

city has money enough at its disposal to satisfy the underwriters." Again, with respect to the expected grant of \$50,000 (it ought to be \$100,000), to buy fire apparatus, we find Mr. Alderman Ekers contending that "the insurance men should be questioned whether this outlay would satisfy them or not." Has no one the public-spirited pluck to stand up and say, without reservation, to the people of that rich city: "More engines are needed. More hose is needed. Improvements in men, in methods, in appliances, are needed, before the conflagration hazard can be reduced." One would think, from the appeals made *ad misericordiam* by the city authorities, that the fire underwriters were a set of ogres, determined to have the very flesh of business men, instead of dealers in indemnity, seeking merely the reasonable rates of premium that will suffice to cover their heavy losses.

It is a mistaken attitude for aldermen to take, that of insisting upon an undertaking from the underwriters to reduce the rates of fire premium if so-and-so is done by the city, instead of first taking the precautions that dire experience has shown to be necessary for safety, and then demanding a reduction in rates of fire insurance. The Montreal city council appear to be unable to rise to the situation of to-day. The conditions of 1872 or even 1882 are not those of 1902. An extended area, higher buildings, greater traffic, electric traction, lighting wires, telephone wires, street car wires, increased risks of all kinds—such are among the surroundings in a first-class, modern commercial city. The arrangements for fighting fires in Montreal have not kept pace with these developments. The fire department, no more than other departments of civic administration, can successfully conduct a city business on a village basis. And yet this is what a short-sighted faction in Montreal is attempting to do, to the indignation of sensible people and to the peril of a whole community.

THE APPLE TRADE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

The annual meeting of the King's county board of trade was held in Kentville, N.S., on the 11th inst. As might be expected in such a famous apple-growing section as this, the chief topic for discussion was that of fruit, and how to make the most of it. Some of the transportation companies came in for severe criticism for the manner in which fruit was shipped, and it was suggested that subsidies should be withheld by the Government pending an improvement in ventilation, etc. A resolution was moved contending that the freight classification of apples on railroads should be altered from 3rd to 5th class, and made similar to that of flour. It was claimed by one speaker that apples sent by rail 1,200 miles to Montreal, and thence shipped to Great Britain, often arrived in the latter country in better condition than when shipped directly from Halifax. The remedy was either speedier vessels or cold storage, and probably the latter was the most practical. A resolution was unanimously adopted to the effect that, as King's county was, for horticultural development, probably unequalled on this continent, the proposed college of agriculture and horticulture for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick should be established somewhere within the borders of that county. The desirability was pointed out of having an inspector in Halifax to overlook the handling of fruit. Altogether, the board's meeting is likely to result in considerable good to one of Canada's most promising industries.

The election of officers resulted as follows: President, Mr. P. Innes; vice-president, Mr. A. S. McDonald; secretary-treasurer, Mr. L. S. Eaton.

WASTE OF WATER.

The enormous waste of water which constantly goes on in many of our cities is an important consideration. Last year the deficit in the Toronto Water Department was \$94,000, and it was, we believe, mainly due to this cause. A good deal of the waste is no doubt owing to leakage from the inferior taps which are in such common use in dwellings. It has been suggested that legislation should be enacted to require taps to be tested and stamped. At the present time there are in the houses of any large city thousands of taps which after being in use a short time, become loose and allow water to run day and night. This is more serious than it might appear, because such an incessant dripping means reduced pressure on hydrants, thus increasing the danger to the community in case of fire. Another means which might be taken is the adoption of water meters, as is already the case in Cleveland, and some other cities. Citizens are much more careful in their valuation of an article for which they have to pay pro rata.

THE WINNIPEG EXHIBITION.

A friend has sent us the annual report of the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition Association. The figures of income and expenditure are instructive, showing to how remarkable lengths this western fair has grown in eleven years. Receipts for 1901 were \$64,202; of which \$15,500 was granted by the city and the Manitoba Government; \$26,343 was taken for admissions; entry fees, booths and advertising brought in \$9,940; subscriptions to prize list, \$1,713. There was expended for prizes, \$15,378; for printing and advertising, \$7,440, showing that the management has learned the value of publicity so achieved; and \$7,308 in maintenance and permanent improvements. The "attractions," by way of elephants, vaudeville, fireworks and bands, cost \$13,280. The ground and buildings are put down in the balance sheet at \$104,476, and are owned by the city of Winnipeg. Respecting these the report says: "The main building is anything but creditable, and a determined effort must be made to entirely change the character of the exhibits in this building. They should be made representative of the manufacturing industries of the west." The directors appeal to Winnipeg and the people of the west for more resources, to make the Fair what it should continue to be, in harmony with the growth of the province. "The difficulty of giving a dollar's worth for fifty cents is a position that cannot be long maintained," says the president, "and the general public or those of them who believe the exhibition to be a good thing, must take a greater interest in its work and responsibilities." The idea of increasing the admittance price, or of grading prices, is broached. This may be necessary, but it is a dangerous experiment, as the people found who launched a big exhibition, and lost a big lot of money, at Detroit a few years ago.

AGRICULTURAL SAVINGS & LOAN COMPANY.

Some increase of business is shown by this company. It had more money to lend, deposits being \$25,000 greater, and currency debentures \$64,000 greater, while there was a slight decrease in Old Country borrowings, a feature which characterizes several other loan company reports. Its net mortgages are now \$2,212,000. The year's gross earnings were very satisfactory, being \$118,750 in interest and \$2,021 in rents. Net, they were \$51,888. This enabled the putting of \$15,000 to reserve and carrying more than \$3,000 forward after paying dividend and income tax. The report states that funds have been kept well invested during the year, and this is evidenced by the results in profit. By reason of the lamented death of Mr. Regan, who had been thirty years connected with the company, for seven of them as its president, a new director had to be added to the board, Mr. Masuret was the gentleman chosen, a well known London merchant.