

A correspondent in Montreal sends us a description of a huge steam engine, weighing 170 tons, which has been built for the Ogilvie Milling Co., Winnipeg, by the Laurie Engine Works, in Montreal. It is a tandem Corliss compound with cylinders, high pressure, 24 inches diameter; low pressure, 48 inches diameter, and 48 inches stroke. The main shaft is 16 inches in diameter and weighs over eight tons. The main bearing for this shaft is fitted into an enormous frame casting weighing twelve tons. A great feature is the fly wheel, or main pulley, which is 22 feet in diameter, 6 feet 6 inches across the face, and weighs 60 tons. The whole immense machine, says our correspondent, is a credit to a Canadian shop.

CONFLAGRATION IN OTTAWA AND HULL.

Another frightful instance of the conflagration hazard is the devastated condition of Hull and part of Ottawa to-day. In a narrow street of wooden houses in the western part of Hull, a high wind blowing, a chimney took fire about noon yesterday, and the flames spread eastward and southward soon destroying hundreds of the wooden houses thereabout, and sweeping east towards the Ottawa River. In an hour they had leaped the river and taken possession of Victoria Island on which are situated the Carbide Works, the Hull Lumber Company's mills, the Electric Company's power houses, Bronson & Weston's mills and piling grounds, Baldwin machinery shops, the McKay Milling Company, Parr's lumber mills, Merrill's foundry, and numerous smaller concerns. Eddy's mills and yards, his extensive paper factory, match factory, pulp mill, are all gone but one mill. At yesterday evening's accounts Booth's mills, too, are burned. Next the flames attacked the city of Ottawa side, across the river, burning the Chaudiere bridge, the C.P.R. station and a number of cars, and devastating Rochesterville and a cluster of villages to the southwest. Lumber piles extending along both sides of the river went up in flames. The Chaudiere flats are a mass of smoking debris. Four persons were burned to death and forty are in the hospital with burns. A late report from the G.N.W. Telegraph Co. said that the Ottawa fire brigade crossed the river to Hull and while there the Chaudiere bridge was wrecked and thus the firemen could not get back to save their own city. But the Montreal brigade was sent, and arrived to do valuable work. At midnight only could it be said that the business quarter of Ottawa was safe. But the loss in mills, factories, lumber and dwellings is placed at ten to twelve millions, with insurance of five to six millions. The insurance on Eddy's property alone, which he took from the Canadian tariff companies on March 15th to give to American "underground" or Canadian non-tariff companies, was \$587,000. The suffering among those thousands of poor working people, who have lost their all, and will be without work for months is saddening to think of. Government will make an appropriation for their relief and other cities and towns are already moving to assist.

ASSESSMENT LIFE COMPANY WINDS UP.

That assessment life assurance has pretty well run its course in New England would appear from the fact that the Insurance Commissioner of Maine, a few days ago, filed a bill in Equity in the Court at Lewiston, asking for the appointment of a receiver for the Maine Benefit Association of Auburn, Me. This association was organized in 1885, and has had a fairly prosperous career. In 1886 it had 3,675 members, and its cost per thousand was only \$8.60. By 1890, when it had 6,178 members, the cost had run up to \$15.10; but for the last three years it has been losing members and had only 5,613 at the close of 1898, while the cost per thousand had run up to \$19.15. The company never made any attempt to become a large organization, but was conducted on conservative lines. Its losses have been paid promptly and in full, but of late years it has found it extremely difficult to secure new business or even hold the business already in force. The association qualified last year in Massachusetts under the Dewey law, says The Spectator, and hopes were entertained that at the next session of the Maine Legislature an Act might be passed enabling it to reincorporate under the old-line laws. Evidently the Insurance Commissioner is of the opinion that it is no longer safe for the association to continue and therefore moves for a receiver. It is believed that the deposits made by

the Maine Benefit with the State Treasurer are amply sufficient to provide for all outstanding claims. "As the Maine Benefit was the sole surviving assessment company of New England, the chapter of assessmentism in that section of the country may now be considered as permanently closed so far as relates to business organizations as distinguished from fraternalism."

ROYAL VICTORIA LIFE.

The management of this vigorous and promising life company has reason for congratulation on the showing made at the annual meeting in March. Assets of \$232,600 have been accumulated, of which \$200,000 is capital paid-up in cash, and there is not far from two millions of business on the books. The insurance written in 1899 exceeded a million, under 764 policies, and the cash receipts of the year in premiums and interest reached \$68,435. To have done this in what is practically the second year of the company's existence is to have done uncommonly well, and the agents are entitled to the compliment which the report pays them for their share in the achievements of the year.

We have already remarked upon the prominence of the gentlemen who have been secured as directors. The addresses made by the president, Mr. James Crathern; the vice-president, Mr. Andrew F. Gault, and the medical director, T. G. Roddick, M.P., show intelligent appreciation of the prudent measures necessary to be taken and maintained in the founding and carrying on of a life company. It is greatly to the credit of Mr. Burke to have surrounded himself with men of business and men of substance in the building up of his enterprise. The local boards formed by the Royal Victoria are as follows: In Toronto, Sir Thos. W. Taylor, ex-Chief Justice of Manitoba; Donald Mackay, Esq., vice-president Ontario Bank; W. J. Gage, Esq., president W. J. Gage & Company, limited. In Ottawa, Geo. Burn, Esq., general manager Bank of Ottawa; John MacLaren, Esq., MacLaren & McLaurin, lumber merchants; W. D. Hogg, Esq., Q.C., O'Connor, Hogg & Magee.

IN THE DRY GOODS STORE.

The market for silk fabrics in Lyons, France, is quiet. The same is the case in Crefeld.

Kirkcaldy textile factories are working full time; the floor cloth and linoleum works overtime.

South of Scotland tweed trade does not improve. Makers find difficulty in keeping their looms going.

The pretty color, appositely called wedgwood blue, is being boomed now in all-silk goods in London.

Belfast letters of April 12th say that prices of linen goods are firmly maintained and that the mills generally are busy.

Reports this week from Fall River show inactivity unbroken in the print cloth market. Sales have been small and entirely of odds. For regulars there has been hardly an enquiry.

Khaki colored silks are having a considerable vogue just now, English manufacturers having secured a fair share of the business. Continental firms, however, have been large suppliers of the patriotic shade.

Another trade rumor knocked on the head. The secretary of J. & P. Coats writes denying the report that his concern is considering a proposal to amalgamate with the English Sewing Cotton Company.—Dry Goods Economist.

The business done in white goods for 1901 has reached liberal proportions, says the N.Y. Journal of Commerce. Buyers have no misgivings apparently over the future of this division of the market. They do not hesitate over paying full current prices on this business.

In its Notes from Ireland The Draper's Record of April 14th says that export trade is improving. Orders from the United States are fairly satisfactory, and there is a slowly growing improvement in Cuban trade. Canada is buying freely, and Australasian demand is active.

The Queen's visit has done much for Dublin. Business is "booming" there, the city is thronged with rank and fashion, who are buying freely of Irish manufactured dress and other goods. It is said that it is in accordance with the express wish of the Queen that the absentee owners of Irish estates are now sojourning in Ireland.