

adequate and efficient protection for life and property, and those who have the welfare of their city at heart will never object to investigating any complaints of the character made by the underwriters of Quebec risks. Improvements in fire-fighting apparatus should be inaugurated without delay.

Marine Insurance.

The letter read at the Board of Trade on Wednesday last from English ship-owners, regarding the marine insurance charges on vessels bound for ports in the St. Lawrence, is self-explanatory and forcible. That the subject will receive the very serious consideration of the committee of the council, to whom the matter has been referred, goes without saying. We cannot help thinking that some reasonable concession to the companies on the part of shipowners who permit their captains to navigate the Straits of Belle Isle might prove a road to some satisfactory readjustment of the present rates. However, the question is one of so much importance to Montreal that everything possible must be done to ensure fair treatment from the marine underwriters for ships trading in B. N. A. waters. Nothing but the most exhaustive enquiry into the matter will satisfy those having the interests of the port at heart.

It ought to be possible to obtain at a meeting of shipowners, captains and marine underwriters a fair idea of the apparently unjust discrimination in favour of the United States Atlantic ports. At all events, we may gather from a conference of interested parties valuable opinions as to the causes leading to the high rates now prevailing. Are the dangers of navigating northern waters increasing, or is it claimed that the ship-captains of to-day are less cautious and skillful than the old-time skippers?

What did he mean?

The husband of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts is not securing much supporting evidence from returning soldiers for his charges of neglect of the wounded in South Africa. A contingent of invalided colonials recently invited to Windsor Castle were permitted to say what they pleased regarding the hospital accommodation. Most of them bore testimony to the care and attention which they received in hospital, and one trooper is reported to have raised a laugh by declaring that the treatment he had met with in hospital was superb, and much better than that at the front.

Possibly some benevolent, kind-hearted member of the British parliament will now ask for a Special Commission to enquire into the treatment of our soldiers at the front, unless it should be found that this colonial soldier was merely manifesting his dislike to being shot at by the Boers. He felt safer in the hospital.

INCREASE IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE IN 32 YEARS.

The more intelligent class of business men, more especially those whose operations are chiefly of a financial character, regard any monetary statement which is presented in general terms as most unsatisfactory. The late president of the Bank of Commerce when visiting a branch noticed an item charged "Sundries, 6 cents." He requested the manager to amend the entry by stating the particulars of this expenditure. That was somewhat finical, but the principle is sound that accounts ought not to be generalized, except in statements that are expressly arranged, in a condensed form to give a general view of such accounts. A large part of the time occupied in Parliament and on platforms, and the space taken up in newspapers by discussions relating to the public expenditure of the Dominion would be entirely saved or at least more profitably spent, were members of the House of Commons and journalists to stop generalizing and engage in an enquiry into the details of the items summarized in the public accounts. The work is tedious; no doubt, it does not afford opportunities for rhetorical display, but the country would not suffer by the supply of eloquence being shortened and by more attention being given to details in criticising the public expenditure. We propose to show that, all along the line of the public service since Confederation, the outlays for maintaining the several departments controlled by the government of the day have been steadily rising. In order to avoid even the appearance of political partizanship, we have divided the 32 years from 1868 to 1899 into equal periods of 8 years each. These sections embrace part of the terms of several administrations; every one of them had made a loud demand for "economy and retrenchment," or promises to carry out such policy if placed in power. We have included in the exhibit only the leading departmental expenditures, or those exhibiting the largest increases in the eight year periods. The table only embraces those outlays which were made out of Consolidated Fund, that is, out of the annual revenue from taxes and miscellaneous sources of annual income.

INCREASE IN DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES.

	1892	1884	1876	1868
Public Service.	to	to	to	to
	1899.	1891.	1883.	1875.
Int. on Public debt..	\$1,091,133	\$1,884,100	\$1,267,600	\$1,989,200
Justice.....	64,720	111,540	71,480	206,160
Agriculture.....	102,720	119,870	d 42,822	5,350
Civil Government...	86,720	249,780	144,726	d 304,886
Fisheries.....	27,750	87,502	60,790	36,010
Immigration.....	78,274	d 330,153	35,800	252,720
Indians.....	d 8,046	d 128,618	830,636	195,500
Legislation.....	d 410,522	d 66,720	113,538	d 12,463
Mail subsidies.....	310,850	83,060	d 24,088	110,300
Militia.....	d 154,017	290,013	d 244,780
Prisons.....	72,411	56,162	d 26,600	128,220
Public Works.....	220,400	433,110	1,314,160	3,143,760
Customs.....	132,835	101,654	36,237	205,173
Excise.....	64,570	74,619	60,550	120,213
Post Office.....	287,680	848,610	453,152	904,061
Total increase in each period of all depts..	\$5,137,606	5,235,861	14,241,785	\$10,226,978