

FIRE DESTROYS BIG IRON WORKS

**Toronto Plant Where Aliens
Were Employed is Razed by
Mysterious Fire—Dam-
age is \$250,000.**

TORONTO, Dec. 7.—Fire which originated in the pattern shop of the Polson Iron Works, on the Toronto waterfront, at 6:15 o'clock last night completely destroyed this building, a number of smaller sheds and badly damaged a large freighter and a trawler, the total damage being estimated by the president of the concern, Col. J. B. Miller, at about \$250,000 or \$300,000. The loss is covered by insurance.

How the fire occurred is a mystery, but a significant statement was made by Wm. Newman, the manager, when asked about the number of aliens employed at the plant and whether they might be responsible.

"I don't know," he replied, "but remember we are at war."

Three large ocean freighters of 3500 to 4000 tons displacement are under construction, as well as two trawlers. Two of the freighters were "overboard" but the other was on the "ways" and was so badly damaged that its launching will be retarded for some weeks. The trawlers were saved.

The pattern shop is on the immediate waterfront, a considerable distance from the thoroughfare adjoining the entrance so that the firemen were badly hampered in their work by the maze of machine sheds through which the hose had to be laid.

Men of all-nationalities are em-

ployed as laborers at the works, but as far as could be ascertained no real suspicion is entertained against any of the men.

Col. Miller stated that work would be resumed almost immediately.