

Toronto.—Thomas Gould's house, at 273 Manning Avenue, was set on fire by children playing with matches. Damage amounted to \$40. Barn in the rear of 325 Gerrard Street East, and owned by Mrs. Short, damaged to extent of about \$275, and contents of Geo. Auston's house damaged to the extent of \$25. Grocery store of Fred. Marks, 718 Bathurst Street, damaged with stock to extent of about \$2,000, covered by insurance in the Merchants. It is supposed that mice nibbling at matches caused the fire. C. Wilson Scale Works at 67 Esplanade damaged to extent of \$16,000. Insured for \$40,000. The sheds at rear of 120-130 Bond Street burned, with horse and buggy. Loss, over \$10,000. One of the sheds was used as a warehouse by the Diamond Jubilee Novelty Company, as well as a stable. Insurance, \$2,500.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING FIRES ALREADY REPORTED.

Three Rivers, Que.—The Bournivar's premises destroyed. Loss, \$6,000; insured for \$1,025 in the Western. Roman Catholic church destroyed. Insured for \$11,000 in the Mutual Assurance, \$3,000 in the Commercial Union, and \$1,000 in the Sun.

Burk's Falls, Ont.—H. A. Sydie's general store destroyed. Loss, \$4,850; insured for \$2,000 in the Hartford. A. L. Cullot's building, shop fixtures and tools destroyed. Loss, \$2,500. Building insured for \$900 in Caledonian Mercantile. Wm. Shroeder premises damaged to extent of \$500. No insurance. F. Braster's loss, \$2,000; insured for \$6,500—Caledonian, \$2,000; Hartford, \$3,000; Equity, \$1,500. Mr. Ruther's loss, \$2,000; insured for \$400 in the Independent Cash Mutual of Toronto, and \$200 in the Union.

Peterborough, Ont.—Peterborough Cereal Company, Limited's, property damaged. The main mill building and No. 2 warehouse completely destroyed. Buildings insured for \$5,000 in Phoenix, of London, and \$5,000 in Anglo-America; machinery, \$6,000 in Monarch, Wellington, Merchant and Norwich Union; stock, \$34,000 in Phoenix, Rimouski, Standard, Merchants, Connecticut, North America, Ontario Fire, Metropolitan, York Mutual, Economical, Perth, Traders, and Sun Fire.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

National Pandora's Box on Canada's Pacific Coast.

By R. B. Bennett.

The fact that so many monied men who visit British Columbia invest in that province proves that opportunities and possibilities are to be found in this rapidly developing portion of the Dominion. It makes little difference to which class belongs the investor. If having money to place on mortgage, he will find gilt-edge security on improved property in the cities; if seeking larger returns he may select from many chances in real estate, in sub-dividing acreage or in buying along routes where settlement is being started; if interested in a particular industry, he will probably find an opening; if a homeseeker, with a little capital, he can take his choice in many localities. No country can develop without a liberal expenditure of money. British Columbia is going ahead, and men who have seen the growth of other countries and provinces are coming West to repeat success or to emulate others who have become prosperous.

British Columbia to the man far-distant is marked by the growth of Vancouver after the building of the C.P.R., the springing into existence of Rossland and Nelson because of mining resources, the construction of the G.T.P., through a new northern interior, and the discovery of gold on the Findlay River. It is not remembered, and in many instances unknown, that before these incidents of progress attracted attention, a city was built at Victoria almost in an unknown land. This was possible only because the country was good. Nanaimo has been a flourishing coal mining centre for twenty or thirty years. With the advent of railways and the migration of people to the West from the crowded centres of the world's population, British Columbia has come to the fore. Within the last century immense riches have been created by the exploration of natural resources, and much of this wealth is now available to obtain the bounties of Nature which have been generously deposited in this part of Canada, in the way of minerals, timber and fish. Not only that with a climate peculiar to the Pacific Coast, semi-tropical and even sub-tropical fruits may be grown, and with weather, seldom if ever severe, horticulture and agriculture become a pleasure rather than a labour. There you have a few of the causes of the rapid growth of British Columbia.

It is because there is a substantial base upon which to work that the Northern Interior is opening up remarkably under the impetus given by the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. By the time the railway is in running order—probably 1911—the map will be marked with the locations of towns and the routes of other lines of transportation where now are only rivers and coast lines. That there are many things possible is apparent by the rush to the north. Already, before townsite lots are on the market, Prince Rupert is a thriving place. The tentacles of enterprise may be seen reaching north in the shape of the formation of the Canadian Fish & Cold Storage Company, composed of Canadians; the establishment at Ketchikan, just outside Canadian territory, of a branch of the New England Fish Company, which has made big money in the halibut business, shipping East from Vancouver; the operation of the Telkwa Mining, Milling and Development Company in the Bulkley Valley, the largest of its kind back from the Coast, and the numerous lumber and mining companies that are finding locations on the Queen Charlotte Islands and contiguous territory.

While the first growth may be more particularly noted, the expansion of the southern and older portion of the province is a feature, and shows that development is not superficial, but ramifies from a centre, the prosperity of which has been proved. Nothing is more gratifying than the progress all the way through from Kootenay and Boundary districts to the extreme West Coast of Vancouver Island.

Activity in Copper Mines.

These boundaries include a variety of industries. In the Eastern portion of the province, mining and lumbering are the principal. Even there fruit-growing is being taken up, for the warm valleys give the best possible location for orchards. Land companies are doing well in clearing for cultivation, planting trees, and disposing of sub-divided acreage to those coming West with a little money. After a dull time in the low-grade copper mines for the past six months, these properties are once more becoming active, and continued operations only serve to show that there is no lessening of values with depth, but rather greater riches are to be found. The frequency of transfers is indicative of the faith in the country of those who have a knowledge of it. Why do people sell if they have good properties? may be asked. The properties being good makes it possible to effect a sale. The discoverer seldom has money to carry on development operations. But he has to show that the proposition is worth while, before even mining men will consider purchase. When he has done this he has usually expended his all; and when companies are formed he is often satisfied to take a large portion of the purchase price in stock. Some men have done their own mining, but in this industry a large capital is invariably required. In the Boundary country, where a huge tunnel is to be cut under the mountains, ore seams will likely be encountered; and, if so, the future can only be measured by the past experiences of Butte and other great copper camps. The Le Roi in Rossland is an example of what is under the ground there, but in every district, in the Slokan, the Similkameen, the Nicola, the Big Bend and the Kamloops, are similar examples, exploiting a variety of valuable mineral resources.

Lumber and Mines Help the Province.

In 1907, the mines of British Columbia beat all records in production. Special mention might be made of the coal mining, the increase in the quantity of coal and coke being 37.7 per cent. over the year previous. The large producing collieries were practically the same, but the beginning of new concerns was noted, such as that of the C.P.R. at Hoerner, the Nicola Valley Coal and Coke Company, and the Diamond Vale Iron and Coal Mines in the Nicola, and three small collieries near Nanaimo.

Vancouver Island, not inappropriately termed The Isle of Dreams, will be a great centre of industrial activity. Apart from the coal mines of Nanaimo and Comox, the iron and copper-gold propositions on the West Coast, and the extensive areas of timber give something for capitalists to work upon that will bring big returns for enterprise. Several new sawmills are spoken of for this part of the province, and shipping facilities being so easily available lumbermen are seeing the advantage of holding limits there. Within the past year several large transactions have taken place, involving aggregate money considerations in the millions.

The timber of British Columbia is attracting the big operators who have made fortunes and names in the middle and Western States, and even now three or four parties are here to make purchases. With such demand, the value of holdings has increased enormously in five years, and with the present reserve on all provincial timber lands, the values will be further augmented. The lower mainland and the Interior below the line of the C.P.R. are crowded with mills, and these are constantly being added to. They are scattering up the Coast, and by the time the new Transcontinental Railway is in operation many more will be ready to cater to the