FIRE PERIL IN HOTELS.

Hotels are burning with alarming frequency, says *Safety Engineering*. During the first day of 1913 five hotels in widely separated sections burned, sacrificing two lives and over $100,000 in property values. During January there were 25 fires and in three of them seven persons lost their lives. The property loss was nearly $700,000.

A hotel fire every 33 hours was the rate of burning in 1912, and so far in 1913 there has been a fire every 27 hours.

Hardly a day passes without news of a hotel fire somewhere in the country. Despite the encouraging progress in the fire prevention campaign, hotel fires were more frequent in 1912 than in any of the five years preceding, and if the rate of burning in 1913 continues as it has started, this year will surpass all others. In 11 months of 1913 there have been 300 hotel fires.

From a partial list of reported fires it is estimated that the property loss in average hotels throughout the country for a period of five years has been over $25,000,000, and the loss of life has been even more serious.

MOST FIRES OCCUR DURING PERIOD OF SLEEP.

Nearly half of all hotel fires occur between midnight and 3 a.m., fully 20 per cent. between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., and more than 15 per cent. between 9 p.m. and midnight. In short, fully 85 per cent. of all hotel fires occur during the night hours, 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., and 75 per cent. during the period of sleep.

The momentous fact is that hotel perils are increasing. Defective hotels are growing more defective.

The causes of trouble must be removed. The difficulty in the way of improvements is the "inertia of investment." Improvements that make for safety in hotels cost money and there is the interest on the added investment to consider. That is the way that most hotel proprietors will regard this proposition. But the interest on an investment in safety should be figured in a different way.

The interest of public authorities in hotel safety has been confined chiefly to the means of exit. The elimination and improvement of conditions, without which the necessity of exit might not occur, have been disregarded.

TRAVELLING MEN SHOULD NOT SLEEP IN UNSAFE HOUSES.

Those that suffer most from the result of defective conditions in hotels are travelers. The interest of travelling men demands that they shall get safety. They are constantly exposed to risks that there is not any good reason for, as safety can be had at small cost.

The influence of the powerful commercial travelers' associations has been felt in matters that affect the convenience of their members in travel. It would seem that these organizations could force improvements in hotels. A classification could be made of unsafe hotels and commercial travelers warned to avoid houses that were not safe to sleep in.

Of Prince Albert's new £200,000 issue at 90 and interest, 66 per cent. was left with underwriters. The public has since been picking it up at a discount.

LA NATIONALE OF PARIS ENTERS CANADA.

Arrangements have been completed by the above well known French fire company to commence operations in Canada as a non-tariff company.

Mr. J. E. Clement, manager of the Mount Royal Assurance Company, Montreal, will also manage La Nationale in Canada, excluding the Maritime Provinces, and while as above stated La Nationale is not a board company, it will be managed by Mr. Clement on a conservative basis.

The resources of the Company amount to $6,600,000. Premium income for 1912 was $3,780,000 and losses and expenses, $2,984,000. The members of the board of directors include many wealthy and influential French gentlemen. The General Manager is Mr. M. F. Muisant.

AMORTIZATION OF VALUES OF FIXED TERM SECURITIES.

At the annual meeting of the Association of Life Insurance Presidents, held in New York City, Mr. Robert Lynn Cox, general manager, stated on the question of amortization of values of fixed term securities that recently the Association had again taken this matter up but were not yet ready to report the results. Those addressed had been a little slow in replying, evidently giving the matter great weight, because those that had replied have made such replies that showed that they had given the matter serious consideration. "I may say, offhand," continued Mr. Cox, "that a majority of those addressed seem inclined now to recognize that method of valuation as being a proper one so that I fancy the area which will recognize that method of valuing those securities is going to be very much enlarged. Of course, there are some states in which legislation will be required before it can be made uniform throughout the United States, but even in those states the Commissioners seem to be disposed to look with favor upon the matter of obtaining legislation. It is an important matter, and it looks as if we were leading toward uniformity on that proposition."

COST OF LIVING STILL THE SAME WAY.

The Department of Labour's index number of wholesale prices stood at 138.4 for November as compared with 136.8 in October and 136.6 in November, 1912. The increase was due to advances in the prices of grains and fodders, cattle, beef, sheep, dairy products (especially eggs) and fresh vegetables. These increases, however, were somewhat offset by declines in flour, glucose, honey, raw cotton and silk, coke, iron pipe, linseed oil, resin, and raw rubber. The level was higher than a year ago in animals and meats, dairy products, textiles, hides, leathers, boots and shoes, lumber, miscellaneous building materials, furniture and crockery. A lower level than last year appeared in grains and fodders, fish and paints and oils. Fruits and vegetables were slightly higher, but miscellaneous groceries were somewhat lower than last year. The feature of the month in retail prices was the advance in eggs, but the movement was also upward in butter, potatoes, coal, milk and prunes. Beef, veal and mutton advanced in some localities, but fresh pork and lard declined in a number of Canadian cities.