MANY CASHING "PERS" IN LONDON

Line of People Greets Clerks at the Government Dispensary.

There will be lots of Christmas cheer this Christmas. A special Yuletide consignment of rare and common blend arrived at the local government dispensaries recently from Montreal, and citizens are lining up by the dozens to get their holiday prescriptions filled.

Hundreds of "pers" were secured weeks and months ago in anticipation of Christmas needs. They are now being parted with in exchange for Christmas refreshment.

Late this morning Londoners braved wintry blasts for periods of five to ten minutes, lining 20 deep on Talbot street intent on obtaining their share of the Montreal assortment.

Bootleg business, too, according to one of the profession, is booming as never before, and large truck loads have arrived in the city. Persons who failed to secure their liquor legitimately have taken recourse to the unlawful vendors, who guarantee this year's stuff as "genuine Montreal."

Little of the synthetic variety is being sold in the city, according to the analysts at the Institute of Public Health, who handle all seized liquor in the city and county. The bootleg brand is powerfully potent and runs high in alcoholic strength.

Brandy has become the most popular beverage, according to several who are "in the know." Whiskey is always in strong demand, but the milder fluids have come to the front noticeably during the past week. This indicates that consumption of plum pudding will eclipse that of other years by a substantial margin.

Tomorrow, officials at the government dispensary expect a last-minute rush that will keep them busy every hour of the day.

"BROADENING OUT" FAVORED FOR LABOR BY COLBERT

Another sign of the time politically is the intention of John Colbert, president of the Individual Labor Party, to build up the organization and increase the membership. The Labor party in London is composed solely of delegates from trades' unions. The constitution of the party prevents the entry of other delegates.

But in the Individual Labor Party anyone with labor convictions can join, and this is the branch of the labor organization which permits of the membership of what are known as the intellectuals. The ordinary members of the Labor party do not think much of the intellectual as a whole, although they are always willing to give place to the best of them. John Colbert stated at the last meeting of the party that he was planning a membership drive to begin early in the new year.

CLARK'S
Economy Stores
CASH AND CARRY
LONDON'S FAIR-PRICE GROCERY STORE.

CHRISTMAS CANDY
Royal Mixed, per lb. 20c
Gum Drops, per lb.....20c
Large Cut Rock, per lb.....25c
Chocolate Drops, per lb.....25c
Chocolate Bars.....6 for 25c

NEW SEASON'S NUTS, PER POUND, 21c.
Mixed, Brazils, Walnuts, Soft Shell Almonds, Filberts.

ORANGES AND GRAPEFRUIT
Sunkist Oranges, Special, at, doz..... 39c
Large size, dozen 50c
Florida Grapefruit ..... 3 for 25c

SHELLED NUTS
Valencia Almonds, pound 49c
Bordeaux Walnuts, pound 49c

NEW MINCEMEAT
Choice quality, per pound 15c
Extra quality, 4-lb. tin 65c

CRANBERRIES
Finest Cape Cod Berries, lb..... 19c

IMPERIAL JELLY POWDERS
All flavors ..... 3 pkges. 25c

FANCY CLUSTER RAISINS
1-lb. package, each 25c
Extra qquality, 5-lb layers $1.99

GRANULATED SUGAR
10-lb. bags, each 80c
ICING SUGAR
2 lbs. for 21c

CHOICE CREAMERY BUTTER
Freshly churned, per lb. 38c

PEANUT BUTTER
Toy pails, holding 1-lb., each 25c

HEINZ TOMATO CATSUP
Small size, bottle 23c
Large size, bottle 33c

Clark's Economy Stores
Where You Buy Cheaper.
719 RICHMOND STREET.
754 DUNDAS STREET.

TELEGRAPHERS' CHRISTMAS MINGLES JOY WITH TOIL

Friends of Long Ago United As Yule Messages Click Across the Wires.

"23" STARTS IT

Messenger Boys and Check Boys All Take Part in Day's Fun.

Christmas, the gladdest day of all the year, the holiday when folks rise early to exchange greetings, presents and make merry, is a day of work, strenuous toil for the railroader and telegrapher. Firemen, conductors, engineers, despatchers and all those who bring brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers and friends together for the Yuletide dinner, have a big day on their hands, but it is not without its compensation.

The telegrapher works half a day. If his "trick" is from eight in the morning to 4:30, he works half that time. It is spent mostly in sending Christmas greetings. One would think that he might get tired of sending so many, but such is not the case, he sends a few himself, and gets a lot of fun out of it.

First thing Christmas morning the president sends out the official greeting. It is known as a "23." That is, it is a message that goes to all offices. It is posted up by the time clock or bulletin board. Then as if it were a signal everyone on the system gets busy.

The superintendent sends one to each of the chiefs of the division. And then since he has been moved around considerably in the last 20 years, he sends some here and there throughout the system. In the course of a few minutes the answers come back, cheerful news that old friends and old times have not been forgotten.

"Merry Christmas."

"Merry Christmas," says the chief operator in London to the chief operator in Toronto. "Same to you," flashes back the answer. "Merry Christmas," says the wire chief at Montreal to the wire chief at Sudbury. If he is very busy, if there is sleet or snow, he may add some business to his greeting, something like this, "Merry Christmas yourself; better give us a copper wire as far as North Bay on 18, that old clothes line you have in there now must be strung along the fence posts." Comes the answer, "Press through with copper wire now, give it to you for 18, say when, heavy fog here."

As the messages come in to the big offices they are posted on the bulletin board. The top of the second message received is pasted on the bottom of the president's message, the third "Best wishes" pasted on the second, and so on. There are yards and yards of best wishes from coast to coast before the day is over. Every time an operator gets a chance he goes over to read the last half dozen to be posted, for he knows hundreds of people over the system. He has worked in California and Komoka. He was six months in Ottawa and two weeks in Medicine Hat.

The messenger boys and the check boys (the office boys who take the telegrams and transfer them from one wire to another), have the most fun. In the big offices there are a dozen or more "checks" running from wire to wire the live long day. They are the coming operators. They are full of fun and mischievous. They too send their greetings. They usually allude to food. The dignified superintendent may ask if Santa turned up all right, not so the check boy, he starts off, "Check Kids, Buffalo: Merry Christmas: go easy on the puddin'. Checks, Montreal."

Derisive Laughs.

Sometimes a long distance one comes in to the check girls in Toronto from the check girls in San Francisco. This is always good for a derisive laugh if there are no check girls in that office, and a presumably witty answer is drafted out by the boys and started off.

In order to make speed in some of the big American offices the check boys used to work on roller skates before automatic carriers came into force. The boys in such offices were the envy of others in smaller offices, and the messages used to run thus, "Merry Christmas; hope you break your neck." "Same to you, and many of them," was the answer.

Every office has its phantom station some place out in the wilds, where imaginative bits of foolery are given a point of origin. Along about dark the wits of the office take a moment to fake a message from such places which are well-known to the operators. They go something like this, "Goose Feather Corners, Ungava, Ont., Chief Operator, Hamilton, Your inspirational felicitations heartily reciprocated. Signed, Zake Zepp, chief operator."

So while the operator transmits hundreds of "Merry Christmas to Mother and Dad" telegrams throughout the day he too knows the thrill of Yuletide spirit, which brings families together again, and keeps the knot of friendship tightly tied.

WILL PROVIDE DINNERS.

Homeless men will be provided with a dinner on Christmas Day by Adj. Lewis of the Men's Metropole. Provisions are being made to make the cheery day as agreeable as possible for the unfortunate ones who find themselves in need of charity.

Every inmate of the rescue home will be provided with yuletide cheer.

Work Shortage Blocks Paroles

Canadian Press Despatch.

Kingston, Dec. 22.—Several convicts, it is understood, will be paroled from Portsmouth before Christmas, but the number will be smaller than usual, owing to the unemployment situation throughout the country.

Reports heard from time to time that John Doughty of Toronto, who was given a six-year term in 1921 for theft of $105,000 in bonds from the Ambrose Small estate, would soon be paroled, are refuted by information from a reliable source that Doughty will have to serve his full term.

ALL LONDON CHURCHES TAKE SECRET BALLOT

Concluded From Page 1.

announced at a congregational meeting.

Poll clerk—R. D. McDonald.

Scrutineers—J. H. Gillespie, H. Hall, A. McPherson, H. H. Rennie, Col. C. M. R. Graham, C. G. Watson, J. S. Sangster, J. S. McLarty, E. S. Crawford, Sheriff Donald Graham, E. E. Reid, Mrs. Wm. Beattie, Mrs. Jean Knox, Mrs. Donald Graham, Mrs. H. G. Bell, Miss Gertrude Bapty, Clerk John Stuart and W. C. Allen.

St. Andrew's Church.

Rev. D. C. MacGregor, D.D., pastor.

Form of ballot—That recommended by joint church union committee.

Days and hours of voting—No voting on Sunday; voting will take place every afternoon this week between 3 to 5 p.m. and every evening next week from 7 to 9 p.m. Polls will finally close on Monday night, Jan. 5, at 9 p.m., when a congregational meeting will be held to hear the result of the vote.

Poll clerk—John Lochead.

Scrutineers—A. Robson, J. S. Brown, R. MacDonald, R. B. Turnbull, R. H. Morrison, and J. H. Laughton.

Knox Church.

Rev. T. A. Symington, M.A., pastor.

Form of ballot—That recommended by the joint church union committee.

Days and hours of voting—No Sunday voting; voting will take place every evening 7 to 8 p.m., and also on Monday, Wednesday adn Friday of both weeks from 3 to 4 p.m.

Polls will finally close on Tuesday night, Jan. 6, at 8 p.m.

Poll clerk—W. H. Weston.

Scrutineers—V. K. Greer, Chas. J. Farr, W. G. McNeil, A. A. Fitzsimons, R. F. Gray, Wm. Wadell, E. Coleman, Andrew Beattie, Harmon E. Westland, C. H. Baker, Wm. Duncan, C. J Mitchell

King Street Church.

Rev. W. R. McIntosh, D.D., pastor.

Form of ballot—That recommended by the joint church union committee.

Days and hours of voting—No Sunday voting. Voting will take place every evening from 7 to 8 p.m., except on Saturdays and holidays, when it will take place from 4 to 5 p.m.

Polls will finally close Wednesday night, Jan. 7, at 8 p.m.

Poll Clerks—Dr. J. A. L. Orr and J. J. McWilliams.

Scrutineers—Marshall Wilson, Kenneth Roff, Robert Brigge, Kenneth McIntyre, Stanley Turnbull and Rodney Caton.

Chalmers Church.

Rev. John Richardson, B.A., pastor.

Form of ballot—One question: "Do you wish this congregation to enter the union of churches on June 10, 1925, in terms of the United Church of Canada act, 14-15, George V., Canada, chapter 100?"

Days and hours of voting—No voting on Sunday, Christmas or New Year's Day. Voting will take place on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays of each week from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Polls will finally close on Wednesday night, Jan. 7, at 9:20 p.m.

Poll clerk—John Kelman.

Scrutineers—D. Black, J. Watson, Miss Robena Duncan, Miss Mae Dunn, Russell Legg, A. J. Chapman, Miss Edna Hunter, Miss Clarie Allen.

St. George's Church.

Rev. John Hosie, B.A., pastor.

Form of ballot—That recommended by the London Presbyterian Association; two questions: "Are you opposed to this congregation entering the United Church of Canada?" and "Are you in favor of this congregation entering the United Church of Canada?"

Days and hours of voting—No Sunday voting; voting will take place every day from 8 to 9:30 p.m., except holidays, when it will take place from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Polls will finally close on Monday night, Jan. 5, at 9:20 p.m.

Poll clerk—John Kingsborough.

Deputy poll clerks—Stanley Hardie, John Hutchison George Cairncross.

Scrutineers—Mrs. Stanley Grosvenor, Miss Dora Kingsborough; James Watts, Mrs. George Smythe, Harold Steele.

New St. James' Church.

Rev. James H. MacKay pastor.

Form of ballot—Two questions: "Are you in favor of this congregation entering the United Church of Canada?" and "Are you opposed to this congregation entering the United Church of Canada?"

Days and hours of voting—No Sunday voting; voting will take place every day from 3:30 to 5:30 and from 7:30 to 9:30, except Christmas and new year's days, when voting will take place from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. only. Polls will finally close on Monday night, Jan. 5, at 9:30 p.m.

Returning officer—John A. Campbell.

Deputy returning officer—W. D. Beamer.

Poll clerks—R. J. Webster, B. F. Watterworth.

Scrutineers—Miss Nellie Tytler, Miss Irene Straitch, Miss Ella Dickie, Mrs. R. E. Crouch, Miss Helen Patterson, Miss Ethel Millar.

Hamilton road Presbyterian church of which Rev. M. Fraser Cree B.A., is pastor, is not taking a vote on the question until Tuesday, Jan. 5, and succeeding two weeks.

LIBERALS ASSAIL PREFERENCE PLAN

Claim Adoption of Scheme Would Be Death Blow to Trade With Argentina.

Associated Press Despatch.

London, Dec. 23.—The Liberal anti-protection newspapers take up arms today in opposition to the rumored intention of the government to discriminate against foreign meat, and, while declaring their skepticism concerning the whole story, argue that if the suggested scheme is started it is bound to fail. Argentina's position as principal exporter of beef to Great Britain is unassailable, they say, not only because Argentina meat is better than the Australian, but because the British trade with Argentina is too valuable for any government to attempt to discourage.

Australian despatches express great satisfaction at the reported adoption of the preference scheme, which, they say, is identical with that submitted to the British government on behalf of the Australian meat council last May. The despatches give rosy predictions of meat price reductions to be expected in Great Britain when the plan is put into effect.

POSTOFFICE HOURS SET FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

Stamp May Be Purchased at Certain Periods—Building To Remain Open.

The postoffice will be closed on Christmas Day except between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., according to Postmaster T. Duncan. While the postoffice is open, stamps will be on sale and the general delivery and registration wickets will be open.

There will bo one delivery by letter carrier in the morning. All special delivery letters will be delivered.

The public lobby will be open all day for the convenience of boxholders.

The mails will be closed and despatched the same as on other days.

Only one clearance will be made from the street boxes and parcel receptacles, starting at 7:30 a.m.

Money order, savings bank and postal note wickets will be closed the entire day.

CAR CATCHES FIRE.

Due to a short circuit the car of a local insurance man caught fire at 10:40 this morning. The car was only slightly damaged and was able to proceed under its own power. The fire was extinguished before the arrival of the fire department.

Railroadmen Work To Give Others Joy On Christmas

While the chimes ring out on Christmas Day; while the steaming pudding is being served, London's railroadmen will be serving those who are hurrying home to spend a brief holiday.

Though the Yuletide rush, often accompanied by bad weather conditions, means long hours on the road for the trainmen, many of them will be able to have a part of the day at home and some will be able to cancel their runs altogether.

The C. P. R. recognizes Christmas as a family day, says Superintendent Rutter. For that reason as many men as possible from the engine and train service will be home. Work and pick-up trains will be cancelled. There is a spirit of give and take among the knights of the road, and the day is arranged to make it best and happiest for all.

Junior men will give way to the senior men. Single men will go out and leave the family men at home to welcome Santa Claus on behalf of the children.

Superintendent C. Forrester of the Canadian National Railways said today that the manifest, dairy and beef freights will run as usual.

All advertised trains will run on schedule time as usual unless the snow storms prevent it, and railroaders heartily hope for fair weather.

All railroads report heavy traffic in mail, express, freight and passenger service today.

Gossip Around The City Hall

With some 62 local improvement bylaws during the past year, the work of consolidation of accounts is only half through. Detailed sketches of all the works have to be made and submitted to the city auditor. Sketches are drawn to detail and filed, so that costs could be estimated from the drawings alone.

"I don't think the time is right for a subway on Wellington street at the C. P. R. tracks," Mayor Wenige declared this morning. "That district is pretty well developed now. The district that needs improvement is the other way. What we need is a bridge for Richmond street first."

According to Plumbing Inspector J. A. Young, December is proving a

light month for the plumbing trade. This is easily explained, as the big rush of work came earlier in the fall and most people do not want repairs and new fixtures around Christmas time. The past year has been a fairly remunerative one to the plumbing trade.

"My inaugural address is all prepared—but it is not ready," the mayor told an Advertiser man this morning. Mr. Wenige was unwilling to divulge any of the details he will boost for in 1925, and declared that he would permit the publication of his inaugural in plenty of time.

Col. Gartshore, re-elected by acclamation to the Victoria hospital trust for a two-year term, took his oath of office before City Clerk S. Baker this morning.

The final 1924 meeting of the city housing commission was held last evening with Chairman Ashton, Commissioners Hessel and Wray present. Little business, outside of passing of accounts and expression of goodwill, was transacted at the short session.

DANCE HALL ROW ECHO WHISPERS $23.45 FINE

An echo of the dance hall row at Wardsville last summer, in which a Newbury youth was badly mauled, was heard in county police court this morning when Leonard Munn was fined $10 and costs on a charge of disorderly conduct. The total amount paid over by Munn was $23.45.

The young man pleaded guilty through his counsel, C. St. Clair Leitch of St. Thomas.

Munn was the last of the trio involved to appear in court, the other two young men having previously been fined.

LABOR PARTY ELECTS OFFICERS FRIDAY NIGHT

Differ on Points, But No Split Is Expected in the Ranks.

Election of officers of the London branch of the Canadian Labor Party for 1925 will take place on Friday night. Nominations were opened last week and were left open to next Friday, so that no members might be overlooked. At the last meeting held the Communist party, the left wing of labor, introduced a little ginger in the shape of a criticism of the actions of Ald. McKay and Ashton in their recent municipal campaign. The Communist delegates thought that the indorsation of the candidates by the Labor party should have been given greater prominence by the two aldermen in the pre-election statements.

"However," says L. R. Menzies, the Communist, "the party will not be disrupted by any internal split, and will be free to go its way to a more active organization in the next six months. There is a general satisfaction among members with the work of Arthur Mould, and a feeling that he has acted energetically and capably as president of the party, and that it should go on to a larger usefulness politically under his guidance."

The keynote of the meetings recently has been preparation for all political eventualities, and that the party should be ready and efficiently organized to deal with any federal or provincial election. For this reason, it is probable that a fighting, progressive, executive will be elected next Friday to lead the party out of the present wilderness of stagnation into which it has been in the last year or two.

WOODSTOCK OFFICIALS ARE SUED AFTER RAID

Magistrate and License Inspector Named Defendants in Action by Ernest Scott.

Canadian Press Despatch.

Woodstock, Dec. 23.—Notice of a county court action for $500 damages has been made by Ernest Fred. Scott, of Woodstock, against M. J. Breckenridge, license inspector and A. S. Ball, police magistrate of Woodstock, as a result of a raid made by Inspector Breckenridge on his residence in search of liquor on Saturday, Dec. 13. In his statement of claim Mr. Scott names M. J. Breckenridge as having secured a search warrant without reasonable or probable cause, and names Magistrate Ball as having granted the warrant without reasonable or probable cause. The notices, which have already been served, give the inspector and magistrate the statutory month's notice of action, and unless some settlement of the case is made in the meantime it will be heard at a session of the county court early next year.

RUM SLEUTH LAUDS CITY AS ONE OF BEST IN ONTARIO

Inspector Elliott, Toronto, of the provincial police branch of O. T. A enforcement, visited the office of License Inspector Walter Bolton this morning.

"You have one of the best cities in Ontario as far as the O. T. A. is concerned," stated Inspector Elliott. "No, I am not here on any particular business. Just routine matters, that's all."

FEW MEETINGS.

With the 1925 city council not meeting until the second Monday in January and the 1924 practically through with its business, few meetings will be held in civic circles during the coming fortnight. However, Mayor Wenige intimated today that a caucus of the new aldermen would likely be held some time next week to discuss committees for the coming year.

THE CRICKETS PLAY SANTA.

"The Crickets" of the First Methodist Sunday school under the direction of Miss Winnifred Taylor, their leader, and Miss Mary Watson, the president, have planned some very interesting Christmas work. This afternoon they are filling between thirty and forty stockings for the children of the Thomas Alway Hall home. They will supply the Christmas tree for that institution, as well as books and play materials to occupy the children during their unpleasant bout of mumps. The recent rummage sale held by the class, made it possible for them to be so generous at the Christmas season.

RETURNS TO CITY.

Ajutant Spooner of the Salvation Army returned to London from Ingersoll today, where he acted as chairman at the Ingersoll corps Christmas tree and entertainment last night. The auditorium was packed with an enthusiastic crowd of children, who were on hand early for the 17 numbers on the program. Each number, musical and otherwise, led up to the arrival of Santa Claus, who made his appearance late in the evening.

BOYS VISIT PLANT.

Members of the boys department of the Y. M. C. A. were taken for a trip through the Hayden Press plant this afternoon to learn something of printing methods.

PARTIES PLANNED.

Toboggan parties are being arranged by the members of the Y. M. C. A. to take place between Christmas and New Year's. If the weather permits, it is expected that many of the younger members will turn out.

LATEST U. S. COIN BEARS ENGLISH KING'S REPLICA

Unusual Commemoration Token Obtained by Harry Bennett.

The Huguenot-Walloon tercentenary half dollar, struck by the U. S. mint to commemorate the founding of New Amsterdam, made its appearance in London today. Already prized at three times its face value by numismatists, the coin is of very unusual design and is the first token of the U. S. mint to bear, in replica, the face of a foreign monarch.

Harry Bennett, city assessment commissioner, secured the coin through friends in New York city. There were only 100,000 struck and a waiting list for these took up practically the entire lot within a short time of their appearance a few days ago.

The "face" of the coin shows profiles of William the third, of William the silent of England, and of Admiral Coligny, the words, "United States of America," "In God We Trust," and "Huguenot Half Dollar."

On the "reverse" is the design of the original vessel of Admiral Coligny which brought Dutch people to the New Netherlands 300 years ago, and the inscription "Huguenot Walloon Tercentenary," "1624," "1924," and "Founding of the New Netherlands."

The coin is regarded as an unprecedented venture on the part of the U. S. government, since it bears the miniature replicas of the faces of a famous Huguenot. It is the first famous Huegonaut. It is the first time, with the exception of the Columbus coins and stamps struck in the 90's that foreign notables have appeared on U. S. coins.

UTILITIES COMMISSIONERS TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

T. W. McFarland and R. J. Webster have taken the oath of office as public utilities commissioners for 1925.

Though the two commissioners were re-elected by acclamation at the recent municipal elections, the taking of the oath of office is necessary to complete the qualification before they can take their seats at the commission.

City Clerk Sam Baker sent out the notices last week regarding the taking of the oath, notifying the successful candidates that the oath should be taken within a period of 20 days following the issuing of the notice.

RECEIVES "KILLER."

Inspector George Tustin of the humane society is in receipt of a revolver from the Ontario humane society, labelled the "Humane Killer." This gun, according to Mr. Tustin, will put an elephant out of misery just as fast as it would a dog. It is equipped with a silencer that deadens all sound.

Famous Burglar Is Again In Toils

Calgary Police Trap Edward J. Bond.

Canadian Press Despatch.

Calgary, Dec. 23.—Captured after attempting to shoot his way to freedom in a downtown second-hand store yesterday afternoon, Edward J. Bond, burglar with a dominion-wide reputation, is in custody. Stolen property from many Calgary homes was found in his possession. Bond is also believed to be wanted in Edmonton, Vancouver and Revelstoke. The youthful burglar just ended a four-year term for burglary in Prince Albert penitentiary.

Isaac Proux, alias John P. Taylor, is under arrest as Bond's partner in crime. Both are wanted at Edmonton on six charges of burglary and one of assault and robbery.

ALIENISTS DISAGREE AT POISONING TRIAL

Associated Press Despatch.

Mount Vernon, Ill., Dec. 23.—The trial of Lawrence M. Hight, deposed pastor of Ina, Ill., and Mrs. Elsie Sweetin, who are charged with poisoning Mrs. Anna Hight and Wilford Sweetin, was near its end today. A session last night brought the case up to the concluding evidence, the state virtually finishing its rebuttal testimony. Dr. Frank Fry, a St. Louis alienist, testified for the state last night that Hight was of sound mind when examined last October 24. Dr. G. H. Anderson, superintendent of the state hospital for the insane at Anna, Ill., defence alinist, testified Hight had the mentality of a 10-year-old boy.

SCORE SAVED WHEN FIRE DESTROYS TENEMENT

Associated Press Despatch.

Niagara Falls, N. Y., Dec. 23.—More than a score of persons were rescued by police and firemen and several families were made destitute when fire early today swept a two-story frame tenement on Eleventh street, and spread to three neighboring buildings. The officers hurried through the blazing building, arousing inmates and assisting them to the street. No one was injured. The loss was estimated at $15,000.

GAMES STARTED.

With a series of ping pong games the boys at the Y.M.C.A. started their Christmas program yesterday. Jack Mitchell began by defeating Franklin Welsh. It was a close game. Ernie Cook beat Jack Rankin. Bill Harper made a good shawing by trimming Elmer Luck. In the fourth round Bill Harper defeated Ernie Cook. Jack Mitchell and Bill Harper play off on New Year's Day. The final game yesterday was won by Jack Edwards, who defeated Jack Smith.

CIGARETTE THOUGHT CAUSE OF BIG FIRE

Reconstruction of Orth Building Under Way—Chief Gives Theory.

Investigation of the $50,000 fire which swept the two upper storeys of the Orth building at the corner of Dundas and Clarence streets Saturday afternoon reveals that a cigarette butt is probably the cause of the blaze. According to Fire Chief Aitken's theory, the fire started when a lighted cigarette was thrown into a corner among a pile of papers.

Reconstruction work on the stores of Orth, Limited and N. F. Willmot, jewelers, which were damaged by smoke and water, commenced on Monday, and both dealers expect to be prepared for business again in a short time.

CITY WORKER'S CONDITION SERIOUS AFTER STROKE

L. Crummer, 17 Picton street, who was seized with a stroke on a Dundas street car early this morning, has been an employee of the board of education for many years.

For some time he was caretaker of Talbot street public school, but early this year he was transferred to the staff of the superintendent of works. He was on his way to work at the new Empress public school when the stroke overtook him.

Two fellow employees carried the stricken man into the school and summoned medical assistance. Dr. J. T. H. Bean, who responded, had the patient removed to the hospital.

The condition of the patient, who is over 75 years old, is reported as serious.

CELEBRATE TONIGHT.

Salvationists of No. 2 citadel of the Salvation Army at Tecumseh and Edward streets celebrate tonight, when the young members will meet at the corps headquarters for their Christmas tree and entertainment. Prizes will be given for proficiency in young people's work.

Adjutant Spooner is to be chairman. Ensign Chittenden and Ensign Foster are in charge of the corps.

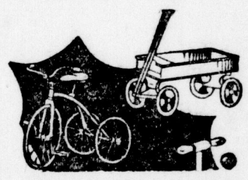
PURDOM ISSUES WRIT.

J. Wilson Purdom has issued a county court writ through his solicitor, A. R. Douglas, against Galrdner, Clarke & Co. of Toronto for $625, alleged to be due the plaintiff under a memorandum of agreement made on May 9, 1924.

CONDITION IMPROVES.

The weekly report of the employment situation in London, issued this morning by Superintendent J. C. Spencer of the employment bureau, shows that there are 590 men listed as being out of work. This is an improvement over the previous week, when 611 men were registered.

LAST-MINUTE GIFT SUGGESTIONS



FOR HUSTLING BOYS
Whether it's a wagon, tricycle or other moving toys—it's here—all prices.
Child's Auto .....$11 and up
Buster Brown Wagon ....$5.50 and up
Tricycle .....$7.50 and up
Handsleighs .....60c and up

NUT CRACK SETS
One crack, six picks 50c

144 ONLY
JET BLACK BUD VASES
Assorted shapes. While they last
75c

SPECIAL 500 CASSEROLES.
Nickel-plated frame with earthenware dish. Specially priced for Christmas gifts $1.98

CARVING SETS
English Stainless I X L Wostenholm Carving Sets ..$3.50 to $20

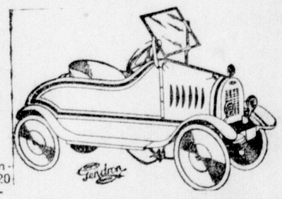
RUSH SPECIAL!
Half-dozen Wm. Rogers TEASPOONS (Boxed)
While they last $1.50

30% Off
1847 Rogers
AND
Community Plate

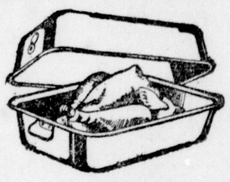
SKATES
We have all models of Automobile, C. C. M. Skates, 90c pair up. Bring your shoes and we will put on your skates free.

200 ONLY
HOB CRYSTAL GLASS FLOWER BASKETS
50c each

Meccano Sets .....$1.25 up



CHILDREN'S AUTOS AND TRICYCLES AT COST



ROASTERS
Enamel Roasters $1.39
Aluminum Roasters, $2.69 up

Regular $35.85
1847 Rogers' Old Colony or Ambassador and Anniversary Patterns
26 pieces, in plush-lined tray—6 hollow-handle, stainless dessert knives, 6 dessert forks, 6 dessert spoons, 6 teaspoons, 1 butter knife, 1 sugar shell. Regular $35.85, in a whirlwind clearance,
$25.09

GIFTS FOR HIM
Razors
Pocket Knives
Tools
Vacuum Bottles
Lunch Kits
Snowshoes
Skates
Ash Trays
Cuspidors
Tool Chests
Razor Strops

GIFTS FOR HER
Cut Glass
Silverware
Electric Curlers
Electric Irons
Percolators
Roasters
Pyrex Ware
Casseroles
Trays
Scissors
Candlesticks

GIFTS FOR THE HOME
Electric Heaters
Carving Sets
Fireplace Sets
Spark Guards
Nut Crack Sets
Electric Grills

GIFTS FOR THE BOY
Sleighs
Skates
Toboggan
Meccano Sets
Autos
Tricycles
Flashlights
Snowshoes

COWAN HARDWARE, Ltd.
125-127 DUNDAS STREET. OPEN TONIGHT. PHONES 3461-3462.