

## SOME RECENT FIRES.

The following particulars are gathered from first Press reports of conflagrations. Upon these are instituted further inquiries, which appear under heading "Additional Information."

- Hastings, Ont.**—Cheese factory destroyed.
- Huntsville, Ont.**—Anglo-Canadian Leather Co. damaged.
- Joliette, Que.**—Poitra Woollen Mills Co., damaged, loss \$1,000.
- Newcastle, N. S.**—Grocery store of Mr. M. Dunn destroyed.
- Sprucedale, Ont.**—Mr. James Daly's home destroyed; loss \$400.
- Portage la Prairie, Man.**—Cowan block damaged; incendiary origin.
- Hutton, Alta.**—Property northward destroyed; loss \$1,000,000; one life lost.
- Niagara Falls, Ont.**—Clark's Burning Springs House destroyed; loss \$10,000.
- Midland, Ont.**—Mr. Manley Chew's lumber yard destroyed; loss about \$500,000.
- Cornwall, Ont.**—Residence of Mr. Simon Duval damaged; lamp explosion the cause.
- Cobourg, Ont.**—Lock-up at Castleton damaged; set on fire by Clarence Peters, a prisoner.
- Flesherton, Ont.**—Mr. Wm. White's barn and crops destroyed. Similar loss met with a year ago.
- Brockville, Ont.**—Motor-boat owned by Mr. S. J. Fluker damaged; leaking gasoline pipe the cause.
- Belleville, Ont.**—Residence of Mr. George Emily destroyed; loss \$3,000. There was a small insurance.
- Calgary, Alta.**—Premises of Mrs. Palmer, Messrs. Matthew Wells and D. Rosenthal damaged; loss \$2,500.
- Walkerville, Ont.**—Home of Mr. Wm. O'Hara destroyed; spark from passing locomotive set fire to grass near by.
- Cananogue, Ont.**—Summer residence of Mr. Oliver Adams destroyed; strong evidence of incendiarism found.
- Rosthern, Sask.**—Prairie district destroyed, including houses and hay stacks; loss \$10,000. A boy heating a kettle started fire.
- Montreal, Que.**—Residence of Mrs. Cortois; loss on building and furniture \$2,000. The Montreal Wool and Cotton works; loss \$30,000.
- Broadview, Sask.**—Separator owned by Mr. F. Baker, destroyed with a team, wagon and rake owned by Mr. H. Baker; sparks from engine the cause.
- Peterboro, Ont.**—Messrs. E. F. Mason & Co's. store, loss \$8,000. Stocks of Mr. Richard Hall's store, Kingan Hardware Company, and Mr. Milburn's jewellery store damaged.
- Victoria, B. C.**—Messrs. M. R. Smith & Co's. building and stock damaged; loss \$10,000 on building, and \$40,000 on stock; insurance \$10,000 on building, and \$20,000 on stock and plant.
- Calgary, Alta.**—Mrs. A. Palmer's block damaged; loss as follows:—On building, \$1,200; Mrs. Palmer's stock, \$200; Messrs. Matthews & Wells' stock, \$400, with slight damage to Mr. Rosenthal's store.
- Rapid City, Man.**—Residence of Mr. E. C. Gossett Jackson, destroyed; insurance carried in Western Fire Assurance Company. Mr. John English's granary was destroyed. Mr. H. Rourke's barn destroyed; loss, \$1,500.
- Macgregor, Man.**—Dr. Hamworth's stable destroyed; insurance \$400. Warehouse and drug store owned by Mr. John A. Gray; loss on drugs \$800. Messrs. E. Turner & Sons' store, Albion Hotel and stables also damaged.
- Toronto, Ont.**—Norway House, Kingston Road, damaged. Messrs Nerlich & Co's. building and Mr. J. D. Tripp's house damaged. Residence of Mr. W. Ashdown and Mr. T. L. Gray damaged.
- Thamesville, Ont.**—The Syer block damaged: Losses, Mrs. Syer, \$2,000 on building and contents, insurance, \$1,400; Mr. A. O'Neil, \$800, insurance, \$500; Mr. R. Pye's tailor shop, Mr. Fred Thompson's barber shop, and Mr. M. Turnell's shoemaker shop also damaged.
- Winnipeg, Man.**—Residences of fourteen families destroyed; loss \$20,000, divided as follows:—Mrs. S. B. Brown, \$10,000, representing several homes; insurance \$4,000, in Messrs. Brown and Clark Agency, on buildings. Mr. Anthony Rysitsky's residence, \$4,500; insurance \$600, with Messrs. Andrews and Andrews. Residence of Mr. A. Kovensky; insurance on house \$1,500, in Colonial, and \$600 on furniture in the Hartford. Fire originated in the woodshed. Henderson block damaged; loss \$4,000. Mr. West, a tenant, lost \$2,500; insurance \$1,000.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING FIRES ALREADY REPORTED.

**Weymouth, N.S.**—Methodist church, loss \$2,000. Child playing with matches the cause. Building was once insured in the Royal but the agent is said to have given no notification of the expiration of risk, and no insurance has since been carried.

**Saskatoon, Sask.**—The Bowerman block; estimated loss on stock \$12,500, on building \$5,000. Insurance on stock in Calumet \$6,000, in British \$2,000.

## SERIOUS ARSON CHARGE.

At the Brampton, Ont., Assizes this week the case of James Ruston, farmer, against whom a serious charge of arson had been laid, was heard before Justice McMahon. The case was tried in the spring before Justice Wm. Mulock, but the jury on that occasion disagreed.

The defendant was said to have set fire to his home and barn at Chinguacousy on February 20th, in order to obtain \$4,000 insurance, equally divided between the London Mutual and Peel Farmers' Fire Insurance companies. The jury on Thursday, after an hour's deliberation, acquitted him.

The chief witness was John Hollis, a former employee of the accused. He declared in the witness box that after the barn was erected Mr. Ruston expressed his intention of destroying the place to get the insurance. They discussed the matter and the witness said he was offered fifty dollars to apply the match. During the time given for his decision, the two men packed up all the valuables in the house. Some of these boxes, he claimed, were hidden in a cement structure underneath the floor of the barn and the remainder were removed to safekeeping. The ingenious plan supposed to have been formulated by the defendant did not appeal to the witness and he informed the manager of the London Mutual of his employer's intention. On the day on which he was supposed to have started the blaze he met Mr. Ruston and refused to do the work. The latter agreed to do it himself.

On the night of the fire, Mr. Dixon Rutherford, who resides near Mr. Ruston saw the flames. He hurried, he said, and asked the owner how it started but he claimed he did not know. The defendant's little daughter was crying and Mr. Rutherford was asked not to question her. Mr. Rutherford's father is a director of the Peel Farmers' Company.

Another witness was called who told of the construction of the cement structure in the barn. He said that when it was dug up in March pieces of bees wax, supposed to have been used to seal the boxes were found.

Detective Tipton, of Toronto, said he found on investigating that the cement structure had been broken open. The box containing goods was found in a driving shed near by. The answers which the defendant gave to the insurance men were considered somewhat strange.

Ruston denied the statements made by Hollis that he offered him fifty dollars to fire the building. As to burying the box of silverware and valuables under the cement floor of the barn, he said: "When I got home before Christmas I found that in my absence the house had been rummaged by Hollis—everything had been turned upside down; so I determined to hide my valuables. When Hollis was away one day I got the box and packed it. Then I took it to the barn to cement it down under the floor, but while I was hiding the things Hollis came around. He saw me covering up the box. I left it there, and on February 3rd I dug it up again and took it into the house. It went up in smoke at last."

He denied making any unlawful proposition to Hollis, and said that on the night of the fire he and his daughter only just escaped with their lives.

Under cross-examination by Mr. Gamble, K.C., the Crown Prosecutor, Ruston admitted that he had expressed his willingness to take \$5,800 for his farm and go into some other business; also that Griffin had offered him \$5,000 for the property without the house.

Ruston has an action down for hearing against the Peel Farmers' Insurance Company, and another entered against the London Mutual Fire Insurance Company, but the judge decided under the circumstances to traverse the civil suit to the next Assizes.

The Standard Trust Company, Winnipeg, has opened a branch at Moose Jaw, Sask.

A branch of the Bank of British North America has been opened at Burdett, Alta., under the management of Mr. H. R. Powell.

The Waterous Engine Works Company, Brantford, Ont., have recently delivered one of their steam fire engines to Victoria, B.C., the second to that city; one to Lethbridge, Alta., and have an order for one for Montreal, making the sixth fire engine shipped to that city.