

coal supplies; they estimated the stock of unmined coal at 146,000,000,000 tons. This, however, has since been proved to be enormously below the mark by vast coal bearing areas having been discovered. The question is one of supreme interest and importance; the consumption of coal is proceeding at a rate that must, in a few years, advance the price, and so add to the cost of all manufactured goods, as well as the cost of living wherever this fuel is used. Clearly the existing conditions indicate that, both for power and light, electricity produced from the force of water must become more and more valuable as a factor in economizing coal.

THE CANADIAN FIRE UNDERWRITERS' ASSOCIATION.

Annual Meeting.

The Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association was held on Wednesday and Thursday, 19th and 20th September, in the Hotel Royal, at Hamilton. The assembly was called to order by President Lilly, promptly at 11 o'clock. The attendance was very good indeed, although, with other absentees, we missed managers Heaton, of the Guardian; Thompson, of the Lancashire, Hinchshaw, of Atlas and National, and Morrissey, of the Union.

The following were present:—Aetna, F. W. Evans; Alliance, P. M. Wickham; American, Manchester, Jas. Boomer; British America, P. H. Sims; Caledonian, Lansing Lewis, J. G. Borthwick; Commercial Union, J. McGregor; Connecticut, North America, H. Hampson; Hartford, P. McCallum; Imperial, G. R. Kearley; Keystone, Western, J. J. Kenny; Law, Union and Crown, J. E. E. Dickson; Liverpool and London and Globe, G. F. C. Smith; London and Lancashire, Mercantile, A. Wright; London Assurance, E. A. Lilly; North British, Thos. Davidson; Northern, R. W. Tyre; Phoenix of London, R. McD. Paterson; Quebec, G. J. Pyke; Queen, Royal, W. Mackay; Sun, H. M. Blackburn; Waterloo, F. Haight.

The Agenda submitted, consisting of only nine items, was a very light one, and, with the exception of two or three important subjects referred to below, the attention of members was almost wholly confined to a revision and criticism of work already done, as developed by the reports of the standing and special committees, the minutes of local boards, and the remarks and discussions, incident to, and arising out of these. The continuance of heavy losses throughout the Dominion is producing the expected result, namely, an increase in rates, whilst such increase has not been made a general and uniform advance, it is not unlikely that this may ensue ere long. Amongst 3-year risks, the following have been named for higher rates: churches of all classes of construction in all places "A" to "F" tariffs. Then, with a larger increase of rate follow academies, schools, colleges, convents, nunneries, charitable and

religious institutions of all kinds. Increased lumber and other rates at Ottawa and Hull, also increased rates on wholesale risks, outside Ottawa and Montreal, were approved.

Changes in the way of a reduction of the "Distant Points" rates were authorized, the old 50 per cent. advance over ordinary rates being reduced to 25 per cent. Risks in these sections remain, however, subject to the recent increases for such places.

The item "Rebatable Grain Policies" elicited a great deal of discussion, with the result that the issuance of such a policy was considered inadmissible under the rules and constitution.

The proposal to introduce the stamping system as at present operated so satisfactorily in Toronto, into the city of Montreal was endorsed, and, so soon as the city has been specifically rated (a measure immediately to be undertaken), the stamp will come into operation.

The very serious position occupied by the city of Quebec in regard to its water supply for fire extinguishing purposes, as also the defects in the fire appliances and in the management of the fire brigade, were very severely criticized and unfavorably commented on. The Association well nigh unanimously, after hearing details, resolved on instant action as regards a further advance in the city rates. Ultimately, it was agreed to wait for the report of an influential special deputation to be immediately sent to confer with the mayor and council and the Board of Trade, in order that the intentions of the city as to providing a high-level reservoir for increased and adequate pressure at fires and the improvement of the fire brigade be ascertained. The citizens of Quebec will do well in their own immediate interest if they see that their officials meet the Association representatives in a fair way, and agree to take immediate action. If the city will do nothing worth while in the direction indicated, it is certain a heavy and instant increase of rates will ensue, and that possibly some companies may close their agencies there.

With the election of Mr. H. M. Blackburn, of the Sun, as president of the C. F. U. A. for the ensuing year; Mr. J. McGregor, of the Commercial Union, as vice-president, East; and Mr. Alfred Wright, of the London and Lancashire, vice-president, West, the session, lasting just one day and one-half, was brought to a close, being the shortest on record. It was not considered advisable to hold the usual banquet this year. The general feeling being that it was desirable to avoid all unnecessary expense at the present, in the hope that with the coming of the longed-for better times in the fire insurance field, members would have something to celebrate, something to feel glad about at their next annual. In this spirit the proffered hospitalities of the Hamilton Board of Fire Underwriters was kindly declined, though the members of the C. F. U. A. appreciated greatly this evidence of good comradeship on the part of the Hamilton men.