

A FATAL HOTEL FIRE.

Rats and matches are supposed to have started the fire in the dining-room of the Webster House hotel in Montreal early on Tuesday morning, which resulted in the death of three persons and the injury of seven or eight. So rapid was the spread of the flames that the efforts of the bookkeeper and the bar-tender to arouse the inmates were not entirely successful. Besides, so dazed and panic-stricken were many of them that they jumped from windows at great heights instead of waiting for ladders which might have saved their lives or limbs. From \$30,000 to \$40,000 is the estimated loss by the fire. There is insurance of \$19,000, of which \$10,000 is with the Aetna, on the building, and \$6,000 with the Royal (on building), the remaining \$3,000 being with the Norwich Union, on the furniture. The whole premises was a mass of smoke and flame by the time the fire brigade reached the scene; the firemen did good service in rescuing guests and employees by means of ladders. It appears that there were no fire escapes on the building. The coroner at the inquest held at the Morgue in the afternoon remarked upon the existence of a law which insists on fire escapes being placed on all hotels over three stories high. But where was the official whose duty it was to see such a law carried out? One man, Mr. James Sutherland, of Poughkeepsie, made his exit by his own fire escape—a rope that can be carried in a hand valise, which he purchased a week or two ago in Toronto, after seeing an exhibition of its usefulness.

INDUSTRIAL ITEMS.

A Nova Scotia paper reports the Truro Knitting Mill so busy that they are unable to keep up with their orders.

According to the Amherst Press, the firm of Rhodes, Curry & Co., are doing an increasing business. They have lately turned out twenty freight cars for the I. C. R. Ten apple cars for the D. A. R. have also been turned out the past day or two. These cars are very tall, and will carry three hundred barrels each. Ten cars for the Dominion Iron & Steel Co. have gone forward. Another order for twenty refrigerator cars for the Intercolonial has recently been received.

For the first time in a quarter of a century in Canada, says The Mining Record, the coal mine managers are experiencing a little difficulty in securing a sufficient force of capable miners. To-day there is no necessity for a competent miner to be without satisfactory employment. So brisk is trade and so good the demand for labor, that the operators of the mines claim that their output is somewhat curtailed owing to the restricted supply of labor.

The new factory at Owen Sound for the North American Bent Chair Co. (factory B), is about completed. The brick work is finished. It is expected that the big building will be occupied inside of a month. The company is being rushed with orders, a cable from Australia being received a few days ago ordering 125,000 chairs. Through American houses the Owen Sound chairs continue to go into South Africa. Notwithstanding the Boer-British war, shipments were made a few days ago for Johannesburg.

The Coldbrook Rolling Mills at St. John, N.B., have found it necessary to erect a new warehouse of 100 x 50 feet, two stories in height. Work upon the building is now going on.

We find the statement in a contemporary that a contract has been made by the Ogilvie Milling Company with Sadler & Haworth, of Montreal and Toronto, to supply a mammoth leather belt, to transmit 1,000 h.p., in their new mills at Winnipeg, Man. It will be 72 inches wide, three-ply thick, and over 130 feet long. This belt, it is claimed, will be the widest and heaviest leather belt in use or ever made in Canada.

There was a meeting of desk manufacturers in Chicago last Saturday at which more than nine-tenths of the manufacturers of the United States were present. After considering a rearrangement of prices to correspond with the increased cost of materials and labor, an advance of 10 per cent. in the prices of desks was agreed to. A new price list will be issued by the association on November 5th, Carl Leopold, of Burlington, Ia., was chairman and L. D. Hodges, of Grand Rapids, Mich., secretary.

Machinery has been the means of reducing the workday from twelve or fourteen hours to nine or ten hours, says Carroll D. Wright, and the inevitable result will be the still further reduction in the time necessary for the earning of a living. It has not only shortened the workday; it has also increased the remuneration per hour.

FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

Messrs. A. & R. Loggie shipped seven carloads of blueberries to one address in Chicago one day last week—a train-load of blueberries! They paid freight and United States duties in advance, the amount being \$6,000.—Chatham, N.B., World.

The Dominion Express Co. is sending large quantities of fish from across the bay to the upper provinces and the west.—St. John Sun.

Beans are quoted \$1.14 per bushel at Blenheim, the centre of the Kent county district.

The Department of Agriculture is sending out circulars to hay dealers, notifying them that the Imperial Government desires tenders for supplying 2,000 tons of hay, to be delivered at Cape Town before Christmas. The hay is to be of the best timothy and mixture, pressed in hundred pound bales. These tenders should be sent to the Department at Ottawa, addressed to the War Office, care of Lord Strathcona.

It is said that a dozen orchards in King's county, Nova Scotia, will each yield 2,000 barrels of apples this year.

The schooner "Mayflower" arrived in Montreal this week from Miramichi with a cargo of oysters. This is the first consignment from the Lower Ports this season.

The Middleton Outlook reports that eight cars of canned apples have been shipped to England from the Middleton and Waterville factories this season.

The Melchers Gin Distillery Company, Berthier, Que., intends for the present year to fatten three carloads of stock per month. The same firm is asking tenders for the construction of another warehouse, for warehousing the gin in copper tanks until they can bottle and barrel it for the trade.

Willett & Gray say of sugar: "Although it is rather early in the season we give herewith our preliminary estimate of the new cane crops of the world, being a total of 2,812,000 tons, against last crops of 2,930,282 tons, and our estimate of the new American beet crops, being a total of 110,000 tons, against last crops of 32,471 tons. The cane crops show a deficiency of 118,282 tons, but the American beet crops are in excess 77,529 tons, thus, if considered together, making a net deficiency of only 40,753 tons, which is all that is offset against the increase in the European beet crops."

The much talked of salmon canning combination seems to be off, according to Vancouver advices of Oct. 26th, but three important firms in British Columbia have amalgamated, with a capital of \$500,000. Canneries concerned are Malcolm and Windsor, Scottish Canadian and English Bay Cannery. They hope to take other houses in on deal.

The apple drying factory of Kennedy Bros., at Leamington, Ont., was destroyed by fire last Saturday night. The fire originated from the kiln, and was thought to have been caused by excessive heat. The loss is estimated at about \$2,000, with no insurance. The factory employed about sixty hands.

On Lulu Island, near Vancouver, a site was obtained not long ago for a box and basket factory. The manager of the proposed works, Mr. Eckert, told a News-Advertiser man that the company had been formed and would be incorporated in a few days, under the name of the B.C. Manufacturing Company, with a capital of \$25,000. All the capital had been subscribed, the stock being all held by four gentlemen, viz., Mr. J. N. Hague, of the Capital Box Company, Tacoma; Mr. Henry Eckert, the manager, formerly of Olympia, and Messrs. C. E. Eckert and J. E. Horton, relatives of the manager, both formerly of South Dakota. The buildings, pipe works, are quite suitable to the purposes of the Company, and the work of installing the machinery will be commenced next week. They will make fruit boxes and baskets, and later on intend to make other goods.