

FIRE ESCAPES.

While it is true that external fire escapes from schools could scarcely be used by unassisted younger children, they would afford ready means by which assistance from outside could effect the speediest possible rescue. And, if constructed with ample galleries, the upper part of the fire escape would afford the little ones a refuge from suffocating indoor smoke until it was possible for firemen or others to rescue them. It seems only right, therefore—and at best a tardy right—that an immediate result of the Hochelaga school disaster should be the installing of up-to-date fire escapes. City Building Inspector Chausse in his special report to the Fire Committee has drafted the following definite rules for enforcement:

1.—Fire escapes must be installed in all schools and colleges in each and every flat above the ground floor.

2.—Furnace rooms must be completely encased in brick.

3.—Ceilings must be completed in fire proof material in order to lessen the danger of fire spreading.

4.—As it has been found that in certain schools doors opened in an inward direction, all doors, in the future, must be so constructed that they will open outward. This will lessen danger in case of fire.

5.—All gas lights must be encased in a manner that it will be impossible for fire to be caused by them.

Referring to these rules Mr. Chausse said: "When these new methods of fire protection are installed in all the schools and colleges it will be found that the safety of scholars will be greatly augmented. I may say that it is the intention to see that these rules are strictly enforced. I have sent copies of the above to the principals of all schools and colleges. It ought to be said that there is a feeling among the heads of all the schools that every precaution should be taken to lessen the danger of fire in such buildings."

Of interest in this connection is the order of the Provincial Legislature, passed on Monday, calling for a list of all educational institutions, public buildings and industrial establishments not provided with fire escapes. The motion was introduced by Mr. Langlois who remarked that several prominent citizens of Montreal had asked him if it was not possible to publish the names of those responsible for buildings that remained without fire escapes. He thought the Government should force all such to provide their buildings with fire escapes. He was aware that in the neighborhood of Montreal, an institution erected within the last two years, and containing about 175 boarders, had no fire escapes.

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND ONTARIO MINES PRODUCTION.

British Columbia Mining was especially active during 1906 judging from the following comparison with 1905, estimated by Mr. Wm. Fleet Robertson, Provincial Mineralogist. But for the seven weeks' strike in the Fernie coal mines the increase would have been still greater.

	1906.	1905.
Gold	\$6,070,000	\$5,902,402
Silver	2,200,000	1,971,818
Copper	8,690,000	5,876,222
Lead	2,690,000	2,399,022
Coal	4,590,000	4,152,936
Coke	1,050,000	1,358,920
Miscellaneous	1,100,000	800,000
Totals	\$26,390,000	\$22,461,325

Worked out, these figures mean that copper has increased in value of production 49 p.c.; lead, 13 p.c.; silver, 11.6 p.c., and gold 3 p.c. Coal production has increased 10 p.c. and miscellaneous products 13½ p.c.

The mines at Cobalt shipped about 4,584 tons of ore valued at \$4,280,000 during 1906, according to the official report recently issued by Dr. Eugene Haanel, superintendent of the Mines Branch, of the Department of Interior, Ottawa. The prospective shipments for 1907 are estimated by him at about 12,000 tons, with an approximate value of over \$12,500,000.

MANUFACTURERS LIFE.

Despite the storm and stress of life insurance conditions during 1906, the twentieth annual statement of the Manufacturers Life Insurance Company shows its new business paid for during the year to amount to \$8,107,310—an increase of \$1,442,386 over the showing of 1905. The total amount of insurance upon the company's books at the close of the year was \$47,380,655—an increase for 1906 of \$5,110,383. The year's total income and the assets are other items in which substantial increases are shown, the latter now standing at \$8,472,371, giving a surplus on policy-holders' account of \$1,081,662. Policy reserves amount to \$7,244,151 on the Government's valuation basis.

Certainly, the results of the year, as given in the annual statement, are marked evidence of business energy on the part of both management and field force.

THE LIFE ASSURANCE PRIMER.

A second edition of this useful and practical work by Henry Moir, F.F.A., F.I.A., has now been issued. The book has been carefully revised, and considerably amplified. An entire new chapter has been added dealing with State Supervision and Annual Statements, and various changes and additions have been made to bring it up to date. Many questions have been enlarged and illustrated to make the meaning more clear, with the result that 32 pages in all have added to the new edition. The Life Insurance Primer is now used as a textbook in a considerable number of the universities and colleges of the United States and Canada, and the author has evidently done about all that could be done in the way of improving the work. It may be obtained from THE CHRONICLE office.