

was enhanced between 1900 and 1905 by 65.7 per cent. while the purchase of foreign goods was only increased by 38.1 per cent., and the taxation revenue was enlarged by only 39.4 per cent. against an increase in tax-paying capacity by 65.7 per cent. These comparisons are not favourable either to the theory that the people of Canada in recent years have been buying foreign goods to an extravagant, an imprudent extent, or the theory that, the taxation revenue has enlarged out of proportion to the resources of the people.

So far as the debt of Canada is concerned its annual cost is too insignificant to be considered as a "burden," the amount being only \$1.53 per head of population, or \$3.69 for about each \$1 of annual revenue, as compared with the Commonwealth of Australia debt of \$7.81 for each \$1 of annual revenue, New Zealand \$3.07, Cape of Good Hope \$3.12, United States, \$3.31, France \$8.52. The aggregate debt of the Dominion, including the debts of the provinces, amounts to \$305,358,000, for which assets can be shown of at least equal value.

The financial position of this Dominion is one of very great and yearly increasing strength. Canada is the land of the future. All the present indications point to such a development of population and resources as must eventuate in Canada becoming a powerful nation, second only in importance in the British Empire to the mother country.

THE HAZARD IN FIRE INSURANCE.

No. IV.

In resuming this subject we will take up the matter of retail stores, about which the public generally have very little knowledge. We may start by saying that the same rules apply to these risks primarily as to wholesale stores, viz., exposure, construction, area, height, heating and lighting, all of which are calculated by the same methods, but there are some special features appertaining to retail stores as opposed to wholesale, which we will now proceed to consider.

Take for example the dry goods class, and it is evident that the hazard as regards contents is very much greater in the building where the goods are all or nearly so, exposed loose and hanging for inspection and sale, than where such merchandise is for the most part in original packages or with a few samples on a counter during the day time. Again, what in our last article we condemned respecting ornamental finish in a wholesale establish-

ment, may be admitted as necessary in a business where display, for the attraction of customers, is one of the baits held out to induce a sale. The same may be said as regards other retail stores such as hardware, groceries, jewellery, and so forth. Loose goods strewn round or suspended in festoons from brackets or in windows form damageable contents in case of fire, the injury from smoke alone being often very considerable. In a retail store, plenty of light, natural or artificial, is so necessary that large establishments, have not only to be fitted with large glass fronts on the street (to be well illuminated after dark) but skylights with a wellhole in the centre are often required to show the goods to the best advantage. Thus it follows that the more extensive the building (apart from the area question) the greater the hazard from a fire point of view. A small retail store with a dwelling over having four or five employees is palpably a very much less risk physically, than a large establishment with fifty to a hundred hands with a vast expanse of glass in wood or iron frames open in the middle to a skylighted roof with no one living above whose life is at stake should a fire occur in the night. We now come to a still more hazardous risk of the class, which has arisen and grown rapidly of late years. We allude to the departmental stores which present all the worst features of the large retail stores combined with multiform occupancy, such as dry goods, groceries, crockery, furniture and the like, sometimes adding painting, upholstering and repairing. So well has this risk come to be reckoned by the experience of underwriters that the rates charged are as great as for special hazards unless counteracted by the only method for a reduction of those rates. This reduction can be brought about solely by the building being fully equipped by automatic sprinklers and as nearly as possible of what is called mill construction, for from what we have written on these large retail stores it is out of the question to make them of fire proof construction, the finish, open wellholes, and the nature of their contents, forbidding such, and it is well known that iron pillars or beams unprotected are a source of great danger in a hot fire snapping or twisting from the heat and wrecking the building, as was a notable case some years ago in Toronto, whereas a solid wooden beam or column will withstand a fierce fire for hours. Private appliances such as a standpipe from the city main with hose and nozzle on each floor and casks and pails or approved fire extinguishers are likewise considered in the rate, being of material use if a fire is discovered at the outset.

We have thus endeavoured to enlighten our readers as to some of the main features in connection with the hazard of retail stores, which has taken up so much space that we are compelled to defer the consideration of the factory hazard for another issue.