

"RED BOOKS" of the

BRITISH FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE.—No. 145.

Edited by the Executive.

THE BRITISH FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE.

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THE

**Tenth Anniversary**

OF

THE COMMITTEE'S INCORPORATION.

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THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER.

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MAY 25th, 1909.

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LONDON, 1909.

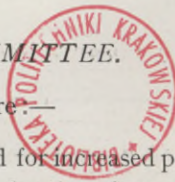
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PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES OF  
THE BRITISH FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE  
(Founded 1897—Incorporated 1899).  
1, WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.

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*Two Shillings and Sixpence.*

OBJECTS OF THE COMMITTEE.



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The main objects of the Committee are:—

To direct attention to the urgent need for increased protection of life and property from fire by the adoption of preventive measures.

To use its influence in every direction towards minimising the possibilities and dangers of fire.

To bring together those scientifically interested in the subject of Fire Prevention.

To arrange periodical meetings for the discussion of practical questions bearing on the same.

To establish a reading-room, library and collections for purposes of research, and for supplying recent and authentic information on the subject of Fire Prevention.

To publish from time to time papers specially prepared for the Committee, together with records, extracts, and translations.

To undertake such independent investigations and tests of materials, methods, and appliances as may be considered advisable.

*The Committee's Reports on Tests with Materials, Methods of Construction, or Appliances are intended solely to state bare facts and occurrences, with tables, diagrams, or illustrations, and they are on no account to be read as expressions of opinion, criticisms, or comparisons.*

*The Committee is not responsible for the views of individual authors as expressed in Papers or Notes, but only for such observations as are formally issued on behalf of the Executive.*

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# THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER.

## THE MEMBERS AND VISITORS.

### THE CHAIRMAN'S TABLE.

The Chairman: MR. EDWIN O. SACHS, F.R.S.ED.

To the Right.

To the Left.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LONDSEBROUGH,  
K.C.V.O.

(President Widows' and Orphans' Fund of the  
National Fire Brigades' Union).

THE HON. SIR JOHN COCKBURN, K.C.M.G., M.D.

(Late Premier of South Australia.)

CHIEF OFFICER J. MEIER (Amsterdam Fire Brigade),  
(President International Fire Service Council).

CAPTAIN J. DE COURCY HAMILTON, R.N.

(London Fire Brigade).

CHIEF OFFICER REICHEL (Berlin Royal Police Fire  
Brigade).

MONSIEUR PHILIPS (Termonde Fire Brigade), (Honor-  
ary Treasurer Int. Fire Service Council).

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FOX, F.R.G.S.

(London Salvage Corps.)

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SEABROKE, V.D. (Rugby Fire  
Brigade), (Chairman National Fire Brigades'  
Union).

SIR JAMES WILLIAMSON, KT., C.B.

(Late Director of H.M. Dockyards.)

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(H.M. Chief Inspector of Mines, Home Office).

MR. P. ROSE-INNES (Recorder for Sandwich).

MAJOR CROZIER.

(H.M. Inspector of Explosives, Home Office).

LIEUTENANT SLADEN, R.N. (London Fire Brigade).

CHIEF OFFICER HILL (Bedford Fire Brigade (Hon.  
Sec. National Fire Brigades' Union).

HON. CHIEF OFFICER DALE (Leyton Fire Brigade).

HON. CHIEF OFFICER DYSON (Windsor Fire Brigade)

(Vice-President, National Fire Brigades' Union).

MONSIEUR C. KUSEL.

MAJOR R. J. MAITLAND-COFFIN, F.R.C.P., Hon.  
Medical Officer.

MR. W. T. HATCH, M.Inst.C.E.

(Metropolitan Asylums Board).

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(District Surveyor); Gen. Hon. Secretary.

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MR. H. K. G. BAMBER, F.C.S.

MR. E. R. HEWITT, A.R.I.B.A.

(District Surveyor).

### MR. MAX CLARKE'S TABLE.

MR. MAX CLARKE, F.R.I.B.A.

MR. F. W. HAMILTON, A.R.I.B.A. (Dist. Surveyor.)

MR. MATT. GARBUIT, F.R.I.B.A.

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MR. A. C. MORRICE, A.R.I.B.A. (Dist. Surveyor.)

MR. WALTER DEWES.

MR. E. J. GOSLING, F.R.I.B.A.

MR. F. HAMMOND, F.R.I.B.A. (Dist. Surveyor.)

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MR. PERCY COLLINS, J.P.

MR. WM. EASTMAN.

MR. FRANCIS CHATTERTON.

MR. ALFRED CHATTERTON.

MR. BERTRAM CHATTERTON, A.M.I.C.E.

MR. PERCY C. RIDLEY, F.S.I.

MR. H. T. SNEEZUM.

MR. ROBERT RAY.

SIR HENRY TANNER, KT., I.S.O., F.R.I.B.A.

(Principal Architect H.M. Office of Works).

SIR THOMAS BROOKE-HITCHING, KT.

(Late Sheriff, City of London).

HIS HONOUR JUDGE RENTOUL, K.C., LL.D.

CHIEF OFFICER WESTPHALEN (Hamburg Fire Bri-  
gade), (Vice-President Int. Fire Service Council).

CHIEF OFFICER DE MARIE (Ettelbrück Fire Brigade),

(Gen. Hon. Secretary Int. Fire Service Council).

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way).

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Brigade).

CHIEF OFFICER BELL (Surbiton Fire Brigade).

MR. W. STRICKLAND, J.P.

### MR. OSWALD WYLSON'S TABLE.

MR. OSWALD C. WYLSON, F.R.I.B.A.

MR. JOS. RANDALL, A.Inst.C.E.

MR. A. J. ORR.

MR. H. B. SANDERS.

MR. W. E. MARKHAM.

MR. S. S. MARKHAM.

### GENERAL TABLES.

The Assistant Secretary, the Surveyor, the Ambulance Officer, and the Press.

## NOTE.

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The British Fire Prevention Committee, which was founded in 1897, was incorporated in 1899, in which year it also opened its first Testing Station. It had been suggested from various sides that the Tenth Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Committee and the opening of its Testing Station should be celebrated by a subscription dinner, and by the arrangement of some tests which could be viewed by those attending the dinner from afar, if they so desired. It was thus arranged that the Anniversary Dinner should take place on May 25th, and that the testing day should be on the preceding day, May 24th. An invitation was tendered to the Executive officers of the International Fire Service Council to be present, as also to the principal officers of the National Fire Brigades' Union and the Association of Professional Fire Brigade Officers.

Both the tests and the dinner were well attended, and it afforded the Committee much pleasure that there was a deputation present from the International Fire Service Council, including the President, Senior Vice-President, Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of that body.

The tests, which were with doors, will be the subject of a separate report in the ordinary course.

Regarding the dinner, suggestions have reached the Executive from various sides, more particularly from members at a distance, who were unable to attend, that a record should be published of the speeches, and this Red Book, No. 145, thus contains a record of the oratory on that occasion, as also a list of those who were present at the dinner.



From the speeches on the occasion, it would appear that the work of the Committee is being appreciated over a wide area, and that the influence it has exerted in guiding building legislation, fire preventive legislation and fire service legislation, in directions where it is most effective to prevent loss of life and loss of property, is being recognised both at home and abroad.

It would be out of place to here record work done or matters achieved by the Committee during the past decade, more particularly as the speeches presented speak for themselves.

One feature, however, that was somewhat marked on this occasion was the desire of both membership and visitors that the Committee should use its influence towards popularising fire prevention, as distinct from limiting the scope of its work to research and legislation. There seemed to be a feeling that some attempt should be made to make the ordinary safeguards against fire, more popularly known and applied by what is generally termed the "man in the street." It is to be hoped that during the coming decade of the Committee's existence some means may be devised to attain this end.

EDWIN O. SACHS.

*London, S.W.*

*July 1st, 1909.*

THE  
**British Fire Prevention Committee.**

(FOUNDED 1897—INCORPORATED 1899.)

DINNER

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE COMMITTEE'S INCORPORATION.

(*Mr. Edwin O. Sachs, F.R.S., Ed., Chairman, presiding.*)

*May 25th, 1909, Georgian Hall, Gaiety Restaurant.*

THE TOASTS.

**THE LOYAL TOASTS.**

**The Chairman** (MR. EDWIN O. SACHS, F.R.S., ED.): My Lord and Gentlemen, I desire to propose the toast of "His Majesty the King." There is no need for me to mention His Majesty's high qualifications or to speak of his interest in fire prevention to which he gave such gracious expression on the occasion of the London Fire Prevention Congress of 1903.\* I would only to-night remind you who are connected as amateurs with the fire service, that the King in his early days was an amateur fireman, and he attended many fires from "head-quarters" and took a great interest in fire brigade work generally. As Prince of Wales he was a popular figure at many a fire, and he had many a kindly word for many of the older generation of firemen. Gentlemen, "His Majesty the King." (Cheers.)

The toast having been most enthusiastically received,

**The Chairman** said: "It is customary, when any friends from abroad are present at any special gathering of the British Fire Prevention Committee that after the toast of "The King" has been honoured, the toast of "The Sovereigns and Presidents of Foreign States" should be honoured, too. We have to-day amongst us, gentlemen who have attended from various Continental countries to very kindly do honour to our Committee. We all desire to know them happy in their own countries under the guidance of their own sovereigns and presidents. If I may mention one sovereign in particular on this occasion, it is in order that we may wish long life and prosperity to the Queen of Holland—(loud cheers)—and to her little one. We are glad that it is from Queen Wilhelmina's country that we welcome the president of the International Fire Service Council, who is with us to-night in the person of Commandant Meier. We also gladly wish prosperity to the heads of those two great states, Germany and France. (Cheers.) The Kaiser, I know, takes a great personal interest in the royal police fire brigade of his capital city, Berlin, of which service we are glad to

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\*"The King sincerely trusts that the deliberations of this important and representative body will lead to a further development as to the best means to be adopted in regard to the prevention of fire and to the saving of life in cases of fire."



see the chief officer of the Fire Brigade, Branddirektor Reichel. The Empress, too, it should be mentioned, annually inspects the officers and men of the brigade who have distinguished themselves. The present French president has always received the fire service with the same great courtesy as his predecessors have done before him. It would lead too far for me to mention the other heads of state seriatim, and thus I would only say, may the sovereigns and presidents of foreign states, whose officers are among us to-night, have long life and the best of health.

### THE BRITISH FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE.

The toast having been heartily received,

*The Right Hon. The Earl of Londesborough, K.C.V.O.*, president of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund of the National Fire Brigades' Union, said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, it gives me very great pleasure to rise to-night to propose the next toast, and to wish success to the British Fire Prevention Committee on this, their tenth anniversary of incorporation. As you know, this Committee was formed after the great Cripplegate fire in 1897, but it was not incorporated until 1899.

I am sure you will all agree with me that it has done most splendid service in that time, notably in helping very much to inaugurate the London International Fire Prevention Congress of 1903 and to organise the technical side of that splendid Fire Exhibition which was held at Earls Court in that year. Both exhibition and congress did much good. (Hear, hear.)

Every time that you go to the committee's testing station to see the tests you can realise what wonderfully good work the committee are doing. All the tests are most eminently practical and the reports which are published are not the opinions of members of the committee, but are simple statements of hard facts, so that anyone who takes the trouble to read the reports can see the value or demerits of whatever material or invention has been tested by them. I often wish very much, gentlemen, when I go to these tests, that it was possible to have the general public present at some of them, so as to get the general public to take an intelligent interest in fire prevention. Unfortunately, to the man in the street, I think fire prevention and fire extinction seem to be questions of a lot of men in helmets carried to fires on engines, and when there, pouring water upon the conflagration in a haphazard way. But fire prevention is really a most scientific kind of work, and there is but very little show in it.

I am not going to detain you at any length, because amongst firemen the motto was: "Deeds, not words," and they do not appreciate long speeches, but there is one thing which I should like to say, especially as we are honoured to-night by so many foreign guests, that is, that it is very greatly to the credit of the gentlemen who undertake arduous duties in connection with this Committee that all their work is entirely



honorary. They do not receive a farthing pay for any of the hard duties they do, and in some cases the tests are not only really very trying, but they are conducted in very hot temperatures, and there is always a considerable element of danger in them. Not only do they not receive a farthing pay for their services, but in all cases they pay their own out of pocket expenses and in many instances they help to defray the cost of the investigations by liberal personal subscriptions. In other words, much of the research work done is carried out with money coming out of the pockets of the members of the Committee themselves.

I think it speaks most highly for the public spirit of these gentlemen that they should give their most valuable time gratuitously to these great services and beyond this help these investigations personally.

As I said before, I will not detain you any longer, but will call on you to join with me in drinking most hearty success to the British Fire Prevention Committee, hoping it may long continue to carry on the splendid work it is doing and coupled with the name of Mr. Sachs, the Committee's very able chairman. (Prolonged cheers.)

#### THE CHAIRMAN'S REPLY.

The toast having been received with enthusiasm,

*The Chairman* said: My Lord and gentlemen, I have not prepared a set speech, such as is generally expected on an occasion of this kind, for I look upon this meeting as a friendly gathering rather than a formal one. I shall, however, with your permission take the opportunity of making a few observations in regard to our work

Before I do that, however, I should like to say a few words of more personal direction.

We are very happy to see our foreign friends here this evening, and I am especially glad to see here Chief Officer Reichel, of the Berlin Royal Police Fire Brigade, and Chief Officer Meier, of the Amsterdam Fire Brigade. When some eighteen years ago I spent some time with the Berlin Fire Brigade as a visitor and "volunteer fireman," Mr. Reichel was an officer at the head-quarters station, to which I was attached, and Mr. Meier, who was studying fire service questions in the same way as I was, happened to be my room-mate.

Prior to speaking of the work of the Committee, I should like to say also, that the Home Secretary (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) who unfortunately could not be with us to-night, has sent us a message in which he "wishes the Committee a very successful evening and every success in the continuance of their work, which he very much appreciates." We are very pleased to have these kindly words from the head of the Home Office—a department which has always been most courteous to the Fire Prevention Committee.

We have had a large number of telegrams, letters and congratulations on the anniversary of incorporation, not only from home,

but from abroad. I will only mention a few. All of you who were present at our Fire Prevention Congress in 1903 will remember a spirited French gentleman, M. Lépine, the head of the Paris police, who is an honorary member of this Committee. M. Lépine sends his compliments to the Committee, and congratulates the Committee on its work and hopes it will have a long and successful career.

Another gentleman who was with us in 1903, and whom we all remember, was Prince Alexander Lvoff, the head of the Imperial Fire Brigades Union of Russia. He telegraphs to the British Fire Prevention Committee as follows:—"The president, chairman and committee of the Russian Imperial Fire Brigades Union present their sincere congratulations and best wishes for the welfare of the British Fire Prevention Committee on their tenth anniversary." I may mention there are several other Russian telegrams of congratulation and encouragement.

Why I mention these kindly messages is really to indicate that the work of the British Fire Prevention Committee seems to be appreciated in a wider field even than that of the British Empire, and we are very proud of that.

I think the courtesy which is extended to us abroad is sincere, that the work we do is really thought highly of, and above all that many of our foreign friends really envy us when they see, that in spite of all their subsidies, they have not yet been able to get up a testing station such as we have anywhere. (Cheers.) Our testing station is the best in the world, and we hope it will always be so. (Cheers.)

Why our reports on fire tests are liked all the world over is because they do not contain opinions; they contain facts only. There has never, during the ten years of the Committee's existence, been, to my knowledge, an opinion of any sort expressed in those reports. There has not been a "but" or a reason interpolated in the text of our official records of tests. We present hard statements of fact, and it is just those hard statements of facts, given without fear or favour,—and which sometimes also create virulent enemies for the Committee among the industries concerned,—that have made our reports the standard reports of the world for all government departments and for many members of the technical professions. (Cheers.)

But the most remarkable feature of our work has been, that the results have been accomplished solely with voluntary workers and with funds voluntarily raised. The Committee have spent fully £20,000 in ten years. We have had to twice move our testing station, the present station being our third, and these necessary removals have meant a very heavy expense indeed. All this anxiety of raising the funds, the trouble of the removals and the anxiety in conducting the more dangerous of the fire tests would, however, have been impossible but for the co-operation which might almost be termed that of a "family party," between the working members of the



British Fire Prevention Committee, *i.e.*, their present and past executives. With quite rare exceptions the work of the committee has been internally harmonious, and when we had troubles to face or enemies to fight, the members of the executive stood shoulder to shoulder.

Here I would, however, at once mention that the Committee have always had the assistance and advice of the National Fire Brigades Union, with whom we have worked most amicably, and during the last five years we have also had the co-operation of the London Fire Brigade.

The fire chiefs in the old days were, as Lord Londesborough has remarked, perhaps all too frequently given to think of fire protection simply in the sense of extinguishing fire by putting water on it, but the modern fireman thinks of fire *prevention*. The modern fire chief does not like badly built walls or unprotected girders coming down on his men. He is pleased to see the efforts that are made by architect and engineer to provide better construction in towns and villages. He supports the efforts of those who have fire *prevention* at heart, and although some of the older chief officers may occasionally think that this "blessed" Fire Prevention Committee is going to do us "firemen out of our jobs," for all that they are, I think, one and all glad to see that modern tendency for better construction, that tendency for better workmanship, and they appreciate the results, namely that fires, when they do take place, occur in safer buildings, that fires do not spread so easily, and that fires can be "got at" more easily.

Apart, however, from the work on matters relating to building construction, the Committee have done a great deal to prevent fires from originating where no constructive questions arise. We have reduced the number of small fires that arise through carelessness or lack of knowledge, which small fires often mean loss of life or grave personal injury. Fire *prevention*, from the constructional point of view, is all very well and good, but *what we now want is fire prevention from the popular point of view*. We don't want men to throw down lighted matches to set fire to ladies' dresses; we don't want celluloid combs to be used by ladies for combing their hair; we don't want ordinary flannelette to be used for children's clothing; we do not want children to play with fire.

Fires and loss of life can be greatly reduced by popularising fire prevention. The means to arrive at this popularisation will have to be different from those applied to improving the construction of buildings. The proper construction of buildings and the safety of buildings may lead to a reduction of the loss of property from fires, and occasionally to the reduction of loss of life, but it is the training of the public which is wanted to a great extent to substantially reduce the loss of life—the loss of life due to thoughtlessness and ignorance of the individual, the loss of life from small fires, and what I would term domestic conditions. Whilst for the improvements in matters of construction quiet scientific

research work was necessary, fire prevention in the popular sense requires publicity and the aid of the daily press, and it also requires quite a number of minor legislative enactments. The steps taken by the Home Office, and by Mr. Samuel, the Under-Secretary, in particular, to include provisions as to fire-guards in his Children's Bill, was a step in the right direction. (Hear, hear.)

I think, gentlemen, the time has arrived when, side by side with our scientific and technical work, we must make some great effort to popularise fire prevention. We must try to teach the public some of those safeguards which are really so badly wanted. We tried our hands, in an amateurish sort of way some time ago, in the following manner: we got up a competition amongst school teachers all over the Empire, the competitors being asked to write a fable which children could read in their Standard Readers when they were four or five years old, the subject being the dangers of matches and fire. We had fables from all parts of the Empire. We published four of these fables, but the Board of Education at home have not yet adopted them, or tried to apply the idea by devising similar reading matter of their own. But some of the New Zealand authorities have, and some of our Australian Colonies have. They have put our fables into their school children's reading books or papers, and I trust they will teach the lesson we desire overseas. That little bit of work we did—reading the many fables put before us, trying to get the right fable, and trying to get it accepted, and that was work in the right direction, *i.e.*, towards popularising fire prevention. If we do that sort of work, we shall popularise the subject and do good. (Cheers.)

As to the reduction of the loss of property from fire since the Committee was founded, I have it on good authority that it has dropped in ten years from something like £17,000,000 to about £12,000,000 per annum. We, of course, do not claim to our credit the whole of that £5,000,000 per annum saved, but a goodly part, certainly more than half is due to the Committee's work, not only in improving constructional matters, but helping the fire service to get what they require in the way of better organisation, legislation and appliances. The Exhibition and Congress of 1903 which this Committee inaugurated had a very material influence on the fire service of the country, and our friends of the National Fire Brigades' Union often compliment us on the beneficent results to the fire service due to those two events.

In thanking you for the very kind way in which you have received the toast, I take it not as a compliment to myself, but as a compliment to the good workers of the Committee, notable amongst them at the present time being Mr. Ellis Marsland (the general Hon. Secretary), Mr. Max Clarke, Mr. Percy Collins, Mr. J. H. Dyer, Mr. Wylson, and also those gentlemen, not on the executive at present, but formerly, whom we are happy to see here to-day, namely, Mr. Frederic Farrow, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Mond. All these gentlemen



put their backs into the work, and it was very much due to them and to the co-operation in the work that there has been, that we have had all the compliments we have had to-day. (Loud cheers.)

**The Chairman:** My Lord and gentlemen, instead of the usual musical programme we are now going to have a few lantern slides and cinematograph views shown on the screen under the direction of our Hon. Secretary, Mr. Ellis Marsland.

**Mr. Ellis Marsland** (*Gen. Hon. Secretary*), then showed and described the following series of lantern views :

PART I.

*B.F.P.C. Tests.*

*Views of Tests with wooden doors.*

*Views of Tests with "armoured" doors.*

*Views of Tests with Iron and "armoured" doors.*

*Views of Tests with Fire resisting floors.*

*Views of Tests with Stancheon protection.*

*Views of Tests with Fire Resisting Glass.*

**THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE SERVICE COUNCIL.**

**The Hon. Sir John Cockburn, K.C.M.G.**, late Premier of South Australia (*Member of the Council*), then proposed the toast of "The International Fire Service."

He said: Mr. Chairman, My Lord and gentlemen, this is truly an international gathering—more international in spirit than perhaps any other gathering can be, because, in our ordinary international gatherings, behind all the pleasing phrases which we use towards one another, there is often a divergence of view and interest; but here we are all of one mind. The visitors whom we are delighted to see here to-night from various nations, unite in a common aim with our brethren of the fire services in this country.

There is a freemasonry among firemen which is eminently characteristic, and the grade of character in that freemasonry is higher than among any other body of men.

The Chairman remarked just now that you will find wastrels in almost every profession, but you will rarely or never find a "rotter" in the profession of a fireman. There you have the true distinction of character. His is one of the noblest of professions, because every fireman must have the qualities of a hero, and whatever the attitude of the government may be towards his profession, he is always a hero in the imagination and affection of the people (Cheers.)

There is nothing that binds men together so strongly as that of union in action against a common foe, and there is this distinction between the uniform worn by the fire brigades and every other form of uniform, that whereas military uniforms are donned for the purpose of destroying life, the uniform of the fire officer is put on for the purpose of preserving life, and whereas uniforms in military service serve to

distinguish foes, that uniform of the fire service is a mark of friendship all the world over. We war not with flesh and blood, but with the most fierce, relentless, and all-devouring element—an element so terrible that in all times and ages it has been an object of dread and even of worship. Fire is regarded by some nations as a God, and by others as a Demon, and the symbol of the central fire, the sun, is an object of almost universal worship. It is a good thing it is not the recognised form of worship here, because we should have very little opportunity sometimes of exercising our devotions.

The fireman has to deal with the two essential elements of the world. Early in the last century there were two great battle cries in regard to cosmogony—in regard to the manner in which the world came into existence. There was the battle cry of fire and the battle cry of water, and the ranks of scientists were divided into two camps—those who maintained that the world was created through the agency of fire, who were known as the Plutonics; and those who maintained that the world came into being from water, and those were called Neptunists. The peculiarity of the fireman's calling is that he unites both elements, one to neutralize the other. A most proper coat of arms or emblem for any fire brigade would be a device which has been venerated all over the world, and has been always regarded as a most sacred emblem, *i.e.*, Solomon's Seal, or the hexalpa, which consists of two equilateral triangles, one crossing the other: the triangle with the apex pointing upwards symbolising fire, because fire is always pointed; and the triangle with the base upwards symbolising water whose surface is horizontal. This combination has always been regarded as a most singular and mystic emblem, and it is so peculiarly appropriate to the work of fire brigades that I expect it has been adopted somewhere; if it has not, it is a matter of wonder.

The Chairman has alluded to the great work of fire prevention, and we have all looked with great interest to the slides which have been so lucidly explained by Mr. Marsland, for it has been the good fortune of some of us—in my own case not so often as I should have liked—to have witnessed some of the experiments shown on the screen. Now, a really good fireman's work differs from that of most other callings, in that he seeks to destroy his own vocation. The fireman's occupation is one that gives him plenty to do; but, as the Chairman has properly remarked, the true fireman is a fire preventer, and he does all he can by the exercise of brains and influence to reduce as far as possible the occasions on which he is called into action, and the number of those large fires in which he is able to show his bravery.

We hail with extreme cordiality the visitors from other countries who have come over here to join in fraternal greetings with the British Fire Prevention Committee on the occasion of their anniversary. It is not the first time that some of our foreign visitors have been here. With this toast I have the honour of coupling the name of



Chief Officer Meier, of the Amsterdam Fire Brigade, and Chief Officer Reichel, of the Berlin Royal Police Fire Brigade. We had the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Meier before, as he was one of the delegates at the memorable fire congress in 1903, which is a very happy date in my life, because on that occasion I had the honour of representing the Commonwealth of Australia at the Congress, and from that time I have been a member of the British Fire Prevention Committee, and it is a position I greatly prize, for I do not know any work of greater utility; it is gratifying to all those who are engaged in it, and it binds men together in bonds of the strongest possible description.

This is truly an international gathering, and international gatherings are the surest bonds of the world's peace. And let us hope that the meeting with our friends from other nations in Europe and our gatherings in European capitals may do something towards safeguarding that peace which we all desire to see maintained. (Cheers.)

May our hands be always united to prevent the possibility of the greatest calamity—an international conflagration which might set back the hand of the dial of civilisation for time untold; and therefore we welcome our visitors, not only for the sake of their noble profession, but also on account of our friendship with the great countries from which they come; and I have the honour of asking you to toast "The International Fire Service," coupled with the names of Mr. Meier and Chief Officer Reichel. (Loud cheers.)

#### THE REPLIES.

The toast having been honoured:

**Chief Officer Meier** (Amsterdam Fire Brigade) President of the International Fire Service Council, said: Mr. Chairman, my Lord and gentlemen, because I fear that if I speak in my own language, but very few would understand me, I will try and reply, in a few English words, to the toast so kindly proposed by Sir John Cockburn.

Sir John Cockburn has toasted the International Fire Service, and I desire to indicate that there are only a few public services that can rightly be treated as truly international, and that, to my mind, the fire service is one of these. We have all the same aim, all the same object, and it is merely the practical means for fulfilling these aims that are different. The practical methods of fire prevention and extinction, and of fire brigade organisation differ in the various countries, and that is why we travel, in order to see and to learn, and that is how it comes about that we fortunately frequently meet. That we can learn in London, we have seen this morning when we paid a visit to the stations of the London Fire Brigade and the London Fire Salvage Corps, as also yesterday when we visited the Fire Prevention Committee's extraordinarily well organised Testing Station, and saw it in operation. (Cheers.)

Now the International Fire Service Council, of which I have the honour to be the President, not only comprises a number of Fire

Brigade Unions and Federations, but other Societies connected with Fire Service work. Of these Societies, Unions and Federations, the chief and most prominent of all that we have is the British Fire Prevention Committee (Cheers.) There is no society on our International Council which has done so much in so few years as that Committee, and the International Fire Service Council is very happy when it is able to congratulate to-day the British Fire Prevention Committee on its tenth anniversary of incorporation. We hope that the Committee will prosper, and make yet greater progress, and I say this regardless of the fact that if our friends of the British Fire Prevention Committee reach their ideal, the fire brigades will have to put off their nice helmets, scrap their steam engines, and turn their chemical engines into soda water machines—(laughter). When the British Fire Prevention Committee reach that ideal we shall have to do that, but for all that I hope it will not be so very long before the number and the extent of our fires are still further reduced, owing to their teachings. What more, the fire service must everywhere learn that it has more to do than to pump water on to fires to extinguish them. The entire fire service should go in for fire prevention, and then fire service work will be considered a truly humanitarian science and the fire service a profession of the very first rank.

I hope that for a long time there will be fraternal relations between the different fire preventive and the fire brigade services of all countries. (Cheers.)

**Chief Officer Reichel** (Berlin Royal Police Fire Brigade) Member of the Executive of the International Fire Service Council, replied in German (*summarised free translation*):—

It affords me great pleasure to be here in London on this occasion, and I thank you for your kind reception on, this, my first visit to your Metropolis.

The work done at international meetings is not necessarily always instructive, but what we see and learn on the occasion of such meetings is frequently of lasting value to us.

Thus I have, on this occasion, seen the British Fire Prevention Committee's Testing Station yesterday, on the occasion of a four hours' fire test, and I was much impressed with it. I long know the Committee's work and its useful reports which I study with care, and I may truthfully say that the Committee's Testing Station, the manner in which the tests are conducted there, and the efficient and simple way in which the reports on the tests are presented have not been surpassed anywhere in the world. The testing station is the best in existence, and the red books are models of their kind. (Cheers.)

I am delighted with the thorough, prompt, and punctual manner in which I observe all the Committee's work is carried out, its thoroughness, punctuality, and promptness even in such arrangements as the entertainment of foreign guests. (Cheers.)

I thank you for your toast on the International Fire Service.



*A second series of lantern slides were then shown and described.*

PART II.

NOTABLE FIRES.

*Windsor Hotel Fire, New York, March 17th, 1899.*

*Queen Victoria Street Fire.*

*Antwerp Customs House (Entrepot Royal), 5th June, 1901.*

*San Francisco Fire, April 14th, 1906.*

*Fire at St. Michael's Church, Hamburg.*

**THE BRITISH FIRE SERVICE.**

*His Honour Judge Rentoul, K.C., LL.D.*, then proposed the toast of "The British Fire Service." He said: Mr. Chairman, my lord and gentlemen, we have here to-night, not merely a German invasion, but a foreign invasion. We have guests from various countries, and I suppose they will now think of the British Fire Prevention Committee as a sort of "Dreadnought" against the dangers of fires at home.

Herr Reichel told us that the Fire Brigade officer and all connected with fire prevention in all the civilised countries of the world were one great brotherhood, and with that I am sure we entirely agree. He told us something else, and that is that he has observed the work at our British Fire Prevention Committee's Testing Station, and I believe also had studied the information he had received in connection with the tests conducted by that body, and he said he considered it the best of its kind in the world.

Of course, we always agree with anything of that sort with regard to our own country, but it is only fair for me to return the compliment, because the first great city in which I ever lived as a resident for any considerable time was the city of Berlin, the thing which struck me most there during my residence was the Fire Brigade, the work of which I happened to see a good deal. One good turn deserves another. Herr Reichel paid us a compliment, and I have paid him another, and that is the best I can do.

We have heard much from the previous speakers in reference to the excellence of the British Fire Prevention Committee, and from others we have heard of the good work done by Fire Brigades generally. That I should now be the unfortunate man to give a third toast which touches closely on the same subject is, I hold, certainly another injustice to Ireland.

The Chairman told us that his Committee gave no opinions at all in their Reports, that they merely recorded facts. That is thoroughly antagonistic to the practice of my profession, because we live by giving opinions, and we get rid of facts very often as promptly as we possibly can. (Loud laughter.) Nevertheless, the statement of plain facts is something that is wanted in fire preventive work.

But even if the prior toast on the International Fire Service included in a way the lesser one on the British Service, I am only too happy to

give it with all sincerity as a toast to a most useful and able service of which we all are proud.

I give the toast coupled with the names of Captain Hamilton and Lieut.-Colonel Seabroke. (Cheers.)

### THE REPLIES.

**Captain James De Courcy Hamilton, R.N.** (retired) in reply said: Mr. Chairman, members of the Executive of the British Fire Prevention Committee, brother foreign officers, my lords and gentlemen, that is about the easiest part of my speech, because no one will criticise that. (Laughter.)

It is with great pleasure that I rise to respond for the toast and I feel it a great honour to be called on to reply for the British Fire Service. But why I should be pitted against the most eloquent Judge of the British Empire I cannot conceive, and I wish the toast had fallen to other hands to respond to, because I do not feel equal to it. In saying how much we appreciate the flattering references that he made to the British Fire Services I feel sure that I am echoing the sentiments of all the officers here present who belong to that service, but some of his remarks will require a certain amount of water on our part.

Whatever force we belong to in this world we must have, or make many errors, and I do not think there is any service which is more ready to recognise this than the fire services generally throughout the world; because, whether we have been a short time in the fire service or a long time we all have to confess that we are always learning on account of the fact that the nature of the buildings (we have to deal with) changes from year to year, and there is the increased fire risk arising out of the introduction of new trades.

The reply that has fallen to me seems to call for a certain amount of history as regards the British Fire Services; therefore, you will have to pardon me, not having been brought up in the eloquent profession of the learned judge, for having made many notes to help me during my task.

As regards the history of the British Fire Service, in the early part of last century the fire *personnel*, outside London, for the protection of the county towns was provided by the Municipal Corporations. In London it consisted of small bodies of men under the insurance offices who acted mainly on those actual buildings which they found bearing the sign of the offices to which they belonged. If they found the burning building did not have the sign of the office they belonged to, they went to bed and let the building burn. (Laughter.) It is rather difficult to obtain definite records on these matters; but this *personnel* I have referred to, which then protected the county towns and also London, was supplemented in many instances by assistance from the insurance offices, and this constituted the foundation of the British Fire Service. In 1823 Edinburgh took the lead in the formation of a properly organised Fire Service for the whole city. In 1830



the fire insurance offices in London merged their fire fighting forces into one corps under the name of the London Fire Engine Establishment and they appointed Mr. Braidwood, whose portrait you have seen on the screen this evening and who organised the Edinburgh Fire Brigade before he came to London. The successful manner in which he carried out this work, and the confidence of the public in the small force under his hand, are matters of history to all firemen who have studied the progress of Fire Brigades from their infancy. In 1854 Mr. Braidwood raised a protest to Her Majesty's Government against the immense warehouses that were being erected in Tooley Street, and a disastrous fire occurred, where to the regret of all, such an excellent officer lost his life in buildings against which he had previously protested. He was succeeded by Sir Eyre Massey Shaw, who was at that time simply E. Massey Shaw, and in 1866 the whole of the protection of London from fire was thrown upon a public body in a very simply worded Act of Parliament, that body being the Metropolitan Board of Works, and then the Metropolitan Fire Brigade was established. In 1904 its name was changed to the London Fire Brigade, which it is now known by.

It was natural that on the evolution of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, when it was found to be a success, that all other large cities and towns throughout the British Isles should follow in its footsteps in the matter of their Fire Brigades.

This, shortly, leads up to the present position of the British Fire Service. The works of James Braidwood on "Fire Prevention," published in 1830, and the further works by Sir Eyre Massey Shaw, have been the guides of all firemen up to the present day, and on these the British Fire service is established.

It devolves upon Colonel Seabroke to speak for the thousands of public-spirited men who supply the volunteer protection for a very much larger area of the British Isles than is covered by the professional Fire Brigades.

It is with great satisfaction that I can confidently state that the relationship that exists between all the Fire Brigade Services, the Fire Preventive, and the other Services with whom we come into contact is at the present moment of the happiest description. (Loud cheers.) I am sure that our pleasure has been greatly added to this evening by the presence of such distinguished foreign officers as are here present, and we thank our hosts, the British Fire Prevention Committee, for their generous hospitality, and for having given us this opportunity of meeting our foreign friends.

Personally, I take this opportunity of thanking the whole of the Fire Services for their many acts of kindness that I have received during the six years that I have held the command of the London Fire Brigade, and I would observe that any success that I may have attained is due to the loyal support which has been accorded to me by my colleagues in

all forces, and included in these forces I naturally embrace the British Fire Prevention Committee, many of whose members are gentlemen closely connected with architecture and engineering and who actively assist in the prevention of fire.

On behalf of the British Fire Services, I thank you all, gentlemen, for the very kind manner in which you have received this toast. (Cheers.)

**Lieut.-Colonel Seabroke, V.D.**, Chairman of the National Fire Brigades' Union said : Mr. President, brother officers, both foreign and home, my lord and gentlemen, let me diverge a little from the strict limits of the toast and congratulate Mr. Sachs and the British Fire Prevention Committee on attaining their tenth anniversary of the Committee for so happily consummating it in this room to-night. We have, as it were, in the National Fire Brigades Union, which I have the honour to represent here to-night, and the British Fire Prevention Committee, grown up side by side ; and we have grown to know each other and to like each other and to feel that we belong to the same great service. We have become familiar with each other, and contrary to the old saying, that has not bred contempt, but esteem, on both sides.

London, as Captain Hamilton has told you, has been protected from fire for many years. It has had its Braidwood, its Shaw, and now its Hamilton. Sir Eyre Massey Shaw was our first President, and from him we had every assistance, and to him we looked up for help. Since his time we have had Captain Hamilton, who has always given us the greatest encouragement, and we have always been most happy to see him amongst us. (Hear, hear.)

The larger provincial towns followed the example of London in having their Brigades, but then came the hundred and one towns under Urban District Councils and Town Councils who had the old village squirts and a few exercises. Twenty or thirty years ago some public spirited men tried to alter that, and in many towns Volunteer Fire Brigades were formed, and twenty-two years ago our old and respected comrade, Captain Green, of Oxford, at a meeting of Fire Brigades there, started this Union of Fire Brigades. Since that time we have gradually progressed and the greater number of minor Brigades now belong to us. We have in our Union large Brigades as well, but our Union consists mainly of what we may call Town Council and Urban District Council Brigades.

We have endeavoured to make the Fire Service a Service which shall be known and esteemed by the public ; we have tried to make our men efficient firemen and we have tried to bring together officers and men in that feeling of comradeship which ought to exist in every service. I think we have done that in England and it must remain for future years to show how far this work has been a success. I think we may say we have spread good fellowship not only amongst the firemen of England, but amongst the firemen abroad ; and I am glad, and I welcome on behalf of our Union our friends from other countries who are here to-night.



Gentlemen, I thank you very heartily for the way in which you have received the toast of our Service. (Cheers.)

*A series of Bioscope pictures were then shown.*

PART III.

*Review of the London Fire Brigade.*

*London "Turnout" and Gamage's Fire.*

*American Fire "Turnout" and Fire.*

*Copenhagen "Turnout" and Nocturnal Fire.*

*Petroleum Fire near Paris.*

"THE VISITORS."

**Mr. Percy Collins, J.P.** (*Member of the Executive*) then proposed the toast of "Our Visitors."

He said: Mr. Chairman, and brother members of the British Fire Prevention Committee. The toast I have the privilege to present to you is one, I am sure, to which you will give your very hearty response. It is that of the Visitors. The British Fire Prevention Committee always gladly welcome visitors, and this we frequently do when we are holding our tests at the Testing Station, for then they can get a very good idea of the work that we carry out, perhaps better even than they have to-night from the views which have been shown upon the screen. We are especially glad to-night to welcome our visitors who have come here to celebrate our 10th anniversary. We have been enabled to put in ten years of very good work indeed, with which I think you will agree, and it is especially pleasurable to all of us who belong to this Committee that you, gentlemen, should have gathered round us to-night, to help us celebrate an event which is of importance in our history. (Hear, hear.)

It might perhaps be considered rather invidious if I went through the names of all our guests, but there are one or two that I think I must refer to. I should like especially to mention Lord Londesborough, who has visited our Testing Station several times, and I think I can honestly say that the comments and criticisms he has made to us have been very helpful. Then we have Sir Thomas Brooke-Hitching, who was Sheriff of the City of London at the time of our Fire Prevention Congress of 1903, which he attended, and we are very glad he has done us the honour to come here from the great City of London. Then we have Mr. George R. Sims, who although he never takes a holiday, has to-night kindly undertaken a little recreation to support us. (Cheers.) We congratulate him on his work in regard to curtailing infant mortality, because it is on the same lines as our own, and we are most glad to give him any co-operation we can, because I feel sure he will give us assistance in our own work. We have the great pleasure also to welcome His Honour Judge Rentoul, Major Cooper Key, Major Crozier and Mr. Redmayne from the Home Office, Mr. Brandon, Chairman of the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council, and Mr. Sneezum,

Assistant Secretary of the "London and Lancashire" Insurance Co., Then we have our foreign friends, tried and staunch friends, both of ours and the fire service. I think you will agree that this is, in itself, a very representative list of guests here to-night, and we are very pleased indeed that they have honoured us with their presence to help us to make this, our 10th anniversary banquet, a success. I think you will agree it has been.

Gentlemen, I will ask you to rise and drink to the health of our guests, coupled with the names of Sir Thomas Brooke-Hitching, Mr. George R. Sims, and Chief Officer Westphalen.

### THE REPLIES.

*Sir Thomas Brooke-Hitching*, in responding, said : Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—On behalf of the guests I desire to make four points in less than two minutes, and, I think, with Fire Brigade brevity I shall be able to do it.

The first is to thank my good friend, Mr. Collins, for the kindly way in which he has proposed this toast, and you, sir, and the Committee, for your very gracious hospitality. If it should happen that we are asked to come again, I daresay that, like the Fire Brigades of the country, you will find us ready.

The second point is to regret, not only on behalf of the visitors, but on behalf of the Metropolis generally, the retirement of Captain de Courcy Hamilton from the public service. (Hear, hear.) But whilst we view that retirement with regret, we are not unmindful of the fact that we have in the second officer of the London County Council, on which body I have had the privilege of sitting as a representative of the City of London, a man who has won golden opinions from all sides. (Loud cheers.)

The third point I wish to make is that instead of teaching our school children the mileage of the River Mississippi, or the exact distance of London from Cape Clear, we might with advantage teach them (and I speak as an old member of the London School Board) more practical subjects ; amongst them fire protection and fire prevention.

My last point,—and it is a very important one. You, Sir, have many distinguished foreigners at your festive board to-night ; these gentlemen are at the head of the fire service in their respective countries. They are on the best terms of friendship with us and with one another. When I see this camaraderie and good fellowship, I am impelled to the wish that the spirit of jealousy between the nations should cease, and the spirit of emulation should take its place. These international visits lead me to hope that at no distant date the "United States of Europe" may become more than a dream. With perfect good fellowship in the European States, we should have no use for these alarms of war, and these ridiculous fears of our neighbours, which are fostered by the yellow press. I hope that the excellent example set in this country by this Committee under its able Chairman, may lead to an



international good fellowship permeating every country in Europe for the good of all its peoples.

I thank you very heartily for the hospitality you have extended to your guests to-night. (Cheers.)

**Mr. George R. Sims** said: Mr. Chairman, my Lord, Mr. Collins and Gentlemen,—My first impression, when I found myself in this distinguished and scientific company, was that for me to attempt to address you on the subject of Fire Prevention would be a blazing indiscretion. (Laughter.)

Moreover, the particular branch of Fire prevention in which I am just now specially interested, is too painful a one to be adequately dealt with in an after-dinner speech.

I do not, therefore, propose to emphasise the painful side of the sacrifice of child life, due to quick flaming flannelette, but rather deal with the object aimed at by your Society, namely, the Prevention.

The idea of fire prevention engaged a considerable amount of attention among the ancients. One hundred years B.C., a Roman gentleman advocated the use of a preparation, which made the homes of his fellow citizens non-inflammable. All the Roman villas were to be soaked or pickled in this preparation. How far he was successful I am not able to say, the statistics of the insurance companies not being available.

From this period onward, the protection of property from fire had engaged public attention, but it is only of late years that the protection of children from a flaming death has been considered worthy of legislative attention.

The terrible number of burning fatalities has given us the fire-guard in the Children's Charter. But the fire-guard only protects the child from actual contact with the fire in the grate.

There are hundreds of cases every year in which a spark that flies out of the fire, a lighted match, the flare of a candle, has been sufficient to set the clothing of a child on fire and wrap its helpless little body in a winding sheet of flames.

At the request of your Chairman I have had some statistics got out.

I find that between last September and the 12th of this May 630 children under 15 were burnt to death. I took the cases from Press cuttings of inquests held during the period.

Taking the 630 children, I find that in 160 cases it was stated that the children wore flannelette. Only in six cases was it definitely stated that flannelette was not worn.

I have been studying this question for two years, with the assistance of friendly experts, and I do not think I am over-calculating when I say that out of the 630 deaths 400 were due to the ignition of flannelette garments.

Flannelette has come to stay. It is cheap, it is comfortable, it is warm, and it is therefore the favourite body clothing for little children.

But flannelette is, from its very nature, highly inflammable. Directly it catches light it blazes up. I know a case, in the past month, it occurred in Kilburn, in which a child, her clothing set alight by a spark from a watchman's fire, was burnt up in the street. Before aid could be rendered every particle of clothing had been burnt from the child's body, and it was left charred and naked.

As we are likely to have flannelette always with us, common sense and common humanity alike should use every possible endeavour to reduce the dangers attending the wearing of the material.

There is a material in the market which is flannelette, and which it is contended displays a marked reluctance to flame when ignited.

I understand that it is the intention of your committee to test all materials claiming a greater margin of safety for the wearer than the ordinary material now upon the market.

If you take this matter up in earnest you will be rendering the Nation a great service, for the Nation's greatest asset is child-life. (Hear, hear.)

Whatever the result of your experiments may be, your verdict will be accepted without dispute, and in lending yourselves to this great human cause you will be directly and indirectly assisting in saving thousands of little children from a terrible and agonising death. (Hear, hear.)

**Chief Officer Westphalen** (Hamburg Fire Brigade), Vice-President of the International Fire Service Council, said: Mr. Chairman, my Lord and Gentlemen and my good friends.—I am here as a visitor, but I would prefer not to speak as a visitor, but as one of your fellow-members, for I am an honorary member of the British Fire Prevention Committee.

I hope that many of my compatriots will learn to know the English character, and I would like a great many Englishmen to know more of the German character—the character of the German people.

I have come from Germany to England not as a "spy," and I had no "guns" in my luggage. I left Germany with love for my country, but with warm feelings for the English people, and I beg to hope for the prosperity and happiness of the people of this great nation. (Cheers.)

It falls to my lot as the last speaker to propose the health of the Chairman, Mr. Edwin O. Sachs, and it is with great pleasure I call upon you to drink to this toast. (Loud cheers.)

**The Chairman**, in bringing the proceedings to a close, said, Gentlemen: Thank you very much for your kind reception of the toast to my health. The hour is too late for any formal reply. We will now break up.

NOTE.—The lantern was operated by Mr. G. Davenport, operator to the Society of Arts, and the Cinematograph Views were demonstrated by the Walterdaw Co., Ltd.







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