

*FIRE AT THE MELBOURNE MEAT
PRESERVING COMPANY'S WORKS.*

On Sunday morning, at about six o'clock, a fire broke out at the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company's works, Maribyrnong, by which the plant and machinery, and the cooking and preserving rooms were so much damaged as to necessitate the discontinuance of meat preserving operations for some two or three weeks to come. The fire was first observed by Thomas Lloyd, one of the workmen, who slept at the works. He at once gave the alarm to the fireman, who slept on the premises. The steam whistle was sounded, and the men of the establishment living in the neighborhood of the premises, to the number of about fifty, turned out. The hose kept at the works was attached to the Yan Yean fire-plug, but soon after it had got into working order the roof of the shed where the fire broke out, fell in, and smashed the pipe, rendering the Yan Yean totally useless as regards a supply of water for the hose. Mr. Ritchie, the manager of the works, who had arrived on the spot by this time, took steps to prevent the fire extending to the other portions of the building. The men had now to form a line of about sixty yards to the river's side, and buckets of water were passed along the line from the river, and thrown on the fire. They succeeded by sheer hard work in confining the fire to that portion of the premises where it had broken out. It was at one time thought that the whole of the company's buildings would succumb to the flames, but fortunately there was no wind blowing at the time, and there being a plentiful supply of water at hand, the fire was confined to the rooms above mentioned. The origin of the disaster cannot at present be correctly ascertained, but we are informed by Mr. Ritchie that an inquiry as to the cause of the fire will be instituted. The portion of the premises destroyed, together with the stock and machinery, are insured in the Victoria for £3500, and in the Northern for £1750. The remaining portion of the premises not damaged were insured to the extent of £4000 in several offices. The Melbourne Fire Brigade were not communicated with until it was too late to render any assistance. Great credit is due to Mr. Ritchie for the prompt measures taken to prevent the fire spreading, and also to the residents in the neighborhood for the energetic manner in which they worked to stay the disaster.