

CANADIAN FIRE RECORD

Specially compiled by The Chronicle.

FIRE AT GUELPH, ONT.

On the 27th January, a fire occurred in the dry goods store of C. B. Ryan & Co., at Guelph, causing a total loss. Insurance stated to be as follows:—Hand-in-Hand, \$5,000; Queen City, \$5,500; Hartford, \$5,000; Wellington, \$2,500; Gore, \$5,000; Queen, \$5,000; Liverpool & London & Globe, \$2,500; Western, \$2,500; North Brit. & Mercantile, \$5,000; Phoenix of London, \$5,000; Merchants, \$2,000; Scottish Union, \$6,500; General, \$2,000; North Western National, \$2,500; National-Ben Franklin, \$1,500; Norwich Union, \$4,500; Liverpool-Manitoba, \$2,500; London Assurance, \$5,000; Aetna, \$4,000; Guardian, \$8,000; Waterloo, \$4,000; Economical, \$2,000; Sun, \$2,500. Total, \$90,000. Loss, total. Adjoining stores suffered smoke and water damage.

FIRE AT PETERBORO, ONT.

On the 27th instant, a fire broke out in Mr. R. Neill's boot and shoe store at Peterboro, causing a total loss. The following is a partial list of insurance:—Phoenix of London, \$87,000; Nationale, \$2,500; Norwich Union, \$2,500; Hand-in-Hand, \$5,000; Wellington, \$1,000; Guardian, \$5,000; Alliance, \$5,000; Mount Royal, \$2,500; Law Union, \$1,000; Ocean, \$20,000; Sun, \$2,500; Queen City, \$1,000; Perth Mutual, \$2,500; Western, \$5,000; London Mutual, \$2,500; Dominion, \$2,500; Aetna, \$2,500. Total, \$150,000. In addition to the Neill loss the fire spread to the adjoining building, the Royal Theatre, the Matthews-Blackwell store, the Dominion Bank and the Masonic Hall, all of which were damaged.

FIRE AT JOLIETTE, P.Q.

On the 24th instant, a fire broke out in the St. Viateur School, Joliette, causing an insurance loss of \$52,500. Insurance as follows:—British America, \$10,000; Sun, \$7,000; Law Union & Rock, \$4,000; Norwich Union, \$2,000; Atlas, \$3,000; North Brit. & Mercantile, \$6,000; Guardian, \$1,800; Commercial Union, \$6,900; London & Lancashire, \$7,000; Alliance, \$7,000; Queen, \$5,000; Royal, \$4,000; Union of Paris, \$4,000; Liverpool & London & Globe, \$5,000. Total, \$72,700. Loss, \$52,500.

TORONTO.—Bookstore of John Britnell & Son, 880 Yonge Street, damaged, January 28. Loss to contents estimated at \$8,000; to building, \$1,000. Origin, overheated furnace.

PARRY SOUND, ONT.—Boarding house on Bay Street occupied by F. Roy, and owned by I. Ullman, damaged, January 28. Origin, defective pipe or chimney.

MONTREAL.—Home of S. Martinuk, 297 Principal Street, St. Laurent, destroyed. Four lives lost.

Grocery store of Jos. Bonenfant, Church Avenue and Claude Street, Verdun, damaged, January 28. Origin, thawing water pipes.

LETHBRIDGE, ALTA.—Harris garage at Nobleford, destroyed with fourteen automobiles, January 27.

MOOSE JAW, SASK.—W. W. Shaw candy factory, destroyed, January 29. Loss estimated at \$15,000.

Hillcrest School, a frame structure, destroyed, January 29. Loss, \$4,000.

FORD, ONT.—Home of F. Priestman, Ottawa Street, destroyed, January 23. Two lives lost.

PICTON, ONT.—Picton hotel, and row of frame dwellings, destroyed, January 28. Loss, \$10,000.

COAL SHORTAGE AND FIRE RISKS.

As a result of the restricted supply of coal in various localities, the fire companies are being faced with a considerable increase in hazard, without any additional compensation, and it is necessary that inspectors, field men and agents should be on the *qui vive*, in order both to safeguard the interests of the companies, and by practical suggestion for methods of dealing with coal substitutes, to minimise the waste of wealth to the community through fires. An American inspector of much experience, states in a discussion of this matter, that necessity in the matter of heat is a breeder of carelessness and indifference which knows no limit. In the poorer classes of dwellings, for example, it is quite common to find fuel wood piled under, back of and close to the sides of stoves. In many cases the draft doors of the stoves are kept open, and when pieces of wood are too large to be received inside of the fire box, one end is left protruding through the open lid, emitting sparks and flame into the room.

This wood is largely waste material consisting of old lumber, broken cases, barrels and boxes picked up or collected where possible. As a cellulose, wood has strong absorbing tendency and is quite likely to be charged with highly inflammable and even explosive secretions which it may have absorbed from the material with which it has previously been in contact. Where hot air furnaces, steam and hot water heaters are in use they have been found surrounded by carelessly piled wood in contact with smoke pipes. Recently a roaring wood fire was in progress in an ordinary large size ash can over a wood floor in a large, crowded loft building, closely exposing flimsy, highly inflammable materials. Smaller cans and metal pails are frequently used as stoves where no provision has been made for heating during intensely cold weather.

OIL AND GAS HEATERS.

In modern steam-heated apartment houses the tenants are prone to raise an unsatisfactory temperature by the use of portable oil and gas heaters, both of which are very dangerous when not properly handled or installed. Many such heaters have been found in use dangerously close to curtains, tapestry, woodwork and other inflammable material. The severe dangers in such cases are obvious, especially as the heaters are almost certain to be left burning without an attendant.

As regards the use of wood as a coal substitute its dangers can hardly be overestimated. Its fuel value is equal to about half of that of coal. As it is much lighter than coal and double the amount is required to give an equal amount of heat, an infinitely greater amount of fuel must be handled. On the other hand, wood by nature is far more inflammable than coal, burning with an expanding flame which often extends several feet from the seat of the fire, while the flame of coal is usually quite the reverse. Therefore, with the wood fuel in use, smoke pipes quickly become heated to an intensely dangerous degree, presenting hazards in this respect infinitely greater than those incurred by the use of coal fuel. It is because of this fact that coal heaters in many instances are not proper or safe for wood.

AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS.

Another factor of grave importance to the fire
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