HON JOHN R MURPHY
Boston Daily Globe (1872-1922); Mar 15, 1891;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers Boston Globe (1872 - 1927)
pg. 12

BOSTON'S FIRE FIGHTERS.

—BY—

HON. JOHN R. MURPHY.

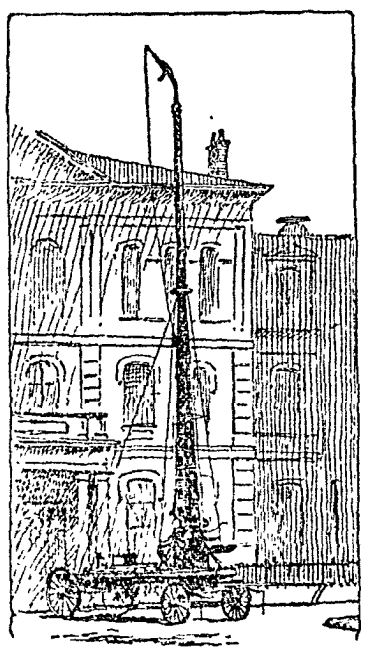
ONE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONERS

In these modern days progress is the watch-word. In no way is it shown more than in the fire service of our American municipalities. Great fires, caused by faulty buildings, constructed largely of wood, have been the necessity which spurred invention with us, so that when London and Paris remodel their fire departments they are compelled to come to America for the most improved and practical ideas. In Boston her citizens have a department which shows the growth from the methods of years ago to those of today in a very marked manner.

Every mature man can recollect when the volunteer firemen worked the brakes on the old hand engines, after drawing them for miles, guided to the fire by the sound of the bell which first announced it. The methods of the old volunteer firemen are gone, but the spirit which animated them still lives, tempered by discipline, in their successors, the paid firemen of today.

Boston's fire department, as at present constituted, consists of the fire commissioners, who have full control of the force; the chief of the department, who is the executive officer of the commission, and, when present, has command at all fires; 10 district chiefs and one call district chief, each of whom has charge of a designated district of Boston; a superintendent of repairs, and a veterinary surgeon; in all, including officers and men, about 700, and of these about 160 are call men, who only are on duty at a fire.

There are 38 engine companies, two of which are double, in all 40 engines in active service; 17 ladder companies, 10 chemical engines, two water towers, and six hose companies. A captain, lieutenant and 10 men constitute a full engine or ladder company, and with the aid of steam, horses and modern appliances, they accomplish more



THE WATER TOWER

than the far larger companies which ran with the machine in the old days.

This force is kept under constant inspection and drill, so that the men, horses and apparatus are prepared, at a moment's notice, to meet any possible contingency that may arise from fire. Boston is a hazardous city from a fire standpoint. Narrow streets and courts, with tall and poorly constructed buildings, increase the danger from fire very much. The rise and fall of the tide necessitates fighting many fires at times on the water front from the land side, as the fireboat cannot be used on account of the low water.

The city is not compactly laid out either, many important sections being almost cut off from the main city. Take East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston and Brighton; they are cut off by water, or by land, completely. Everything in Boston seems to combine to make it necessary to have a fire department extraordinarily strong in apparatus, discipline and effectiveness. No city in the land is hampered with the disadvantages that beset Boston. While in New York and Chicago buildings are poorly constructed, like Boston, yet their streets are wide, and the cities themselves are compact, and at all times they can use their floating engines at fires along the water front.

In joining the Boston Fire Department today, a man enters upon a life's profession. The preparation that he goes through is very thorough, and insures, as near as is possible, a man perfect physically and otherwise, for the duties which he is to perform. Experience has shown that the nearer you come to a man who combines health, strength and intelligence without surplus bodily weight, the more perfect fireman you have.

In order to get as near perfection as possible, the candidate for the fire department must pass a rigorous series of examinations. The civil service examiners test him in simple writing and arithmetic, with questions of such a nature as would show his general intelligence. But after that he must pass the doctor to show his physical soundness, and then comes the gymnasium test, which is very searching, testing the lungs, heart and the strength of every muscle. He must weigh, stripped, at least 130 pounds, and be not less than 5 feet and 6 inches in height. For every inch over 5 feet 6 inches he must weigh five pounds additional. This examination is very important.

A healthy body with a sound heart and lungs, the proper strength in the muscles, means a man who can breathe in smoke where a weaker one would die; one who can run and climb and withstand fatigue. If a man passes these tests and is appointed to a place in the fire department by the fire commissioners, he enters the department drill school for one month, where is made the final and most severe test of all, as to the man's courage and fitness for the service. There he is taught the rudiments of his future calling.

On a tower almost 100 feet high he learns the life drill, how to climb with a Pompier ladder and with a rope rescue a life in danger. If he passes through the school with the knowledge of his duties in theory, he is attached for five months to an active company, where he is taught how practically to apply what he has learned in school. At the end of that time, if he has shown his fitness, he becomes a substitute in the fire force, and later on a full grade hoseman.

This system of preparing men for the department is being adopted in other large cities, but in this respect Boston is still unrivalled. The first duty at a fire is to save life, and while ordinary ladders are the main reliance and generally sufficient, yet, time and again, in cases of emergency, they are wanting. Sometimes in a narrow court they cannot be raised, or if the burning building is too high they may be too short, or they are delayed in arriving, then is used the Pompier ladder, which every piece of apparatus carries.

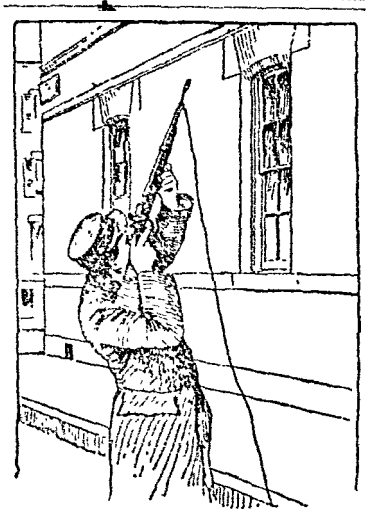
Take the Camden House fire, a short while ago, where the lives of a large number of helpless women were in great danger, and the first piece of apparatus to arrive was a steamer. If, as was the case a few years ago, the men had been compelled to wait for the coming of a ladder truck, there would have been a loss of life, but on the steamer's hose wagon they had their Pompier ladders, and scaling the building with them, those who were in danger were reached and saved.

The Pompier ladder is a strip of wood, from 12 to 18 feet long, iron bound, with small cross pieces to rest the foot on; at the end is a hook at right angles to the ladder proper, with a belt, a swivel snap-hook attached, which enables the wearer to snap on to any convenient hold and support the body while the arms are free, and a coil of rope thrown over the shoulder; a man climbs by the small cross-piece to the first window, by catching the hook at the end of the ladder over a window sill. Then sitting or standing on the sill, he raises the ladder perpendicularly, and catches the hook on the sill above. Then he climbs up there, and so on until he reaches the person in danger, whom he lowers down to his comrades by means of the rope carried on the shoulder.

It seems almost incredible, but two members of the Boston department, with the aid of a Pompier ladder, have scaled a building 90 feet high in 50 seconds. This is only one of many uses to which the Pompier ladder can be put. Suffice it to say that it is a most useful fire appliance, and its advent has supplied, to a great extent, the deficiencies of modern fire ladder service.

In case ladders cannot be used, the life-gun comes into play. This shoots a light line up to the person in danger, which enables him to pull up a heavier one, down which he climbs, or, by its aid a fireman climbs up and lowers him from danger. In case all other means fail, and the flames force one as a last resort to jump to the pavement to save his life, he is caught in a circular jumping net made of strong tarred rope and held taut by the firemen grasping it around the edges. While this method is not absolutely safe for the one jumping, it is far preferable to death from flames, or from being dashed to death on the pavement by jumping without its aid.

The fire department has its skirmishers which are called chemical engines. They generally consist of two 60-gallon tanks, with the necessary appliances, hung on four wheels, and drawn, on account of their lightness, with great rapidity to a fire. The tanks are filled with water, and in a second can be charged with vitriol and soda, which causes a pressure sufficient so that the



FIRING THE LIFE LINE.

water can be played on a fire through a hose in pretty much the same way as soda-water comes from a fountain. When one tank is empty, turning a valve connects the hose with the second tank, and while that is playing the first is being filled for use after the second is exhausted. In this way a chemical engine can play for an unlimited time.

Many people think that it is the chemicals in the water which put out the fire. There is very little ground for this supposition. The utility of the chemical lies in the fact that a pail of water, properly directed, is far more useful at the start of a fire than hundreds of gallons later when it gets a going.

The chemical, because of its lightness and ability to go quickly, is one of the most useful of fire apparatus, and it is able to put out the majority of fires without the aid of steam engines. If a chemical engine is unable to cope with a fire, then the steam engine comes into play. Stripped of its elaborate detail, it is a boiler, with cylinders and pumps attached, which, with steam, forces the water, drawn from a hydrant, through a hose on to the fire. A popular fallacy is that the engine weighing the most in pounds is the most powerful. Such is not the case. It is the engine having the largest pumps, with sufficient steam capacity, that is the most powerful.

A perfect engine is one that can pump the largest amount of water on to a fire, and be so light in weight as to be drawn there in the shortest possible amount of time. Celerity in getting to, and the greatest possible amount of water-throwing power in working at a fire, are the demands upon the modern engine. In Boston proper, where the runs to fires are short, and the chances for large fires are the greatest, there are stationed the most powerful engines.

In the more sparsely settled portions of the city, like Dorchester, Brighton, etc., where the roads are heavy or hilly, and the runs long, and small fires are the rule, the lighter engines are situated. This is done because it would be impossible to draw heavy engines with any celerity long distances over heavy roads in summer and snowy ones in winter. The ordinary fire requires streams of from an inch to an inch and a quarter in diameter, thrown about 150 to 200 feet to be effective.

If the fire develops and threatens to spread, then larger streams become necessary. It seems to be a well-settled fact that a small amount of water poured on a large amount of fire only adds to the intensity of the flames, owing to chemical action, and the larger the flame the more the necessity of increasing the volume of water thrown on the fire by increasing the diameter of the fire stream.

Boston has in service engines unsurpassed by any in America to meet emergencies of this kind. Take engine 35 as a sample. When ordinary streams will not do at a fire, by siamese connections this engine can join four lines of two and one-half inch hose or two lines of three inches each together, and throw a stream of water two inches in diameter over 300 feet.

The capacity of her pumps is 1000 gallons a minute, and for exhibition playing she can throw four one-inch streams over the Houghton & Dutton building, in Tremont st., at one and the same time.

The hose wagons, which follow the steamer when in service, and carry the hose for its use, are fitted with small hand chemical extinguishers capable of putting out small fires. They also carry Pompier ladders, the men and nearly all the tools, which are needed at fires.

The ladder trucks are a very essential arm of the service. They carry the ladders, which range from the baby Bangor to the extension, 92 feet high, which with a tip can be made still higher. To man them requires strong, rugged men. To be a ladderman you must weigh at least 160 pounds and stand 5 feet 9 inches in height. A 65-foot ladder weighs about 500 pounds, and to place that in position requires strength, activity and judgment.

When ladders 85 to 92 feet in height are to be raised, then the turn-table trucks are brought into service, which raise the ladders by means of cranks and a screw.

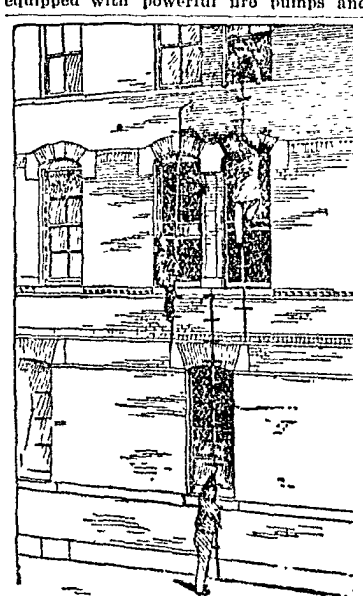
Modern invention has produced the water tower, which is a tube shut into a square tube like a telescope and mounted on wheels. By hydraulic or chemical pressure it is raised perpendicularly; the inner tube is then shot upward by a gearing until it reaches a height of 55 feet in nine seconds. Inside this 55 feet of tubing is a length of hose three and one-half inches in diameter, connected at the bottom with six lines of hose run from three engines, and at the top with a hollow arm or pipe, which is at right angles with the perpendicular tube. This arm can be worked up and down, and to the right and left by a man standing on the ground, and, through its mouth, two and one-half inches in diameter, a stream of 150 gallons a minute, representing the united forces of the engines, and powerful enough to tear down a brick wall, can be thrown.

The advantage of a water tower lies in the fact that a vast volume of water can be directed so as to reach almost any portion of the extreme interior of a building on fire. The same amount of water played from the street would strike the ceiling of the story into which it was directed, and fall on the floor only a few feet from the window, and would not reach the real fire beyond. Again, the men operate the tower from the ground, and there is not that danger to them from falling walls which there would be if ladders could be used strong enough to stand the strain required to support hose and men sufficient to handle such powerful streams. No ladder half strong enough has yet been perfected which will supply the place of a water tower.

It is claimed, and experience in Boston supports the theory, that the power which a tower has to deliver so large a quantity of water at the upper part of a building, prevents the confined air from becoming superheated and thus stops hot air explosions, which are extremely dangerous, as they frequently bulge or throw down the walls of a burning building, killing the men and spreading the fire.

There is no doubt of a tower's value in fighting fire in our tall buildings. It is the best means a department has in an emergency of that kind, as it practically places 65 feet in the air, directed with better results, and a water-throwing capacity equal to the siamesed streams of several engines on the street.

In all cities with a water front a most dangerous class of fires occur among the warehouses on the piers and the shipping. On the land side they can be handled only with great difficulty by running long lines of hose from the steamers. On the water side, where they can be best got at, the fires are handled by a floating engine or fire boat, which is simply a well-built tug boat equipped with powerful fire pumps and



GOING TO THE RESCUE WITH POMPIER LADDER.

hose, and manned by a company of firemen.

The capacity for service of engine No. 31, which is the name of the Boston fireboat, is something enormous. It can throw 6500 gallons of water in a minute; one stream, four inches in diameter over 400 feet, or two streams of three inches, or four streams two inches in diameter, or 12 ordinary fire streams. It is equal in power to 13 small land engines.

The appliances which are used in a fire department are numerous in the extreme; door openers for opening a door without damaging it, axes, shut-off nozzles, two, three and four-way siamese connections, spanners for coupling and uncoupling hose, and so on almost indefinitely. All the apparatus and the appliances used in the force, from the smallest to the greatest, are repaired and kept in condition at the department repair shop.

In fighting fires time is everything, quickness in getting an alarm and celerity in responding is the best way to put out fires. All appliances must be ready at all times for service, and at any hour of the day or night. When, through accident or otherwise, anything becomes unfit for service, the department repair shop stands ready at a moment's notice to repair or to replace it, thus preventing delay, which might, in case the apparatus was needed, be disastrous. Principally for this reason the repair shop is invaluable. Connected with it is the school of engine men, where the men with a bent for machinery are drilled in the handling of an engine, and are made into engine men, to fire and run the engines.

The department also has its school of telegraphy, where members are educated in writing with the Morse key and receiving by ear. When efficient, and vacancies occur, they are detailed at fires to send messages and commands by telegraph to control the rest of the force. They are to the fire department what the signal corps is to the army.

Boston has always been noted as a mechanical centre, and from the inventive brains of some of the members of the fire force have evolved many important innovations, which have been invaluable to the fire departments of the country. Among a few of the most important, which are distinctively the fruit of Boston's genius, we may mention the system of using large fire streams on land obtained by siamesing, the present hose wagon, which means convenience itself; that most efficient piece of apparatus, the modern fire boat, and last the fire alarm telegraph system, without which a department would be well-nigh helpless to protect a city from fire.

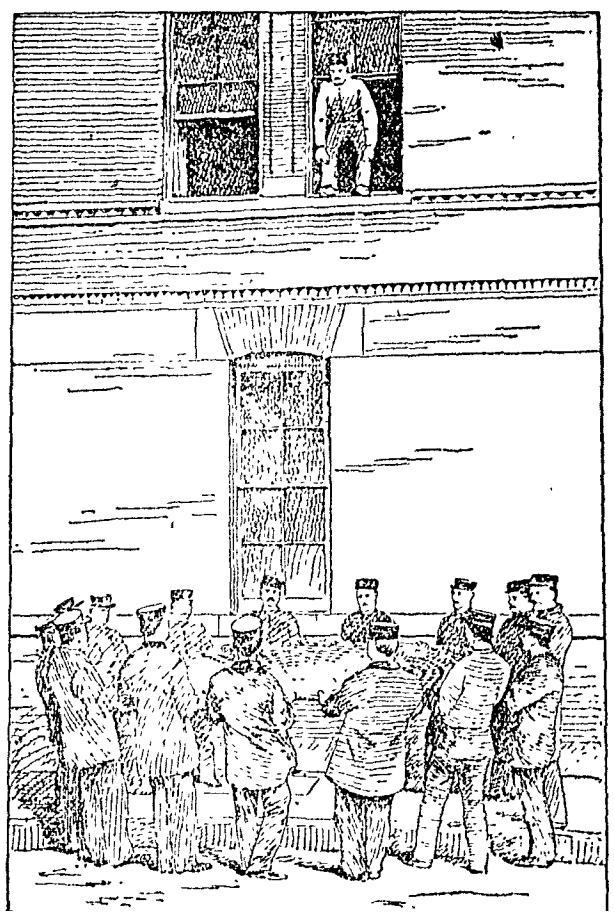
Distributed throughout Boston in convenient localities are over 500 fire alarm boxes, connected electrically with the fire alarm headquarters in the dome of City Hall, where, night and day, an operator on duty receives all alarms of fire sent from the boxes and repeats them to the department. He also looks after the department telephone system.

Let us take a peep into a Boston fire station, engine 26, Mason st., at midnight! On entering you will find yourself in what is called a double company. Boston very soon will have four such in service. To the right sits a fireman in full uniform on floor patrol like a sentinel. On the wall above his head is a small gong and a large one, a telephone, what electricians call a pen register, and probably the names of the company on an ornamental slate, and an arrangement showing the last alarm. On the floor are two engines. No. 26, the smaller, is able to throw two streams of 1¼ inches in diameter, or one stream 1½ inches; and No. 35, the second engine, which throws two streams 1¼ inches each, or one of 2 inches in diameter. Each engine is attached by a pipe connection from its boiler to a small heater in the cellar, which keeps a steam pressure on the boiler of 10 pounds or more. This is done so that they will be ready for immediate service in case of a fire close at hand.

Behind each steamer we find a hose wagon with Pompier ladders, 2½-inch hose in No. 26's wagon, and 3-inch hose in No. 35's. The extra half inch in the diameter of No. 35's hose is because she is able to pump on a fire 50 per cent. more water than No. 26. She throws one of the largest streams of water of any land engine in the world, and the 3-inch hose is necessary to accommodate her water capacity.

In the centre of the floor stand the wagons of the chief of the department and the district chief, the former lit by electric lights. If a first alarm of fire comes in, engine 26 answers with 12 men, and No. 35 stays behind with nine to respond in case an alarm should come in from another box in the same district. If a second alarm from the box to which No. 26 has gone comes, 35 responds, and a second alarm means a fire of some size, and there No. 35, with her three-inch hose and ability to throw a large stream of water, is a powerful factor in staying the progress of the flames.

In front of the engines, the hose and the chief's wagon, suspended about 6 feet from



RESCUING WITH THE JUMPING NET.

the floor by cords drawn through pulleys attached to the ceiling, are the harnesses for the horses, and coming down through openings in the ceiling are several brass poles, called sliding poles. At the rear we see a series of doors, with small square glass windows, with horses behind them. Upstairs in the dormitories the men are fast asleep.

You can hear the scratching of the pen with which the man on patrol is writing down in the record book the happenings of the last hour.

A quiet, almost deathly in its stillness, prevails. A man passing down Washington st. sees smoke coming from the third story of THE GLOBE building, near State st. He rushes to the Old State House, turns the handle of the keyless door of box No. 36 to the right, then opens the door and pulls down the hook inside once. Then he lets go.

That simple action is almost magical in its effects upon the fire department.

Every man and piece of apparatus is instantaneously on the alert.

The letting go of the hook at box 36 has notified the fire alarm operator at City Hall and the men in every fire station in Boston, that there is a fire near the old State House. At the house of engine No. 26, which answers alarms from that box, the pulling of the hook works a transformation. The man's finger has hardly left it when the small gong at the patrol's side rings three quick blows, pauses, and then rings six more quick blows. This it repeats four times, the pen register registering it on a strip of paper like a stock ticker.

With the first blow of the gong the patrol jumps, presses an electric button, the doors in the back of the engine room fly open, the house is lit with a flood of electric light, the horses rush out under the harnesses at the apparatus to which they belong, the men, in boots, trousers and shirts, come whirling down the brass sliding poles, the drivers take their seats, men snap the collars on the horses' necks, and by that simple action and the pulling of a cord they are harnessed. The patrol announces the number of the box, the engineman lights the fire under the boiler, the captain gives the word "go," and jumps on the engine with the engineman and assistant engineman, while the rest of the company follow on the hose wagon.

In 9½ seconds from the first blow on the gong the engine, hose wagon, and 12 men, dressing as they go, are out and away to the fire, while the chief's wagon is driven away to pick him up and carry him to the scene.

You hear the rolling of the apparatus on the pavements, as it flies down the street, drawn by powerful horses, the music of the bugle, shrill and clear, sending ahead a warning of what is coming.

Gradually all sounds die away in the distance, except a faint murmur of the bugle; then silence, except the restless pawing of the three magnificent horses hitched, Russian fashion to engine 35, which, with hose wagon and men, stands waiting and ready for further developments.

In the meantime the operator at City Hall repeats, with the electrical machinery in his care, on the second and larger gong, the alarm which has been received. If the small gong had failed to work, the apparatus would have waited for the notice from the operator on the second gong, and in case both gongs failed the telephone of the department system is left.

Thus three ways for sending alarms are open, and it is seldom all these fail.

In two minutes chemical No 1 would arrive at the fire from Bulfinch st., closely followed by engines 4 (drawn by three magnificent grays), 6, 26, 25, 7 and 8; ladders, 1, with a three-horse hitch, 8, 14 and the water tower; in all, a force of six engines, three ladder trucks, a chemical and a water tower, manned and officered by 100 disciplined men.

In the meantime the chief of the department and several of the district chiefs will have arrived, and the driver of the wagon of the district chief in whose district the fire is, will have hurried to the alarm box, adjusted his portable telephone, and, with the Morse telegraph key in the box, have notified the fire alarm headquarters that he is there. In this way the officer in command at the fire has a communication by telephone and telegraph with the rest of the department.

In three minutes the engines will be connected to the hydrants, the hose laid and water playing, the laddermen having in the meantime thrown their 40, 65 and 85-foot ladders so as to ventilate the building by means of the windows, and allow the hosemen to get in and at the fire.

If the fire threatens to get beyond control, the officer in command orders a second alarm, and the fireman on duty at the box pulls the hook. The small gongs in every station in the department strike No 36 as before, and the operator at City Hall verifies it by striking on the big gongs 10 blows, followed by the box number.

In engine 26's station, where we left the second section of the company, engine 35, with men waiting, hardly has the first 36 done striking on the small gong when the command "Go!" finds them on their way. The three horses hitched abreast drawing the engine, weighing almost five tons, speedily along. Sparks fly from her smokestack. It is a spectacle, exciting and beautiful.

Engines 3, 10, 15 and 22, ladder 13, a chemical and a hose carriage also come on a second alarm. With the apparatus now at the fire, the business section of the city would be stripped, to an alarming extent, of fire apparatus, were it not for the system which we have of covering the territory left unprotected. Under this precautionary system, the moment the second alarm strikes, engine 21 moves into engine 15's station; engine 9 from East Boston comes to engine 25's at Fort Hill sq.; engine 12 moves into engine 3's station; engine 18 to engine 12's; engine 23 to engine 26's on Mason st., and engine 13 to engine 22's.

Should the fire still threaten to increase a third alarm is rung in the same way as the second, except that the fire alarm operator verifies it by striking on the big gongs 10 blows twice, followed by the box number. The designated engines, as provided in the department running card, rush to the fire and others come in and cover the territory left vacant.

The fourth alarm, 11 blows once and the general, 12 blows, twice, followed by the box number, come next, if the magnitude of the fire warrants it.

The system of covering in is still used in these alarms. Even the general alarm, which means a conflagration and is struck on an average only once in ten years and calls almost the whole department into service, leaves apparatus sparsely scattered over the city, sufficient to cope with the ordinary fires that may occur.

The fire we have at box 36 only called for a third alarm, with an extra water tower and an engine, which the fireman on duty at the box telegraphed for, and they were summoned by the fire-alarm operator by telephone or signal blows struck on the gongs in the houses.

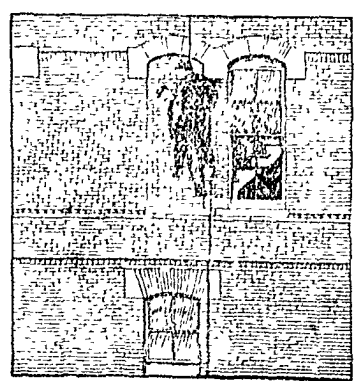
When the fire is out the fact is telegraphed to the fire-alarm operator, who strikes two blows four times, followed by the box number, on the small gong. All apparatus return to their proper stations, and if another alarm comes from the same section, the department know that the proper apparatus is ready to reply and there is no need of the covering apparatus to respond.

At second and third alarms the department veterinary surgeon comes to look after the horses, the superintendent of repairs to attend to repairs and the coaling of the engines, and experts to supervise the running of the engines, and to assist if any thing mechanical needs looking after. Under the system of covering in use by the Boston fire department, all parts of the city have protection, and in case of a second great fire in another portion of the city, as was shown last Christmas eve, when three fires were handled at the same time without outside assistance, the apparatus is close at hand, and is able to render a good account of itself.

The method of having a telegraphic and telephonic connection with the rest of the force by means of the fireman stationed at the box where the fire is, enables the chief or officer in command to call what aid he needs immediately, and he is informed, if there is a fire elsewhere, to send apparatus from the first to the second fire, if it is necessary, and he has it to spare.

The Boston department has had under consideration for some time improvements in her system of covering, including the addition of a fourth alarm, but they cannot be put in practical use until the new apparatus, for which houses are building, comes into service, which will be shortly. One thing which speaks well for the Boston system of covering is that many of its salient points have been adopted in the new system lately put in service in New York city.

Uppermost always in one's thoughts in connection with a fire department, is the powerful, spirited horses bounding along with the apparatus to an alarm, with a motion so like a tiger's. In the fire service alone—unless it may be in war—do you notice this peculiar characteristic in horses. Mankind have written, poets sung, of the war horse, his strength and his glory. The fire horse has yet to find a place in literature. In his way he is as worthy as his more celebrated brother. Sound in wind, intelligent, with every muscle and bone perfect, with great strength, weight and swiftness, only the kings among horses are fit to enter the fire service.



RESCUED WITH THE ROPE.

At six years of age he enters the department, is given his number, and, after years of hard work down town, is transferred to the outer sections of the city, where his labors will be lighter. There he ends his days, or, if incapacitated for work, is sold, to go upon some old farm in the country. Much might be said of the fire horse's intelligence. He learns his duties quickly, and in many cases shows feelings almost human. A pet and a companion, often have I seen strong men weep and a whole company mourn when death suddenly calls a horse—an old favorite in the service.

Apart from their duties at fires and in the fire stations where they care for their horses, apparatus and housework in general, there are many duties which devolve upon the men of the fire department. All gunpowder, fireworks, petroleum and its products, and explosives of all kinds come under their charge. The department also has authority in certain emergencies over steam boilers and steam engines, and, strangest of all strange things, it is required that some 38 tower clocks in various parts of the city shall be wound, regulated and repaired by firemen. All officers must be familiar with the construction and plans of all buildings in their districts, and at least once a month must make a thorough inspection of them. The 6000 hydrants also are constantly inspected and looked after both in winter and summer.

Firemen guard the stages of the great theatres and command the theatre fire force during all performances. Some patrol the streets, watching for fire while their comrades at the fire stations stand ready at a moment's notice to protect from the dreaded enemy the lives and property of the thousands of people who, in the hushed stillness of night sleep on, few of them ever thinking of the vigilance that is watching over them.

Speaking of firemen from a Boston standpoint it appears to me that it is a profession honorable in the extreme. The associations are good, the pay is excellent.

Every fireman must serve at least two years as a hoseman or ladderman before he is eligible for promotion. On personal application to the fire commissioners, the claims of the applicant are judged from his services and record as a fireman and his ability to command men.

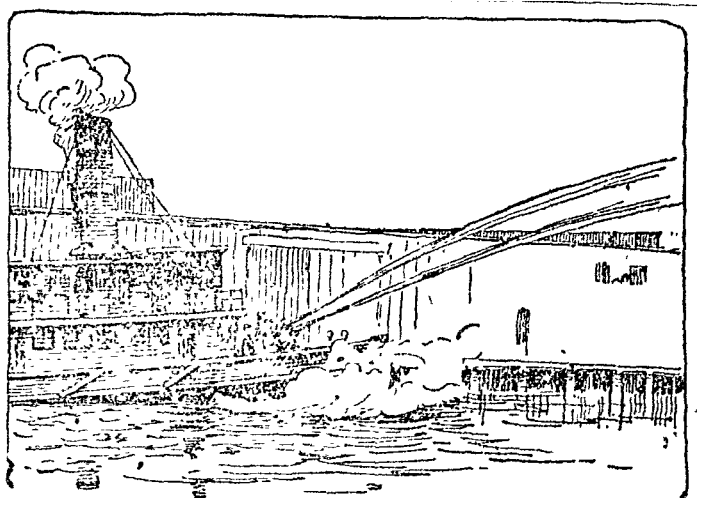
If the result is satisfactory the first step is that of lieutenant, salary $1400. The next grades are those of captain, district chief, assistant chief and chief of department, with salaries running from $1600 to $3600 a year. All promotions are practically in the hands of the fire commissioners, the civil service requiring only that the men promoted shall be able to pass a non-competitive examination of 65 per cent., or more.

An officer must rise from the ranks. It is peculiarly a service where intelligence, faithfulness and bravery are a necessity in both rank and file.

In war the officer often points the way to the soldier to glory and perhaps death; in fire fighting, the officer must lead and the men follow.

While the soldier is animated by the noblest instinct in the heart of man, love of country, it is not to be wondered at that he is brave in giving battle to his hated foe. The fireman fights an enemy of the common good, and although he has not the same incentives as the soldier, yet it is all the more to his credit that in his ranks we have examples of bravery unsurpassed in war's annals.

When the time and the occasion demanded, Boston has never in the past wanted for brave men. The class of men who compose her fire service are a fair representation of the manhood of today, and, if need be, would prove her valiant defenders.



THE FIRE BOAT—ENGINE 31.

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