

The White Spruce (*Picea canadensis*), formerly *P. alba*, makes a fine ornamental tree, but, unfortunately, it has, in recent years, been badly affected with the Spruce Gall louse, which disfigures it very much. While young, or up to perhaps thirty years, the Norway Spruce (*Picea excelsa*), is one of the most attractive evergreens, and is a very rapid grower, but it gets ragged looking as it grows older.

THE FIRE AND THE MUSEUM AT OTTAWA.

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The Museum of the Geological Survey, Ottawa, is to Canada practically what the National Museum is to the United States and the British Museum to the United Kingdom. This museum has been greatly affected by the fire which, beginning about 9 p.m., February 3, 1916, destroyed the Dominion Parliament building, and caused the loss of several lives. Before 2 a.m., February 4, while the flames were still spreading, a member of the Cabinet was considering the use of the large auditorium in the Victoria Memorial Museum building as possibly a suitable place for the meetings of the House of Commons, and members of the Geological Survey were holding themselves in readiness to clear any of the other space necessary.

The Geological Survey occupied practically all the building except the three and a half floors in the east wing and an office which was used by the National Gallery. Each hall and wing is practically one hundred and twenty feet long by sixty feet wide.

About ten a.m., February 4th, the morning of the fire, the Survey staff was informed of the intended use of the building as a temporary home for the Dominion Parliament. The large auditorium with its gallery, which was only partially furnished and had been but little used for lectures, was immediately released from museum uses, and prepared by the Department of Public Works, so that the House of Commons was enabled to begin its session at 3 p.m, or in less than twenty hours after its deliberations had been disturbed by the fire. The throne used by the Governor-General in the privy council room, which was rescued from the fire, served for the Speaker of the House of Commons. A press gallery was built back of the Speaker.

The west hall was occupied by the tentative exhibit of minerals. This exhibit was packed and removed in six hours, or by 4 p.m., Friday, which was less than twenty hours after the fire began. The costly cases in which these minerals were exhibited had meanwhile been taken apart and placed in storage. Rooms for the members of the Senate were made here.

The west wing, which was being prepared for geological and mineralogical exhibits, was cleared before Monday noon. The Senate met at 8 p.m. on Tuesday in this new chamber, which had been vacated by the museum within seventy-five hours after it became known that the Senate would meet in the museum.

The east hall, with invertebrate palaeontological exhibits, similar in size to the other exhibition halls, contained thousands of small and delicate specimens. These were all carefully wrapped, packed and taken away. Forty hours after the beginning of the fire, all the museum specimens and cases had been moved from this part of the building, which was made into offices for the members of the House of Commons.

Of the east wing, containing tentative vertebrate palaeontological exhibits, three-quarters were cleared, and these exhibits were stored, with those of the other quarters, along the walls of the southern half of the hall. This clearing involved not only the moving of small exhibits in cases, but also of such heavy fragile specimens as the titanotherium and the skulls of dinosaurs and mammoths, yet it was all done within two hours after this notification, that is by noon, or in less than twenty hours from the time that the fire broke out.

The ethnological specimens were taken out of the tower hall, which was then fitted up and used before Friday noon as a newspaper library corresponding to the one where the fire originated.

Before noon, that is within less than two hours after notice, the tentative exhibit of Canadian archaeology, in seventeen cases, covering three-quarters of the west hall, was cleared of specimens and cases, while the tables upon which the cases stood were left for the use of the members of parliament. The specimens were transferred to sixty-eight trays and stored in the archaeological laboratory in the basement. Meanwhile the remaining quarter of the hall had been cleared of a tentative exhibit of entomology in four cases. In this hall a place for the press gallery staff to work, various offices for members of the Senate, and offices for the Hansard staff, which records the deliberations of the House, were made ready before Monday noon.

The exhibits in the permanent anthropological hall were left intact. Besides the exhibits the archaeological specimens in storage under the exhibition cases were also undisturbed. The ethnological exhibits which are of specimens from the Eskimo, the Indians of the north-west coast of America, and the Algonquian and Iroquoian Indians of the eastern woodlands, were undisturbed. The aisles in this hall, however, were used for storing furnishings and specimens from various other departments, and for office space for the ethnologists.

The zoological hall, similar in size to the others, was cleared by Sunday noon. This necessitated the taking apart of splendid large group cases, and the dismantling of groups of seals, mountain goat, mountain sheep, musk oxen, and various other exhibits, and the removal to storage in the aisles of the anthropological hall cases, containing exhibits of mammals, birds and reptiles. The space was divided into offices for the members of the House of Commons.

The offices on the second floor were promptly vacated with the exception of two, that of the curator and mineralogist and that of the vertebrate palaeontologist. The invertebrate palaeontological offices were moved to the third floor. The archaeological office was moved to smaller space in the entomological laboratory on the third floor, all specimens being taken to the laboratory. The known loss to archaeological specimens caused by the move from both office and tentative exhibition is negligible, the damage being less than one dollar. Work on monographs will be hampered for lack of space to spread out the material for study, but every specimen is still available, on permanent exhibition, in storage under the exhibits, or in the laboratory, where aisles allowing for the free passage of trays are maintained, though the storage reaches the ceiling in most of the remaining space. The ethnological office was moved into the south end of the anthropological exhibition hall, and the botanical office was moved into the botanical herbarium on the third floor. The library was not disturbed. The vacated rooms were at once occupied, chiefly by the Cabinet and other members of the House of Commons.

The offices, drafting room, workshops, and storage on the third floor, were mostly retained, but the little lecture hall was released. The lectures in course were postponed indefinitely. The zoological study material and the herbarium were undisturbed. The physical anthropological office was concentrated into about half its former space, and an ethnological storage room was vacated.

In the basement the workshops and laboratories were mostly

retained, as were the taxidermist department, the laboratory of vertebrate palaeontology, the photographic department, and half a hall devoted to the workshop of the National Gallery. Some work rooms were vacated, however, and the distribution offices, with their vast store of publications and maps, were moved to another part of the city.

Of about a hundred and forty members of the Survey staff, over seventy moved about a mile to a series of buildings recently taken over by the Government on the north side of Wellington Street, between Bank and Kent streets, while some sixty of those most intimately connected with museum work retained room in the Victoria Memorial Museum building. In this work of moving, militia motor lorries were pressed into service, as well as sleighs and other transports, and the office furnishings and working specimens went out at the rate of sixty loads in one day.

His Royal Highness, the Governor-General, inspected the House of Commons and the other parts of the Victoria Memorial Museum building turned over for the use of Parliament, at eleven a.m. on Monday, less than eighty-seven hours after the fire began, or less than seventy-four hours after the museum authorities were notified of need for the space.

The Museum retains intact only one and a quarter of the exhibition halls, namely, the anthropological hall and part of the hall of vertebrate palaeontology.

A sample museum, by means of which to advance museum interests in the Dominion, has been begun in the anthropological hall. The archaeological and ethnological exhibits are intact, some of the best zoological exhibition cases of birds, reptiles and insects, have been placed in the wider aisles where they may be viewed; while mounted mammals and skeletons of various animals have also been placed in the aisles and on top of the cases.

On the whole, the scientific work of the museum may go on practically unhampered. The lecture work is being carried on in other auditoriums. The exhibitions eventually may be facilitated by the present apparent set back, as the museum staff is undiscouraged, and the members of parliament, who are now in daily proximity to the exhibits, and constantly meeting museum workers, may become so interested that they will provide future facilities for museum work in the Victoria Memorial Museum building, or in a building even better adapted for museum purposes. Besides this they may carry home to all parts of the Dominion inspiration to establish useful museums and to improve those already in existence.



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