

affections so prevalent among office men. Where it is possible, the desks should be so arranged that the light will fall upon them from behind or sidewise; this is the scientific formula and will commend itself in practice to any one who has been accustomed to the glare from the opposite direction. A proper system of ventilation and lighting will do much to preserve a cheerful moral atmosphere, lighten labor and expedite the office work.

A YUKON OPPORTUNITY.

The people of the Yukon are naturally large consumers of canned fruits and vegetables. These they are now mainly getting from California, although some of Vancouver's and Victoria's fruit and vegetable canners—and among them the B.C. Fruit Cannery, of Vancouver—are making successful Yukon shipments. The same remark applies, it is understood, to a limited variety of products shipped from Simcoe, Ont. It is, however, understood to be possible, if the White Pass and Yukon Railway Company readjust and reduce its rates on canned products to a moderate extent next year, for a very much larger proportion of the canned fruit and vegetable needs of the Yukon to be met next year by Canadian home producers than has been the case this season, for although California's canning men will be nearer the Yukon than the producers of Ontario, they will find this advantage largely counterbalanced by the import duties. There would consequently appear to be an opportunity worth investigating and following up by the fruit and vegetable canners of our Dominion, who might well seek to secure the further freight rate facilities which seem to be required in the case.

THE AUGUST FIRE WASTE.

It is agreeable to learn that the losses by fire in the United States and Canada during August were lower than for any month this year, and lower than those of the same month in several previous years. The excessive losses of January, March, May and July, however, suffice to bring the aggregate for eight months of 1901 to startling figures, even though not as great as those of 1900. From the compilation of the New York Journal of Commerce we learn that the totals for eight months of three years were as under:

	1899.	1900.	1901.
January	\$10,718,000	\$11,755,300	\$16,574,950
February	18,469,000	15,427,000	13,992,000
March	11,493,000	13,349,200	15,036,250
April	9,213,000	25,727,000	11,352,800
May	9,091,900	15,759,400	22,380,150
June	6,714,850	21,281,000	9,590,000
July	11,426,400	13,609,100	15,740,000
August	9,703,700	10,298,250	8,334,000

Totals\$86,829,850 \$127,206,250 \$113,009,150

Here we have a fire loss equal to an average of \$14,126,000 per month this year, compared with \$15,900,000 per month last year, and \$10,853,000 in 1899. The Journal says that fire underwriters were glad to have a temporary breathing spell in August after such a disastrous experience as they suffered in July. A continuance of the July loss ratio for only three months more would have resulted in the retirement of half a dozen companies at least.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY REPORT.

In hardly any great enterprise is the prosperity of a country more closely bound up than in its railways, and generally speaking its progress can be measured in no surer manner than by a glance at the financial reports of its trunk lines of rail transportation. The twentieth annual report of the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company, covering the period of eighteen months ending with June 30th last, makes very interesting and very encouraging reading. The mileage now possessed by this enormous system is 10,333 miles; its assets

amount to \$291,518,000, and the value of its lines and equipment is \$225,353,000, besides the cost of its steamboats, which is placed at nearly \$5,792,000.

The earnings for the twelve months ended June 30 last were \$30,855,203. The working expenses in 1899 were \$16,999,872, and in the twelve months covered by the report, \$18,745,828, leaving the net earnings \$12,230,165 for 1899, and \$12,109,375 for 1900-01. Like other large systems the C.P.R. felt the increase in the cost of wages, material, and especially felt the partial failure of last year's wheat crop, etc. During the year the road carried 4,337,799 passengers and 7,155,813 tons of freight, the average passenger fare being 1.93 cents a mile, the charge per ton of freight 0.79 cents per mile. The working expenses for the year amounted to 60.75 per cent. of the gross earnings, and the net earnings to 39.25 per cent., as compared with 58.16 and 41.84 per cent., respectively, in 1899.

The report points out that in view of the rapidly increasing development of Pacific trade and the desirability of securing as much of it as possible, the directors recommend that a sufficient number of coasting steamers be provided. In order to provide for the expenditures necessary to this end the shareholders will be asked to authorize the issue of steamship bonds to the amount of £480,000 sterling.

THE MARITIME FAIR.

Halifax is to be the scene of the Maritime Fair of 1901, which promises to be a good one. The duration of the fair is to be from Saturday, the 14th, to Saturday, the 21st of the present month. Much pains has been taken to secure adequate space for different classes of exhibits, and there are separate buildings for manufactured goods, fishery exhibits, cattle, horses, poultry, sheep, swine, etc. This year, we are told, the number of entries will be larger than ever before. The size of the poultry buildings is doubled so numerous are the entries offered. The management of the fair is in the hands of persons appointed by the provincial government, the Halifax city council and the farmers' association. After long negotiation an arrangement has been effected by which the Intercolonial railway and the Dominion Atlantic railway both make close connection with the fair grounds; and not only this, but they have agreed to carry certain classes of exhibits free of charge. Cheap railway fares by boat and rail are reasonably assured, and the prospect of a large attendance was never better. The horse racing lasts for five days, and the prizes will aggregate \$3,000. Fireworks are to be furnished from Hamilton, and the grand stand will seat some four thousand people.

AN INSURANCE CONFERENCE.

Some thirty of the general agents and local agents of the Mutual Life Assurance Company of Canada held their annual meeting in Toronto last week. Papers on fitting topics were submitted by Messrs T. N. Scripture, B. W. Chipman, Robert Pinkerton, P. B. Fetterly, Abner Cousens and S. R. Clapp, and a discussion serviceable to the field workers of the company ensued, in which Mr. Wegenast, the manager, and Mr. Earl, superintendent of agencies, took a prominent part. On the next day, the monthly meeting of the directors was held, the manager, the secretary and eleven directors being present, after which the board held a conference with the agents, exchanging ideas and suggestions. Encouraging addresses were made by the president, Mr. Melvin, Hon. Dr. Borden and B. M. Britton, M.P., of Kingston. A feature of the gathering was the presentation of a beautiful onyx clock to Mr. C. E. German, of London, who for a number of years served the Agents' Association as secretary, and in other capacities. The presentation was made by Mr. C. B. Linton, of Hamilton, in a felicitous speech, and Mr. German replied suitably. Such gatherings as these have a great influence in heartening and stimulating the field staff of a company. It is not only the "taffy" the agents receive from the head office that does them