that at the present time the Union of Canada is making considerable and desirable progress. The extension of operations has naturally called for an increase in capital, and during the year, the amount of capital paid up has been raised to $4,000,000—the full amount of capital authorized at present. In order that the Bank may continue to extend its operations and take its share in the development of the country, the directors have taken action similar to that which has been lately taken by other banks, and obtained from the shareholders at the annual meeting authority to make the necessary arrangements to increase the Bank's capital by $4,000,000, making the authorized capital $8,000,000 in all.

That the shareholders are satisfied with the results achieved, is evidenced by the readiness with which this request was granted. In this respect the Union of Canada is moving along lines approved by the experience of other leading Canadian banks, and lines, which in our view, as we mentioned last week, afford the most satisfactory means for the provision of additional capital required in the course of the expansion of the country for banking purposes. The fact that the directors have increased the dividend to 8 p.c. per annum this last quarter is an indication that in their opinion, both the position of the Bank and the outlook of the country are satisfactory, and the figures submitted in the general statement bear out this view in regard to the Bank's standing. The Bank's assets now stand at $47,455,827 of which $14,985,269 come under the heading of readily available assets. Deposits aggregate $37,409,681, $14,762,232 being non-interest bearing deposits and $22,647,449 interest bearing deposits. Call and short loans on stocks and bonds aggregate $5,147,552, and current loans and discounts, $30,415,915.

The Bank's directors for the ensuing year elected at the meeting are Hon. John Sharples, Messrs. William Price, M.P., E. J. Hale, William Shaw, George H. Thompson, R. T. Riley, E. L. Drewry, F. E. Kenaston, John Galt, W. R. Allan and M. Bull, the Hon. John Sharples having subsequently been re-elected president, and Mr. William Price, M.P., vice-president. Mr. G. H. Balfour continues as the Bank's able general manager, the Bank's Montreal interests being in the capable hands of Mr. A. S. Jarvis at 232 St. James Street.

AN APPRECIATION OF FIRE ORGANIZATIONS.

In refreshing contrast to the vaporous statements, which are constantly being made by persons ignorant of or ill-informed on insurance matters, with regard to "tariff rings," "illegal combines" and the like is that made by Mr. George W. Hays, chairman of the New York Credit Men's Association, a big organization with 11,000 members, representing 298 different lines of business in Greater New York. Mr. Hays was discussing the other day *inter alia* the subject of the investigation into the methods of the New York Fire Insurance Exchange and this is what he said:—

"As a matter of fact the New York Board of Fire Underwriters does most excellent work in the city of New York—constantly looking into the matter of "unsafe" conditions, and explaining how they can be corrected, substituting excellent devices, such as approved fire doors, instead of the old fashioned iron door which buckles and does not hold the fire in check, etc. The New York Fire Insurance Exchange aims to make rates upon an equitable basis under scientific schedules, conditions of which are known in advance, so that merchants, manufacturers and others interested can construct buildings, knowing in advance what rates will be secured if they conform to the consistent requirements of the Exchange. Whatever real or unjust complaint may be made against the Exchange, it cannot be denied that they are doing business upon a most sensible and businesslike plan of operations. Another thing which has not been touched upon in the investigation is that the subject of "graft" and dishonest practices in connection with the work of these two Associations is always stamped out promptly and is almost an unknown quantity. Both associations, the New York Board of Fire Underwriters and the New York Fire Insurance Exchange, make a prerequisite of absolute integrity of all employes who make inspections or have work to do, and this feature is managed in a way that commands the admiration of all who know anything about the matter. Under present conditions if fire pails are not properly installed they are not credited in the rate. If the automatic alarm, automatic sprinklers, or other automatic service does not stand critical test, it is not approved, and the method of rating has been gone into with such care that there are several hundred classifications of property with burning hazards estimated by actual experience to the extent that reliable data was available, rates being made in accordance with the hazard as found."

A statement of this kind made by a responsible business man, who knows what he is talking about, should carry weight with many who have been given false ideas of the work of insurance organisations by the ebullitions of those who know little or nothing of the part played by organized underwriters in the improvement of fire risks.

Affairs in London.

(*Exclusive Correspondence of The Chronicle*).

Business and Politics—The Monetary Outlook—The Advance in Canadian Municipal Credit—Misgivings of Japanese Finance.

The week's finance has been marked by no exciting incident. History establishes the fact that the most progressive periods of British trade have been those during which there was a well-defined political party in power—Gladstonite or Tory. Traders and manufacturers know what to expect when a definite programme is before the country, be it Conservative or Liberal, but as matters stand at the moment, the country is apparently to be