

exhibits were almost impossible without excessive crowding. In consequence of the greatly increased weight thus placed upon the Museum floors these soon began to settle, and a first row of timber supports was placed in the lowest flat about twelve years ago. These for a time served the purpose and prevented further settling of the floors; but owing to the insecurity of the foundations or continued weight on the upper flats, these again became unable to sustain the burden, and a second series of posts became necessary, though but little additional weight had been placed in the building. The aspect of the Museum flats with the long rows of painted posts is somewhat startling to the visitor on his first entrance and the utility of the whole place is very seriously impaired. In the meantime all new collections have of necessity to be placed in sheds or stored in the basement, so that these are largely unavailable for purposes of study by the Staff, and nothing is now brought in but what is actually required for the purposes of elucidating the structure of the several districts in which the members of the Staff are engaged. Should the necessity arise of placing another relay of supports to keep the several floors in place it will be a difficult matter to find room for further installation of posts.

Owing to the increase of the Staff also, and the necessity of enlarging the museum space to the fullest extent, it was found necessary several years ago to increase the office accommodation. This was done by finishing off the upper flat over the adjoining dry-goods store on Sussex street, and here four rooms were provided, in one of which the Mining Bureau, with all its store of data collected for some years is placed. In these four rooms particularly the danger of destruction by fire is very imminent, and several very narrow escapes in this direction have occurred within the last half-dozen years. This building is a mere shell, old, and as inflammable as tinder; while it is so insecure that it was condemned by the officials of the Public Works Department several years ago, and the contents of the several rooms are now restricted to the necessary office furniture. This condition of things is especially unsatisfactory; and a fire, lasting but a very short time, would destroy the whole of this flat with its mass of manuscripts, note books, instruments and much other material of value which would be impossible to replace.

It can be easily seen, therefore, that, small as are the accommodations in the entire building at the present time, the condition of things is such as not to warrant the addition of any greater load in the matter of materials for exhibit or development. What is to be particularly regretted, however, is the fact that the space available is so limited; since on this account a very large amount of very valuable and interesting material on hand is of necessity stored away in out of the way places through the lack of facilities for its display, and the usefulness of the Museum as an object lesson on Canada's resources is greatly restricted. The members of the Staff also on this account are obliged to make their collections as limited as possible in all branches of scientific or economic work connected with the department. It is needless to state that the collections stored in the sheds are not in fire-proof buildings.

The appreciation in which the Survey is held by the general public since its removal to Ottawa is evidenced by the constantly increasing lists of names in the visitors' book, which now reach a total of fully 30,000 a year.

The importance and value of such a source of information to the younger portion of our population can be scarcely over-estimated, at least to those who can avail themselves of this opportunity of studying the mineral collections as well as the other exhibitions illustrative of the natural history of our country; and will certainly result in developing a love for scientific pursuits on the part of the rising generation. The several collections in the Museum form most valuable

sources of information and are not equalled anywhere in Canada, and their study by young and old will lead to a rapidly increased knowledge of and an increased appreciation of the boundless resources of the entire Dominion.

The reputation which the Geological and Natural History Survey enjoys both at home and abroad among those best qualified to express a competent opinion on the subject, is well known, and is highly gratifying to those who have its development in hand. The Survey has always been particularly fortunate in the choice of its directors, all of whom have aided largely in establishing the reputation of Canada throughout the scientific world. The most distinguished scientists in the United States as well as in England and on the Continent, have all spoken in most unqualified terms of approval concerning the great value of the collections both from an economic and scientific standpoint. The history of Canadian geological research, in which is included some of the most interesting questions as regards the earth's structure and the development of its mineral wealth, can be readily studied here. The original collections of the fossils from which the determination of the stratified rocks was made are placed in the Museum, and the destruction of these would be regretted by every one interested in this branch of science. This fact has been pointed out by many eminent men whose names are well known throughout the scientific world.

As regards the great collections of rocks and minerals which have been gotten together at such expense from all parts of the Dominion, while it is possible that a great portion of these might be replaced at some time, it can be readily seen that the outlay for such a purpose would be enormous. As for the hundreds of note books, manuscripts, maps, plans of surveys, &c., which have been made during the last fifty years, it may be said that these are all exposed to the chances of destruction by any fire that may occur in the vicinity. The age of the building, its well seasoned timbers, and the great weight of the collections on the upper floors would all serve to hasten its destruction, and any one going through the Museum flats, and then through the lower portion of the building, and examining the pine posts which support the upper portion, can easily perceive that a fire of but a few minutes duration would suffice to render these unequal to the task of supporting the weight of the present collections. The risk from fire has long been imminent. Should it break out in any of the adjacent buildings on Sussex street it would require very great exertion to save the Museum, while the danger from the wooden buildings at the back has been seen from the fires which have already occurred in that direction. Luckily in these cases circumstances were such that the Museum buildings escaped, but the danger still exists and the country has too much at stake in the Geological Survey to run the risk any longer than is necessary of having these valuable collections destroyed. The time seems specially opportune to take some decisive step in the direction of providing fitting accommodation for this important branch of the public service, and it is earnestly hoped that the Government of the day will see the possibility of placing this scientific institution in such quarters as will not only ensure the safety and permanence of the materials there stored, but will be a credit to the Dominion, which is interested in the maintenance of this valuable aid to the development of the country's resources.

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Wm. Blakemore, recently mining engineer to the Dominion Coal Co., Ltd., has been awarded a prize of £3 3s. for his valuable contribution to the proceedings of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers on the subject of "Coal Cutting by Machinery." This paper was reproduced recently in this Review.