

The Herald

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 9, 1916
SUBSCRIPTION—\$1.00 A YEAR.
TO THE UNITED STATES \$1.50
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY
AT 81 QUEEN STREET,
CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND.
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EDITOR & PROPRIETOR

Parliament Building Destroyed, Canada's Pride Reduced to Ruins, Sudden and Fatal Conflagration.

Canada's Parliament building at Ottawa, the finest Gothic structure in America, was destroyed by fire last Thursday night. By the time the fire was brought under control, Friday morning, not much beyond blackened walls and smouldering ruins were left of the magnificent edifice, which had been the forum of the people's representatives for half a century. The House of Commons was in session when the conflagration started at 8.50 p.m. By midnight hope had been abandoned of saving any portion of the wings except the Parliamentary library. The fire is believed to have been the work of incendiaries and General Sir Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia, issued orders to the militia, who are on guard duty at every point of ingress and egress on the Canadian border, to exercise the utmost vigilance so that no persons might pass without thoroughly accounting for themselves. The Dominion police were also notified everywhere and the United States authorities were apprized of the occurrence at Ottawa, so that every effort will be made to prevent the escape of any persons suspected of participation in the firing of the buildings. At one o'clock one of the walls of the building collapsed. Mr. W. S. Loggie, New Brunswick, was addressing the Chair, when the Chamber was started by Mr. Glass, member for East Middlesex, Ont., rushing in and shouting: "The buildings are on fire." At once the startled members and a few members of the parliamentary press gallery made for the entrance, followed by the Speaker and sergeant-at-arms. They were astonished to find the corridors filled with heavy dark smoke and the members barely had time to grab their coats before the most of them ran for safety. Fortunately there were few visitors in the galleries, or the loss of life must have been appalling as it was almost impossible for them to reach safety. A half dozen soldiers who were in the public gallery turned their khaki handkerchiefs into respirators, seized a couple of their companions who were overcome and carried them down the stairway. They stated that they feared there was a loss of life in this gallery as there was a number of visitors there, and they believed they were overcome. They tried to locate them but in the black smoke and darkness they were unable to find them. Sir Robert Borden took command of the work of rescue and fire fighting but there was little that could be done. At 9.35 p. m. there was a loud detonation just to the west of the center of the main building where the Commons chamber is located. The explosion was followed by the lifting of the roof and a flash of flame high into the sky. It is almost certain that the conflagration is the work of incendiaries and it is confidently believed that they are Germans. There has been fear of this for some time. All but the main doors have been kept locked and guards have been constantly on duty. How the conspirators succeeded in getting in is a mystery, but the hour was the most favorable that could be chosen. Almost all the ministers, Sir

Robert Borden, Sir Thomas White, Sir George Foster, Messrs. Hazen, Rogers, Crothers and the rest were all either in the chamber or in their offices nearby. A few seconds more and the Premier would have been caught. When the word of alarm was given the Speaker rushed to his own apartment to find Madame Sevigny. The flames spread so fast that they were cut off and were only rescued by jumping into a fireman's net. Several of their staff were saved in the same way. Dr. Clarke of Red Deer reports that when he left the Commons chamber there were still three members there. Dr. Clarke was rescued with the greatest difficulty. Thomas McNutt, of Saltcoates, had with him Dr. Cash, member for Yorkton, whom he had carried out in his arms. Dr. Cash was nearly suffocated but soon recovered. E. W. Nesbitt, member for North Oxford, also had a close call and he is badly burned and bruised. Hon. Martin Burrell is very badly injured. The skin has been burned off both cheeks and he is suffering severely from shock. At 9.50 the center of the main building was completely gutted and the west wing was a mass of flames. The firemen were devoting their efforts to saving the east side which contains the beautiful Senate chamber and offices. The fire started in the Commons reading room, and in a few minutes that section of the building near the reading room was a mass of seething flame. Some spectacular rescues were made in the section of the building near where the fire started. There were many employees in the restaurant at the time, and the lower corridors filled with smoke so quickly that they were unable to get down the stairs. They made their way, however along to the southwest corner and reached the window looking down on the front. They were soon noticed there, and from hundreds arose the cry: "Don't jump, ladders are coming. Major General Sir Sam Hughes, minister of militia, was in the crowd at this point and he too helped gallantly in the work of rescue. It was very difficult to get the men and women out here, as they were sixty feet above ground and there was not a fire escape to be seen. Fire Chief Graham's men aided by members of the 77th Regiment and the city and Dominion policemen, rushed ladders up. For a time it looked as though their efforts would be fruitless, as the flames licked up the intervening space in no time, and soon threatened the room in which the unfortunate employees had been trapped. The latter remained cool however, and in about fifteen minutes ladders were run up both sides of the room and they were able to scale down. Some of the firemen remained in the place long after they had saved those inside, and suffered severely from smoke. One or two crashes shook the place as the sections of the roof collapsed, but the corner remained intact. The library, an octagonal building, unsurpassed for beauty on the American continent, was fortunately saved with its most valuable contents. But the Speakers apartments, with their costly furniture and historic pictures were destroyed. Two lady visitors of the Speaker and Mrs. Sevigny got lost in the maze of corridors in the Speaker's chamber and were overcome by the smoke. They were taken out by the firemen, but were quite dead when discovered. They were Madame Bray of Quebec and Madame Morin. Earliest accounts indicated that the death toll was confined to these two unfortunate ladies; but later intelligence enlarges the death roll. Those missing, in addition to these ladies are: Mr. B. B. Law, Liberal member for Yarmouth; N. S. Alphonse Des Jardins, Dominion Policeman, Alfred Des

Jardins, Plumber, and Robert Fanning, waiter. It is not impossible that the list of fatalities may be enlarged. The first steps toward the erection of the massive gothic pile that crowned Parliament Hill were taken in 1859 under the MacDonald-Carter administration, and the governor-generalship of Sir Edmund B. Head, after the decision of the late Queen Victoria that the seat of government should be permanently located in Ottawa had finally prevailed against bitter opposition from a section of Dominion politicians had him by the arm and that he was in the cellar. He sent the policeman to find MacKay, which he did and he discovered the visitor from Vancouver standing dazed and overcome by smoke on the floor above. Ottawa, Feb. 2.—The debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, ended today and parliament will now proceed with the business of the session. The estimates will probably be tabled tomorrow. The dying hours of the debate produced nothing unusual or unexpected. The ferocity of Messrs. Pugsley and Carvell is a thing of the past, their charges and statements have not stood the light of day and they take their place almost alone as the party tricksters of the Commons, eager to score a political gain out of their country's travail. Subsequent speakers for the most part have shown themselves actuated by high patriotic ideals. The speaker in whom interest centered today was Hon. E. J. Patenaude, the new Secretary of State. He impressed the House; he is fluent and he has the courage of his convictions. Mr. Patenaude was one of the Quebec Nationalists who fought the naval policies of both the Liberals and the Conservatives. "While supporting the ideas and principles of the Conservative party," he said, "none the less I fought its naval policy in all sincerity because I felt that I had to take that course as I have no hesitation in saying that since August 1914 I have endeavored to do all in my power to help the country and the government in efforts they are making to contribute to the defence of our common cause, the most sacred cause we have ever had to defend. The Secretary of State appealed to all men in the House to put aside a party difference, to work for the common cause of country. "If there has been any slackening of recruiting in the province of Quebec," he stated, "I say it is due in great measure to speeches we have heard in this House, speeches which have lowered public opinion at a time when the country is passing through a perilous time." W. M. Martin of Regina, who poses as a serious member of the House, allowed himself to express the cheap clap-trap that the present government had never given the western farmer a square deal. This brought Sir Thomas White to his feet and he had merely to point out what the government did last year to show how false was Mr. Martin's statement. Although it was a time of great financial strain, although it was the duty of the provincial governments, the Dominion government advanced, without hesitation, no less than thirteen million dollars for seed grain, food and fodder to the settlers in the drought-stricken areas. The provincial governments have been unable to bear the strain and refused to do so. Ottawa, February 4.—It will stand out as a good example of the Canadian spirit of determination if we proceed at once with the public business and carry on our work without any unnecessary delay. Sir Robert Borden, "A new and more splendid building on the site of the old historic Parliament Building," Sir Robert Borden. "We should go on at once with the business of the country."—Sir Wilfred Laurier. These declarations uttered under the shadow of disaster and of death mark the determination of the Government and of Parliament to proceed with the business of the session in such temporary and partial accommodation as can be provided. The

Home met in the auditorium of the Victoria Memorial Museum, a spacious theatre which will serve as the Commons Chamber for the rest of the session, and may be used also for the Senate sittings in the mornings. The scene presented in the assembling of this extraordinary sitting stands probably without parallel in the history of legislatures. The auditorium had been hastily transformed by officials of the Public Works Department into the resemblance of a legislative chamber. Some few pieces of furniture had been saved from the Senate wing, including the massive chair occupied by H. R. H. the Governor General. This chair was placed upon the stage for the speaker. The stage itself was draped with flags and carpeted and in the body of the hall seats had been arranged for the members, with desks for the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition. In the lobby of the Museum building the members gathered for the meeting of the House, without offices committee rooms or lockers. They stood around and waited for the customary bell. But there was no bell. Instead the Sergeant-at-arms shouldered the Mace saved from the Senate. (The Commons Mace is gone) and walked into the theatre followed by speaker Sevigny. The little procession which is wont to proceed in much State from the speakers apartments was made up in the lobby. The speaker, instead of his customary robes of black silk and his three cornered hat, wore a borrowed suit of tweeds and no hat at all. He took his seat on the stage and opened the sitting. The members grouped themselves to the right and left of the hall and a large crowd of spectators, House attendants, etc., thronged the galleries running round the auditorium. The sitting lasted for thirty-five minutes only but it will be remembered always by those who took part in it or witnessed it. The Leaders and members of the House labored under profound feeling. The disaster of the night was still in their minds, and before them was the empty chair of one of those who had gone. Sir Robert Borden, whose own escape from the burning building had been narrow, spoke of the catastrophe with deep emotion, particularly in his references to the loss of life and to the destruction of a great historic monument. Even more marked was the emotion with which the Opposition leader joined in the tribute of condolence to those who had been bereaved, and in reference to the stately building which had been, in a true sense his home for forty years. Sir Wilfred's voice wavered and broke as he spoke of the two young women whose lives had been given up in the fire. Young happy wives, young happy mothers, bright as the larks in the blue sky of the morning. Apart from the speeches of the two leaders, the House did no business except the formal adoption of the resolution which had been under debate at the time of the fire, a motion by Mr. Clarence Jameson of Digby for an investigation with a view to the development of a home market for fish. The House then adjourned till Monday. New G. G. R. Time Folder. The last issue of the Canadian Government Railways time folder appears in a new dress, and an attractive one at that. On the front cover the words "Canadian Government Railways" are shown in prominent and distinctive lettering with pronounced initials. A centre design shows a combination of the coat-of-arms of the various provinces, followed by the names of the Intercolonial Ry., Transcontinental Ry., now merged into Canadian Government Railways. The back cover has a repetition of the name of the railways, the centre design being a striking monogrammatic arrangement of the initial letters C. G. R. followed by the principal terminal points, Halifax, Sydney, St. John, Charlottetown, Quebec, Montreal, Cochrane, Winnipeg. A striking red has been used for the cover, headings and rules, the text being printed in black. Included in the time folder is a map showing the railways now under Government operation.—Montreal Gazette.

broke out. He was in his room, No. 203, in the top story. He shouted, but his voice seemed to go nowhere. Mr. McLean seized the overcoats and with a friend, Mr. W. D. McKay of Vancouver, made for the elevator, but the elevator was not running. By the time they reached the landing below, Mr. McLean said he began to feel stupefied, but he realized that he had to keep going down and down. Finally he lost his way and had no idea where he was going until he recovered his senses, somewhat and discovered that a Dominion policeman had him by the arm and that he was in the cellar. He sent the policeman to find MacKay, which he did and he discovered the visitor from Vancouver standing dazed and overcome by smoke on the floor above.

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Local and Other Items
The resolution extending term of the Dominion Parliament for one year, passed the House Commons yesterday unanimously.
It is reported at Paris that several Swiss factories which have been supplying munitions to the Allies have been threatened with destruction.
An Austrian arms factory, Skoca Works at Pilsen, Bohemia has been partly destroyed by the result of an explosion, according to a despatch from Bucharest, Roumania.
The steamer Onward Home, missing in Northern British Columbia waters with a crew of thirty-seven men. Storms still prevail in the Province and a snow fall at Vancouver on 4th.
What is believed to be an attempt to wreck Victoria Bridge, Montreal was frustrated by guards early Saturday morning. A man seen where he had a right to be was fired on, but escaped.
R. A. Pringle and Judge McTavish, Ottawa, have been selected as commissioners to investigate the Parliamentary fire. They were chosen by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and will make their own arrangements for opening the hearing.
King George V on Saturday made his first public appearance since he suffered injury from an accident while reviewing the British troops in France last October. His Majesty attended a solemn requiem service in honor of the soldiers who have fallen in the war.
It is predicted at Ottawa that the Parliamentary session will be over within six weeks or two months. The original, sessional programme will be followed but the fire seems to have taken any rancorous spirit out of the members and smooth sailing is expected.
Messrs. J. P. Morgan and Company of New York, having subscribed twenty thousand dollars to the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the Minister of Finance, honorary treasurer of the Fund, has written Messrs. Morgan and Company expressing the warm appreciation of the fund for their generous donation.
The Sam Brown, a Pittsburgh steamboat, sank within a few minutes after her boilers exploded in the Ohio River opposite Huntington West Virginia. A great majority of the members of the crew, approximately thirty, are believed to have perished. Not more than six survivors reached the Ohio side of the river following the explosion. Debris from the boat lauded on both sides of the river. The boat was blown to pieces and sank immediately.
The annual statement of unclaimed bank balances has been presented to the Dominion parliament and shows that no less than \$61,518 is held by the bank under his head. There is a further amount of \$914,944 accounted for in unpaid checks. The largest balances are those of the Montreal City and District Savings Bank, \$118,794; the Bank of Montreal, \$108,206; Bank of British North America \$91,934; Union Bank \$85,775; Bank of Commerce, \$78,590; Royal Bank, \$54,345; Bank of Hamilton, \$47,701.
The anthracite coal operation rejected in New York on the 8th the demands of their miners for a twenty per cent increase in wages, complete recognition of the United Mine Workers of America, a year working agreement, an eight hour day and changes in the methods of fixing wages. The operators propose that if the differences cannot be settled by the "interested parties" themselves, they be submitted to the Board of Conciliation provided for in the award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission of 1902. The miners demands were formulated last September at Wilkesbarre, Pa. and were ratified last week by United Mine Workers Convention at Indianapolis.