

INADEQUATE FIRE INSURANCE.

The cathedral at Fredericton, N.B., which was struck by lightning and partly destroyed a few days ago, is reported to have cost with its furnishings about \$250,000. But it was only insured for \$55,000. Of this amount, \$45,000, it is stated, was paid for by the authorities having charge of the building, an additional \$10,000 having been put on by a private citizen of St. John, who saw that the building was inadequately protected by insurance.

The facts suggest that there are those in charge of trust property in Canada, who do not realise the fact that the saving of a few dollars by not paying for adequate fire insurance is not economy, but the most wasteful form of extravagance. There was a similar occurrence some time ago, when the cathedral at St. John's, Newfoundland was destroyed, and the citizens of Montreal were canvassed to make good the loss. The recent destruction of the fine church of St. Jean Baptiste at Montreal, followed within a few days by this partial destruction of Fredericton Cathedral, the origin of the fires in both cases being lightning, should act as a sharp reminder to corporate bodies having charge of trust buildings throughout the country of the always-present fire danger, and business men would be rendering valuable service to their several communities by looking into this question of the insurance upon the trust buildings with which they have connections and insisting, where the insurance is inadequate, upon its being raised to a sufficient amount. The destruction of a public building is not merely a loss to one individual or several people who form a body corporate, but to a whole community, and for that reason it is the more incumbent upon those, who are in positions of actual responsibility in this connection, to see that their protection is adequate. Frequently, doubtless, it can be pleaded by a corporate body in charge of a trust building that the funds at its disposal are not sufficient for their purpose, but, in cases like that, we imagine that some consideration would allow an allocation of funds that would avoid the fatal mistake of a "penny wise and pound foolish" policy in regard to fire protection. If all other schemes failed, it would be easier to raise a special fund to pay the fire premiums, than it would be to raise a special fund to replace the building when it had burned down, without being adequately insured.

It is understood that part of the Boxer property at the south west corner of St. James and St. Francois Xavier streets, Montreal, is changing hands. The part in question measures 53 feet on St. James and 95 feet on St. Francois Xavier street, or a area of 5,035 square feet, and it is stated that the price is \$80 per foot, or something over \$400,000. This establishes a new St. James street record.

TORONTO RAILWAY'S NEW FINANCING.

The topic of the week in the "street" has been the programme of new financing adopted by the Toronto Railway directors. As we were able to state last week, the capital stock is to be increased from \$8,000,000 to \$12,000,000. It is the intention to issue \$2,000,000 of the newly authorized stock at par to the shareholders in the proportion of one share for every four shares held and in addition it is the intention to give the shareholders a stock bonus of \$1,000,000, or one share for every eight held. The balance of the \$4,000,000 new stock, or \$1,000,000, will be retained in the treasury. In other words the new arrangement means that present shareholders will get three new shares of the par value of \$100 each for each eight they hold, for a \$200 cash payment. That is to say, the capital of the Company will be increased by \$3,000,000 for a cash return of \$2,000,000, and 8 p.c. is to be paid on the total capital of \$11,000,000. It is also understood that the stock will be placed on a regular 8 p.c. basis.

In view of the strained relations between the city and the Company, it was not to be expected that these new proposals would be received with equanimity by the municipal authorities. Mayor Geary and the members of the Toronto Board of Control have expressed their disapproval of the proposed increase in capital, although they have up to the present taken no action in regard to the matter. In this connection, it has to be remembered that Toronto has the public ownership bee in its bonnet. Sir William Mackenzie, on the other hand, has stated in an interview that only a portion of the new issue is to be expended on street railway extensions or rolling stock, that the issue of stock is not going to affect the price at which the city would buy the railway, and that the Company is by no means thinking of going out of business when its franchise expires, as the Company is not limited to operations in the streets of Toronto.

The shareholders will meet to sanction the proposals on August 14. The Company's 1911 gross earnings by months, with the gains to date in comparison with 1910 are as follows:

	Earnings.	Increase.
January	\$362,380	\$31,033
February	335,108	27,334
March	372,946	29,404
April	361,535	37,594
May	406,885	46,611
June	401,186	36,393
Totals	\$2,246,010	\$208,387

LIFE UNDERWRITERS' CONVENTION AT WINNIPEG.

The annual convention of the Life Underwriters' Association of Canada, held last week at Winnipeg, was largely attended, upwards of 250 being present, and in every way the assembly achieved great success. This was the first gathering of the kind which has been held in the West, and western underwriters signalled the occasion by making elaborate and thorough arrangements for entertainment and hospitality, which greatly delighted the visitors.

A number of the Eastern delegates to the convention travelled in special cars to Winnipeg by way of Chicago and St. Paul, at both of which