

FIRE LOSSES IN CANADA 1919.

The fire losses in Canada for the first six months of 1919 will probably amount to about \$8,500,000 (estimated) or about \$2,000,000 less than for the same period in 1918. From a fire insurance point of view the figures are far from satisfactory, as while the value of property burned is less, the premium income is considerably smaller than last year. In addition to paying heavy losses, fire insurance companies are, owing to continuation of war conditions forced to operate under a higher expense ratio than heretofore, and this tendency appears to be increasing.

The June losses amounting to about \$2,000,000 (estimated), is slightly more than the losses recorded for June, 1918. Most of the principal fires for June, 1919, were as follows :

June 4th A. & R. Loggie, near Chatham N. B.	\$ 60,000
7th Campbellton, N.B. Lumber..	200,000
8th Globe Steam Laundry, Halifax, N.S.	17,500
8th Garage, Chinook, Alta. . . .	20,000
9th Residence at Welland, Ont. . .	20,000
9th Cold Storage at St. Catharines, Ont.	20,000
4th Sayre & Halley, Chipman, N.B.	25,000
9th Saskatoon Quaker Oats Co. . .	140,000
9th Blairmore, Alta., 5 buildings.	25,000
9th Chaleurs Bay Mills, Restigouche, P.Q.	425,000
9th Sinclair Lumber Co., New-castle, N.B.	60,000
13th Nelson B.C.	15,000
16th Plant of Briggs & Turivas, Trenton, Ont.	45,000
18th C. P. R. bldgs., Hochelaga P.Q.	17,000
18th Garage etc., Unity, Sask. . .	25,000
21st McIven Bros., Stokes' Bay . .	12,000
22nd Terroux & Racine, Quebec . .	237,500
22nd Jos. Cote, Quebec	9,000
19th High Grade Oil Co., Toronto.	30,000
23rd Gillies Bros., Braeside, Ont. .	212,000
25th Ville Montel, P. Q.	20,000
	\$1,735,000
Add 10 p.c. for unreported losses and losses under \$10,000	\$ 173,500
	\$1,908,500

EFFECT OF HIGH PRICES.

The belief that prices would fall after the war was moderately justified by facts, and then there came a reaction which is now in full swing. That it will keep on and that there will be no backward movement of prices is now the belief of many economists and financiers. The business community generally throughout the country has been busily readjusting itself to the new level of prices for many months past. It will not be willing to

return to the old basis because that would involve a return readjustment. Maintenance of present high prices, however, is only laying up trouble for the future, because it will be impossible, with things as they are, to get back to specie redemption, liquid bank condition and sound financial management. All these changes must, nevertheless, eventually be realized, and when they are, the level of prices will be forced downward. If business has then definitely adjusted itself to the new conditions, serious trouble will naturally be encountered in working back to the old level of prices, and the usual problems familiar on former occasions will be in evidence. If at that time there should be a large stock of unsold staple goods on hand the difficulty might be considerable.

The relation of these conditions to the stock market is a direct one. High prices for stocks and large loans to keep them up have usually been an element in periods of rapid expansion and over-prosperity on many former occasions and the effect of an expanded stock situation has been twofold; it has called for fluid capital to maintain it, thus drawing such capital away from industrial pursuits, while industrial enterprises have had to work at fever heat to keep up their sales to a point that would at all warrant the selling values attained by their shares or securities. Whatever change in the situation may eventually grow out of these conditions is, however, no doubt distant. No modification of the present situation is now foreseen.

FIRE INSURANCE UP ON HIGH.

While the expression is commonly used under certain circumstances that Mr. So-and-So has his office in his hat, in future a more startling expression can be applied with more semblance of truth, that a certain insurance man's office can be occasionally located in the clouds, where various stunts can be performed over the heads of other insurance men, unless a drop too much is taken, which is unlikely, in the Province of Ontario, where Mr. John S. Dowling, of Brantford, operating an important fire insurance business, is now the owner of an aeroplane which he states, under the guidance of a qualified pilot, will be used for commercial purposes in addition to pleasure. In connection with the latter Mr. Dowling has very kindly extended an invitation to the Editor of The Chronicle to take a "fly" so that he could view the country from on high, where probably Ontario would not look so dry as it does down below. In any case, Mr. Dowling assures Mr. Editor that he would let him down easy. While not doubting the latter, we understand that the Editor, who has a small wife and a large family, has postponed the trip until such time as insurance is carried to include passengers.

It is hoped that fire insurance will not have as many ups and downs as Mr. John S. Dowling is likely to enjoy through his future peregrinations over all.