

FIREMEN VOTING ON IT.

Question of Starting on Day Off at 8 or 10 A M—Capt Smith Gets Letter of Commendation.

The question that is agitating every member of the Boston fire department just now is, "Shall the time of starting days off be changed from 10 o'clock to 8 o'clock?"

During the past few months Fire Commissioner Wells has received innumerable requests from members of the department who desired to have the time of starting their days off brought forward two hours.

The commissioner decided to "put it up" to the members of the department themselves. When he sprung the matter of starting the days off two hours earlier there was immediate opposition from the boys who wanted to have the time remain at 10 o'clock, so the request was modified to calling for days off to begin at 8 a m during June, July, August and September.

This proposal also was greeted with a protest, so the commission decided to put the matter to a vote, and accordingly notified every fire leader in the department to have his subordinates vote on the matter and send their ballots to headquarters.

Yesterday many ballots arrived at the Bristol-st building and today there were many more, and it is expected that it will be fully a fortnight before the total vote is received, owing to the fact that many men who are on vacation must be heard from before the votes are counted.

Many firemen who have a pretty fair idea of how the voting is going have been surprised owing to the good showing made by the men who want the day off to start at 8 a m.

Those desiring to have the day off start at that hour say that going away at 10 o'clock deprives them of several hours pleasure, as many excursions and picnic parties start from town long before roll call.

If the 8 o'clock men win out it means that the meal hours for the summer months in the different houses will have to be shifted around so too many men will not be away from quarters at one time.

The mystery surrounding the missing letter of thanks due Capt Charles P. Smith of engine 1, was cleared at headquarters this morning when the commissioner granted Smith a commendatory letter for responding to an alarm from box 123 while off duty.

Another man who was with Smith Sunday received his commendation a few days ago, and the popular South Boston leader had an idea that he had been passed by, but discovered today that it was all a mistake.