REVIEW OF THE MONTH

CANADA'S JANUARY FIRE LOSSES.

New Year Starts Badly for the Insurance Companies—Many Conflagration Fatalities.

More than one and a half million dollars represents the fire losses in Canada during the month just closed. The insurance on burned property was widely distributed, the Canadian, British, and the United States companies all bearing a part of the burden.

The following are among the fires of the month in which the loss was $50,000 and over:—

Brandon, Man.—Codville & Company's warehouse, $75,000.

St. Timothee, Que.—Roman Catholic church, $85,000; insurance, $35,000.

Port Essington, B.C.—Property to the value of about $100,000.

Wetaskiwin, Alta.—P. Burns & Company's block, $70,000.

Warman, Sask.—Business section of town, $50,000; insurance, about one-third.

Lancaster, N.B.—Provincial Hospital, $60,000; insurance, $49,000.

Calgary, Alta.—Western Milling Company's elevator, $80,000; fully covered.

Vancouver.—D. A. Smith Furniture Company's premises and stock, $100,000.

London, Ont.—Globe Casket Company's factory, $200,000; insurance, $78,105.

Gananoque, Ont.—Turner block and Grand Opera House, $100,000; partially covered.

Emerson, Man.—Alexandra block, $100,000; partially covered.

Sixteen Fatalities in Thirty-one Days.

An unfortunate feature of the Canadian fire story for January is the comparatively large loss of life sustained in small fires. At least sixteen persons thus met their death. Two fires accounted for nine fatalities. These are the details:—

City or Town.	Lives Lost.
Lang, Sask.	5
Lynden, Ont.	4
Montreal, Que.	3
Ottawa, Ont.	2
Quebec, Que.	1
Lavallee, Ont.	1
Total	16

During the month, five fire inquests were held at the following points:—

City or Town.	Particulars.	Verdict.
Ottawa	Two deaths	Accidental.
Quebec	Three deaths	Accidental.
Montreal	Three deaths	Accidental.
Brandon	Codville Co.'s fire: Cause a mystery	Not concluded.
Hamilton	Four deaths; Lynden, Ont. fire.	Theory of foul play not entertained.

Supposed Burglar-Incendiary.

The Turner Block at Gananoque, Ont., was destroyed on the last day of January and damage caused to the extent of over $100,000. Shortly after the fire it was discovered that the jewelry store of W. Abbott has been burglarized, and it is believed that the burglars after robbing the store set fire to it to hide their crime. Reginald Lewis was arrested at Kingston on Monday on suspicion of being implicated in this matter. He confessed to the crime, but later claimed his story was incorrect.

At Emerson, Man., a three hours' raging fire wiped out a large amount of property. The blaze started in the north end of the Alexandra block in a store occupied by the Hereles Brothers who had been conducting a bankrupt stock sale there. Their stock was covered by insurance of $8,000. The owners stated the fire started through a stove in their storeroom being knocked over. The business section was swept away and the total losses were about $100,000. It is thought there are well defined suspicions of incendiarism. At noon last Saturday the elder member of the firm was arrested together with his assistant.

Arson in Alberta Province.

A sensational arson trial is proceeding at High River, Alta., M. Driscoll and his son, F. Driscoll, have been committed for trial on a charge of setting fire to a house and barn of a neighbor named Demers. When the fire was discovered a box full of inflammable material was found in the coal shed, to which a burning fuse had been attached and which had burned down almost to the explosive point.

The Fire Department officials of New Liskeard, Ont., have asked for an investigation of the circumstances connected with the recent fire at Mr. Geo. Taylor's residence. There is evidence to show that the water was not turned on in the main on the Haileybury road when the fire broke out. It is claimed that the hydrant was not frozen as has been stated, but that a man had to run to the shut-off valve at the corner of Whitewood Avenue and the Haileybury road and from there all the way to the pump-house and back to get a key.

Altogether, January has given the Dominion a lurid and expensive fire story.

ANNUAL MEETINGS LAST MONTH.

Among the companies and institutions which held their annual meetings in Canada last month were: London and Port Stanley Railway, Montreal Transportation, Bank of Hamilton, Bank of New Brunswick, National Life Insurance, Rothschild Cobalt Co., Union Cold Storage Co., United Empire Bank, Farmers Bank, Toledo Railway and Light Co., Montreal Lumber Company, Guarantee Co. of N. A., Dominion Oil Cloth Co., Toronto Savings and Loan, Denison Mining Co., Shawinigan W. & P. Co., Robertson Asbestos Mining, Hamilton, Grimsby and Beamsville Railway, Canada Starch Co., Traders Bank, Metropolitan Bank, Twin City Rapid Transit, Provincial Bank, Bank of Nova Scotia, Floyd Silver Mines, Dominion Bank, Walkerton Binder Twine Co., Sovereign Life Association, Royal Bank, North American Life Co., E. W. Gillett Co., Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation, Singennes-McNaughton, Limited, London Mutual Fire, Bruce Mutual Fire Co., Nepigon Mining Lands.

JANUARY DEBENTURE AWARDS.

Nearly Four Millions Sold During the Month—Brisk Bidding—Banks and Insurance Companies Make Offers.

Generally speaking, Canadian municipalities started the year in good shape. Their overdrafts at the bank—those who had them—were not excessive, and their credit was, as a rule, high. Considering the large sums of money that will be required during the present year for local improvements and other purposes this is a matter for congratulation. The bond business was rather unusually quiet during the last few weeks of 1908, few issues were offering, and many brokers found themselves practically cleared out. With the turn of the new year, matters became appreciably more active, and some large blocks of debentures were put on the market. In all, nearly five million dollars' worth of debentures were sold in January. This is a large figure for the first month of the year, but it must be remembered that two millions of it represents the Alberta Government loan floated in England.

Bidding for the large issues was spirited. In several instances exactly a dozen bids were received. In addition to the bond firms, both banks and insurance companies tendered for various issues. In the case of the Calgary $754,000 issue, two bids were received from London, England. The previous large issue of Calgary bonds amounting to $743,000 brought about eight points less than the issue floated last month. Only two years ago, Calgary disposed of some of its bonds at more than ten points below the figure obtained for the present issue.

Twelve bids were received for the city of Ottawa $966,940 4 per cent. bonds. These included, in addition to bids from the Canadian houses, bids from New York and Boston firms.

The tenders in many cases were close, the successful bid often being only very slightly higher than the proverbial next best.