

62 1-2 miles have an improved channel. There is no tide for the 82 miles between Montreal and Three Rivers, and for 20 miles eastward the tide is not useful to navigation. In the next 22 miles the tide for half the time is helpful and in the 36 miles from Portneuf to Quebec the tide rises from 9 to 15 feet. The average current is 2 1-2 miles per hour. The standard depth in the channel is 27 1-2 feet for a width of 300 feet, but improvements are in progress to give a depth of 30 feet and width of 400 feet. In 1903, 802 ocean going vessels went up and down this channel, the daily tonnage being equal to that which would be carried by 80 freight trains daily! The latter statement will cause no little surprise, so little is it realized what an enormous amount of transportation is effected by the river St. Lawrence, to which Montreal owes its pre-eminent position as the national port of the Dominion of Canada.

THE OUTCRY IN THE UNITED STATES AGAINST FOREIGN FIRE COMPANIES.

There is a continual outcry raised by many newspapers in the United States against giving business to the fire insurance companies of Great Britain and Canada. The ground of this objection is, the desirability of keeping all local money in local channels. There is something in this plea which appeals to all who take a superficial view of economic questions. Were the principle of localism carried out thoroughly and generally, trade would be reduced to very primitive conditions, the import and export trade of each country would be paralyzed, and, if the principle were pushed to an extreme, all internal trade would be destroyed save that originated within and terminated inside such locality. There would be no streams of commerce, every district would be dependent upon little local ponds or puddles.

There was a time when the narrow view almost universally prevailed, that all the money sent abroad to pay for foreign products, was so much money lost to the senders and so much clear gain to the receivers. The only way for a nation to become rich was held to be a course similar to that of a miser who localizes money by hoarding cash in his cupboard. This notion has long been exploded in regard to commerce but it seems still to linger in the minds of many writers in the United States in regard to fire insurance. The utter unreasonableness of this cry is manifested by every cargo sent from the United States to England. Those Americans who adopt it practically say to the people of Great Britain, "Your money is needed in the States to buy our products, but, while we accept the money you send here, we will take care to spend our money in such a way that no portion of it will find its way to Great Britain."

All commercial money sent away from a locality is in payment for some equivalent in value which has been, or which is expected to be received. Re-

mittances of a business nature are sent to pay for something that the dwellers in the locality from whence the money is forwarded require, something such locality does not produce, or does not produce of the quality or style requisite for meeting every local demand. It is wise to encourage every reasonable effort to develop local production, so as to meet the various demands of the locality. But if the policy of keeping the money at home were generally followed, such development would never take place, for this process requires outside capital, and sending capital away from one locality to another is contrary to the principle of keeping money at home.

Of all countries in the world, the United States should be the last to complain of foreign enterprises being conducted within its bounds, for no other country is so indebted to foreign capital for its prosperity. Time and again, when Great Britain and Europe have shown a disposition to keep their money at home, the result has been a disastrous panic in the United States. Indeed, the entire fiscal policy of American statesmen is, and has been inspired by a determination to prevent, as far as possible, foreign nations keeping their funds at home by rendering it difficult for them to pay for their imports of American goods by exports or goods to the States.

The remarks of some American journals give the impression that, they consider British fire companies to have some power of hypnotizing American property holders, which is hardly correct. If those in the United States who pay British fire companies for a contract of indemnity were convinced that they were able to obtain a similar article, of as high quality, at the same price, that was produced at home, they would buy the native in preference to the foreign article.

When those who cry out against sending insurance money out of the country or out of their district accept a policy from a foreign or outside company, they do so in confidence that, when their insured property is destroyed, or injured by fire, the outside company will send back into the locality a sum of money probably much larger than what it has received from the policyholder affected.

Were each company to keep stored up such of its funds in each locality as were collected therein, it would have no general fund to draw upon in case of the losses by some local calamity exceeding the local store. The expenses of such a system, the embarrassments it would create, would paralyze the business of fire insurance. Would those who cry out against taking money out of localities be satisfied to run the risk of their insurance being unavailable, in case of need, because the local store of the insurance company was inadequate to pay local claims? To be consistent, those Americans who declaim against paying money to British companies, ought to