

Fire at the Royal Hospital

Great excitement was aroused this morning by an alarm being given at the Royal Hospital, West Street, was on fire. The news rapidly circulated and people quickly made their way to the place. Happily the rumour proved to be worse than reality, as the fire was of slight extent, and was confined to the room wherein it originated. Detective Marr was the first to discover the outbreak. He had been making inquiries at the hospital, and was coming away when he noticed smoke issuing from that portion of the basement at the corner of Westfield Terrace, and abutting on West Street. Marr immediately entered the hospital, and made his way to the basement. He found the room underneath the drug store full of smoke, and a quantity of empty hampers, boxes, straw, and a general litter of packages on fire. The officer at once proceeded to the Fire Brigade Station, in Rockingham Street, and gave the alarm. Supt. Frost ordered out the engine and tender, and a few moments after reaching the hospital water was being plentifully poured on the burning material. The fire was kept confined to the room, and was soon extinguished, greatly to the relief of all concerned. Fortunately all this structural portion of the building is constructed by fire proof materials, and the damage done was limited to the destruction of hampers, packages, etc., and the scorching of the woodwork of the doors and windows. Probably £10 or £15 will cover the pecuniary loss. How the fire originated is not known. The dispenser, Mr. G. M. Tomlinson, whose department is just above this part of the basement, was in the drug store during the morning, and his lad had only been left the room a few minutes when the alarm was given. Everything then appeared all right. It is surmised that a lighted match may have inadvertently been dropped through the grating in West Street.