

CHAPTER XIII

FIRE PREVENTION

THE elimination of wastes of energy, time, and materials has attracted considerable attention, and some progress has been made in its accomplishment, but the question of preventing waste through fire prevention has received little attention. Fire prevention should be an important factor in every business, and it often has an important bearing upon costs and efficiency.

During the years between 1881 and 1912, the total value of property destroyed in the United States by fire amounted to \$5,364,578,199. The fire losses have increased steadily year after year in greater proportion than the growth of the population. The property loss from fire in 1875 was approximately \$78,000,000; in 1885, \$102,000,000; in 1895, \$142,000,000; in 1905, \$165,000,000; in 1911, \$217,000,000; in 1912, \$225,000,000; and for the first nine months of 1913, \$1,026,900 greater than for the first nine months in 1912. Between 1900 and 1910, the population of this country increased by 73 per cent, while the fire loss increased by 134 per cent.

The per capita loss from fire in the United States greatly exceeds that of any foreign country. During the year 1911, the per capita loss in this country was \$2.62; in Italy, \$.31; in Germany, \$.21; in France, \$.81; and in England, \$.53. During the same year New York City had 324 fires for