

### The Danger of Delay.

In continuing this search for the causes of serious disasters on land and sea, we find a story in connection with the loss of nearly half a hundred lives at the burning of the Windsor Hotel in New York surely requiring some explanation. The following statement of Miss Gould's *chef de cuisine*, Dudley, has been permitted to circulate everywhere without contradiction. He says that he notified the clerk and cashier that the hotel was on fire fifteen minutes before the fire was discovered by anybody else, so far as he could see. Dudley's story is corroborated by Fred Johnson, who was with him at the time. Dudley left Miss Gould's house at about ten minutes of 3. He was half way down the block when he saw smoke coming through the roof in the centre of the hotel, just beneath the flagpole. He ran into the hotel. "Your hotel is on fire!" he said to the clerk. The clerk told him to go to the devil. The *chef* naively adds: "I went over to the cashier and said: The hotel is on fire! You had better send in an alarm or send some men up stairs to put it out." The cashier never so much as looked up from the book at which he was writing. As an example of absolute indifference to the safety of life and property, this story would be unique, but for the possibility that the clerk and cashier of the Windsor Hotel were so absorbed in the work of the office, or so accustomed to being hoaxed by guests of the hotel, that even the note of alarm presumably apparent in the warning voice of Miss Gould's cook failed to arouse them to any sense of peril to those in the house. But the danger of delay was surely never more clearly emphasized than by what followed, and it is not surprising that the underwriters of New York are now insisting upon such precautions against fire being taken by hotel proprietors as will ensure immediate attention to an alarm, no matter from what quarter the same may be given.

**Of Interest to Canadian Miners.** Canadian mining men will find the following figures in connection with the gold production of Victoria somewhat interesting. Since the discovery of the precious metal in this Australasian Colony in 1851, large quantities of gold have been exported. In the ten years from 1852 to 1861, the exports of gold amounted to upwards of two millions of ounces per annum, but subsequently there was a gradual decline, till the year 1867, when the weight of metal exported had declined 25 per cent. Twenty years ago the number of miners at work in the Victorian gold-fields was 38,000, of whom about one-third were Chinese. The number of men engaged in mining pursuits in the colony then largely decreased; but gold mining has since revived, and become a permanent industry and a legitimate business, conducted by companies paying satisfactory and increasing dividends.

From a monthly return to the Government issued by the Secretary for Mines in Victoria, we present the following tabulated statement of the output of gold

for that colony since 1851, also the dividends paid by public companies operating the mines in recent years. In the statement compiled by the Victorian Government official, the gold is valued at £4 per oz., and in our table the conversion into Canadian currency is made at five dollars to the pound.

GOLD PRODUCTION OF VICTORIA.				
Period.				Yield. oz.
From 1851 to 1893	..	..	..	58,772,555
During	1894	..	..	716,954
	1895	..	..	740,086
	1896	..	..	805,047
	1897	..	..	812,766
	1898	..	..	837,258

The total weight of gold exported from the colony since the discovery in 1851 to the close of January in the present year is 62,736,084 oz., and its value at \$20 per oz. amounts to \$1,254,721,680.

DIVIDENDS BY PUBLIC COMPANIES.				
Year.				Amount.
1894	..	..	..	\$2,298,665
1895	..	..	..	2,192,535
1896	..	..	..	2,698,475
1897	..	..	..	2,685,470
1898	..	..	..	3,078,170

The report of the Victorian Department of Mines also shows that new and improved methods of treating the ore have been the means of so increasing the average yield of gold per ton that the amount of dividends from many of the principal gold-fields may be expected to show a further increase. Thus the total yield of gold for the month of January showed an increase of nearly 8,000 oz. over the corresponding month of the previous year.

Altogether, the Government report on the gold mines of Victoria furnishes very cheering statistics and much instructive reading for those engaged in the laudable enterprise of developing the mineral wealth of this great Dominion. Such figures as those presented to us by this Australasian Department of Mines ought to encourage Canadians who have, even if somewhat tardily, invested capital for the purpose of placing mining on the list of our industrial pursuits.

The efforts now being made to equip our gold mines upon a proper and a paying basis will surely result in Canada shortly occupying a prominent position among countries celebrated for the quantity and value of their gold production.

**THE ANGLO-AMERICAN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.**—The first general meeting of this Company was held at the Company's Offices, No. 7 McKinnon Building, Toronto, on 27th March, when a strong Board of Directors was appointed. At the Directors' Meeting, held subsequent to the above, Mr. S. F. McKinnon was chosen President, and Mr. Thomas Long Vice-President. Both these gentlemen are well known in financial and business circles.

Mr. A. Dean, who was engaged by the directors as general manager of the Company, has had an extended experience as inspector, having acted in that capacity for some years in connection with the London Assurance.

The Company's offices opened for business on the 3rd instant.