

pounds of lead and \$240,288.90 bounty. The quantity of lead exported was 21,972,988 pounds; on which the bounty paid was \$96,597.37. The grand total for the year, therefore, is 55,703,534 pounds of lead produced and \$336,886.37 paid in bounty.

### GAS AS A CAUSE OF FIRE.

The Ohio Fire Marshal has issued a paper on dangers from leakage of manufactured gas and on regulations for the distribution of natural gas. He states that the average number of fires in Ohio caused by gas fixtures is about two hundred and fifty. "Companies supplying manufactured gas anticipate that one-sixth of all the gas they force into the mains will be lost through leaks, the cost of such a loss being less than the cost of finding, uncovering and stopping the leakage."

As to lost or escaped gas, Mr. Davis says: "Unfortunately, the only way in which it can be found is by exploding it, for in filtering through the earth about the service pipe it loses its odor. The striking of a match, the entrance of a flying spark or the taking of a lamp into the cellar may ignite it. Ninety-four such explosions occurred in Ohio during last year." An eminent expert in gas leakage, James C. Bayles, M.E., Ph.D., whose experience covers two continents, in speaking of the presence in houses of gas from defective mains, in "Insurance Engineering," said: "The most dangerous characteristic of this filtered gas is that it has little or no odor. None of the gases composing it carries any smell of its own. It is a rattlesnake which has lost its rattle; its power and disposition to strike remain unabated, but it is incapable of giving any warning of its presence or purpose. In buildings fronting on asphalted streets it is rarely looked for in vain."

### OUR HALIFAX LETTER.

The Halifax Board of Trade is making a determined effort to influence public opinion throughout the Province on some of the important questions of the day, such as the fast Atlantic service, steel ship-building, forest protection, etc. At a meeting of the council it was proposed to have a series of public meetings during the coming exhibition, when addresses should be delivered on these topics. It has been found, however, that sufficient time is not left in which to complete such an arrangement, and that part of the programme will have to be deferred until next year. The board will have a booth at the Provincial Fair this year, however, and have had a large number of cards printed containing short, pithy paragraphs on the subjects just mentioned, giving facts and figures which should prove striking to those who read them. These cards will be placed around in prominent positions so that even he who runs may read. Next year at the Dominion Exhibition the idea mentioned is intended to be carried out more extensively.

There has been a heavy decline in the gold output of this Province during the past year. In 1903 the output was 27,779 ounces from 103,836 tons of quartz crushed. Last year the output was less than half of that, namely, 11,273 ounces from 45,436 tons of quartz. It is understood that the decline for the current year will be even greater than this. The output of coal, on the other hand, increased, being 5,131,985 tons, against 5,100,115 in 1903. The figures for this year will probably be about equal to 1903.

The Local Government has made appointments to the four vacancies existing on the Provincial Exhibition Commission staff. One of the vacancies, caused by the appointment of Hon. Mr. Longley to a judgeship, has been filled by his re-appointment to the Commission. The other appointments were Hon. W. T. Pipes and Thomas Trotter, M.P.P. The personnel of the Commission is now as follows: Mayor McIlreith, Halifax; Thomas Trotter, M.P.P., Antigonish; J. W. Bigelow, Wolfville; Mr. Justice Longley, Halifax; J. R. Wyman, Yarmouth; David Logan,

Pictou; Ald. J. A. Johnson, Ald. P. F. Martin, Ald. Hawkins, and W. J. Clayton, Halifax.

A new sealing enterprise is to be undertaken. The owners of the sealer, "Edith R. Balcom," having decided to send her far south of the Falkland Islands, the former headquarters, five other owners decided to make a similar experiment. The new grounds are near the South Shetlands, about twelve degrees further south than the Falklands. It is said that no sealers have been on those grounds since the Americans left them sixty or seventy years ago.

The Provincial Exhibition of Nova Scotia opens next week, and a large attendance is expected. The mines exhibit will no doubt be far ahead of anything yet attempted in this Province. The new Mines Building has been the means of attracting exhibitors on a larger scale than heretofore. Among the large displays will be those of the Nova Scotia Government, Dominion Iron and Steel Company, Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Co., Londonderry Iron Co., Montreal Pipe Foundry Co., Dominion Coal Company, Intercolonial Coal Mining Co., Acadia Coal Company, Dominion Tar and Chemical Co., Sydney Cement Co., Sydney Coal Co., Cumberland Coal and Railway Co. The Manufacturers' Building and Machinery Hall promise also to be well filled with attractions, and the other exhibits are very large.

The extension of the Intercolonial Railway into the city proper is now an assured fact. The Government has decided to expropriate the properties on the north side of Water Street, from North Street (the present terminus) to Cornwallis Street, and including Gray's Lane and Gerrish Street, for this purpose.

There promises to be more competition than usual in the fruit-buying operations this year. Heretofore practically all the fruit in the Annapolis Valley has been shipped to London or Liverpool. Returns from the English market were far from satisfactory last year, however, and other markets will be sought to a greater extent hereafter. Mexico is looked upon as a promising market for the future.

Disastrous forest fires have been visiting the Maritime Provinces. A few days ago, as you announced, the thriving village of Belmont, on the Intercolonial Railway, not far from Truro, was almost wiped out, seventeen important buildings being destroyed. Rain is now falling, but there has been a long period of drouth, and a great deal of forest property will be destroyed.

The Truro Knitting Mills has purchased a site for its new factories. The site covers thirty acres, and has a frontage on the I.C.R. of over one thousand feet.

Nova Scotia is interested in the possibilities of selling

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