

## - FIRE - DEPARTMENTS

### A Rescue Squad for Special Service

BOSTON, MASS.—Realizing the need of a squad of men specially prepared for work in dense smoke and chemical fumes, the Boston Fire Department organized Rescue Company No. 1 on June 15, 1917. The new organization is located at the quarters of Ladder Company No. 8 and Engine Com-



THE BOSTON RESCUE SQUAD

pany No. 25 at Fort Hill Square, in the very heart of the business and mercantile section of the city.

The rescue company is furnished with an American-La France motor-driven car, carrying six Draeger smoke and gas helmets, pulmotor, elevator rescue outfit, oxygen and acetylene outfit for cutting metal bars in saving lives or salvaging valuable materials, a 60-gallon chemical tank, hose, axes, extinguishers, life line, jimmies and other small tools.

The particular duties of the company are to perform rescue work and to fight fires

in inaccessible places, such as basements, sub-basements and holds of ships, but in addition it performs any other special work to which it is assigned.

In the short time since its organization the company has achieved excellent results along the lines for which it was formed and has been of material assistance to the department in reaching fires in smoke-filled basements. At a recent bowling alley fire in Boston, where the ventilation was extremely poor and the basement was very rapidly filled with thick smoke, the rescue company, by using their smoke helmets, were able to reach the seat of the fire, carrying large lines of hose, and were an important factor in extinguishing it. By this act alone, undoubtedly, thousands of dollars' worth of valuable property were saved from fire. On Sunday, July 8, 1917, a serious fire broke out in the warehouse of the John T. Connor Company, on South Street. The company, equipped with their masks, entered the building and shut off the ammonia supply, and thus made it safe for other members of the department to enter and extinguish the fire.

This company is yet in its infancy, but a few instances of its worth, such as those cited above, prove that its establishment was well warranted from the standpoint of the saving of property and human life.

A similar company is in service in New York City, and before the Boston squad was organized, Lieut. Daniel J. Hurley was sent to New York to spend several days with the older company. He studied its methods and obtained much useful information, as well as gaining a good deal of practical experience. Lieut. Hurley is now in charge of the company, which is made up of men of fine physique and particular aptitude for the work. No man was accepted until he had passed a rigid physical examination. The present members of the company, in addition to the lieutenant, are Arthur D. Graner, William O. Cheswell, Thomas A. Dean and Joseph F. McKendrew.

The company is assigned to 146 boxes on first alarm, 306 on second alarm, and 48 on third alarm, besides being subject to special calls at any time.

JOHN GRADY,  
Fire Commissioner.