

The annual report was then unanimously adopted, on the Moved by the President and seconded by the Vice-President, that the report of the Directors as submitted be and the same is hereby adopted and order to be printed for distribution among the shareholders.

The General Manager of the Bank, Mr. E. F. Hebden, briefly discussed the report, remarking: "There is very little to say beyond expressing the hope that the shareholders may find the exhibit placed before them satisfactory."

"The only other matter I have to refer to is the staff, and to testify to the continuing loyalty and devotion of its members to the shareholders' interests, and to the excellent spirit animating them towards the Bank and one another, and to the good work performed."

Messrs. John Patterson and C. R. Black were appointed scrutineers for the election of Directors.

The President briefly explained that the appointment of Mr. Bryce J. Allan to the directorate was merely temporary, to fill the gap caused by the resignation of Mr. C. R. Hosmer from the Board. He explained that as soon as it was possible to call a full meeting of the Board a permanent director would be elected.

The motion for the election of the Directors by one ballot was then unanimously adopted.

Mr. J. Campbell Nelles:—"I think a vote of thanks should be tendered the President, Vice-President and Directors and to the General Manager and Staff. While I am not one of the oldest, I am not one of the youngest here. I have had an account with this Bank since 1882, and in all that time I have never met with a single word of discourtesy, while my business has always been carefully looked after, and anyone who has met with the attention that I have always received will have no cause of complaint regarding the Merchants' Bank." (Hear, hear.)

The President, on behalf of himself, the Vice-President and Board, and the General Manager, on behalf of himself and the Staff, briefly returned thanks for the meeting's appreciation of their services, after which the meeting adjourned.

At a special meeting of the Directors subsequently held the following officers were re-elected: President, Sir H. Montagu Allan; Vice-President, Mr. Jonathan Hodgson.

PEMBROKE FIRE INQUIRY FINISHED.

No One Was Culpably Negligent, Says Coroner Joseph—Some Particulars of the Fire.

The Pembroke fire inquiry is ended. Dr. G. E. Joseph, the coroner, has found that no one is culpably negligent. The finding regarding the cause of the disastrous fire which recently visited the town and into which Dr. Joseph conducted a searching inquiry, have been presented by him to the Town Council. He says:—

"After careful examination of the evidence of forty-eight witnesses examined at the inquiry, I find there was no evidence adduced to prove that the fire was due to any other than accidental causes, and it has not been shown that there was any culpable negligence on the part of any person concerned."

Municipal Fire Equipment Was All Right.

"As to when the fire started, no evidence has been given to show. The fire alarm was given about 4.20 a.m., and the first water was thrown on the fire about 4.35 a.m. The evidence shows that the fire equipment of the town was satisfactory and equal to all ordinary requirements. According to the evidence, the firemen answered the alarm promptly and discharged their onerous duties faithfully and efficiently under very trying circumstances."

"As to where the fire originated, the evidence is conflicting. I find that the weight of evidence tends to show that the fire started in the western end of the National Manufacturing Company's foundry building. Whether from some outside source or within the building I am unable to decide."

"The evidence shows that the National Manufacturing Company had taken all the usual precautions against fire and that their building was fairly equipped with fire hose and the other appliances for fighting fire."

"The evidence shows that they had a night watchman on nearly all the time, which was, I think, a necessary precaution, though on the night of the fire and for several nights previous it was admitted that there had been no watchman. It was understood, however, that Mr. Rogers was to obtain the appointment."

Was Some Negligence Here.

"The night watchman employed by the town, on his own evidence, was in the Copeland House 35 to 40 minutes the morning of the fire previous to the alarm, while the evidence of the night clerk is that the night watchman was there from 2.45 to 4.20. This, in my opinion, was negligence on the night watchman's part."

The Pembroke fire occurred on November 4th. It started between three and four a.m., and swept away half a million dollars worth of property. The fire inquest opened on the evening of November 23rd before Coroner Joseph, under the fire investigations act. The chief loser was the National Manufacturing Company, makers of cream separators and scales, who employed ninety workmen and carried \$91,000 insurance. The inquest was ordered by the Town Council. Mr. J. Travers Lewis, K.C., Ottawa; Mr. John Kennedy, adjuster, of Montreal; Mr. J. J. Leterle, of Thiel's detective agency, representing the Montreal Underwriters Association, appeared for the insurance interests. Mr. Williams appeared for the town of Pembroke, and Mr. P. White for the Pembroke Electric Company. The National Manufacturing Company was incorporated with a capital of \$250,000.

Insurance Companies Interested.

The following companies are interested in the Pembroke fire:—Queen of America, \$21,000; Western, \$21,000; Liverpool & London & Globe, \$18,000; North British & Mercantile, \$17,000; Guardian, \$17,000; London & Lancashire, \$13,000; Atlas of London, \$12,000; Royal, \$10,000; Manitoba Fire, \$10,000; Anglo-American, \$10,000; Insurance Company of North America, \$9,000; Home, \$8,000; British-America, \$10,000; Equity of Toronto, \$7,000; Law Union and Crown, \$6,000; Commercial Union, \$6,000; Phoenix of London, \$5,000; St. Paul Fire and Marine, \$4,000; Sovereign Fire, \$3,000; Metropolitan, \$3,000; Yorkshire, \$3,000; Canadian Fire, \$3,000; Ontario Fire, \$2,000; Perth Mutual, \$2,000; Norwich Union, \$3,000; London Mutual, \$3,000; Connecticut, \$3,000; Standard, \$2,000; total, \$231,000.

Many other buildings were destroyed in addition to those of the National Manufacturing Company. It was in relation to this company's fire the inquest was held.

IGNORANCE OF FIRE PROTECTION.

A reader on the American border writes on the subject of fire protection, saying that people are waking up to the fire hazard and to the fact that individuals here and there concede that they should do something in their own defence. Citing one large American town which he had lately visited, he notes the improvement of a number of properties, partly because their owners have been brought to see that their condition was dangerous, partly that the owners wanted reduced insurance rates, which improvement would bring.

A fire protection and equipment company recently reported that in a western city, Indianapolis, Ind., an increased number of minor orders had been received for fire protection devices, and an occasional large contract of a like sort. The reason for these appears to have been an active canvass by the company mentioned, and especially an intelligent explanation of the way these devices worked and an eloquent "stirring up" of citizens on the hidden dangers of fire.

A Canadian public man, prominent and in many respects exemplary, confessed to amazement and self-reproach when a fire insurance inspector pointed out conditions in and around his premises, which might at any moment burn him out of house and home. The man was not above confessing his previous ignorance and warning his neighbours of the similar risks they ran. It is a common admission that thousands of people need to have life assurance commended to them, and tens of thousands to have it explained to them. And the agent possessing patience and skill who will thus enlighten them on the subject deserves well of his fellow-men. Not less true is it that scores of facts and surroundings that an experienced man will detect as fire dangers for factoryman or householder, continue to lie for months or years under the very nose of that factoryman or householder without his turning his hand to remove them.

ACADIA FIRE MAKING STRIDES.

The Acadia Fire was established in Halifax, N.S., the birthplace of many solid financial institutions, about fifty years ago. Amongst the names of its founders are many of those who were identified with the commercial life of the old city-by-the-sea at that time. The company's growth has been steady. Up to 1905, its operations were confined to the home Province, Nova Scotia, but though in that year it took out a Dominion license, it did not commence doing a direct business throughout the Canadian field until recently. The management of the company from Quebec West is in the hands of Mr. T. L. Morrissey.

Mr. C. A. Kennedy, formerly of the Bank of Nova Scotia, has opened an office as broker and bond dealer in the Merchants' Bank building, Toronto.