

**The ex-President
of the Ontario
Bank.**

The reason given by Colonel Denison for acquitting Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn, ex-president of the Ontario Bank, of the charge of signing a false return to the Government is on the face of it, a righteous one. The learned magistrate held that to make the accused liable to conviction, two facts must be brought out, first that the return was false, second that he knew it to be false. His Worship added: "That a man should be guilty of a crime, having no wilful knowledge or intention, would be a strange construction indeed to put on the act and no Parliament ever intended that such an interpretation should be taken of it." As we have already expressed the opinion in THE CHRONICLE, it is a mistake to require a bank president to sign returns as to the correctness of which he is seldom in a position to judge.

**Election of School
Commissioners.**

Mr. Langlois has introduced a bill in the Legislature to provide that the Roman Catholic school commissioners of Montreal be elected by the property owners instead of being appointed by the Government and the City Council as at present. The idea is a good one and just as good for the Protestant Board as for the Roman Catholic Board. The results could not possibly be much worse than some of the City Council's appointments and in all probability would be infinitely better.

**The Commercial
Travellers' Tax.**

The Provincial Treasurer has announced that the tax on commercial travellers is to be abolished this session, the Government consenting to relinquish a revenue of \$18,000 a year obtained from the tax, in order that all hindrances to trade may be removed. The abolition is entirely commendable. The tax was the subject of much unfavourable comment at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, and several Montreal members assured the conference that the Board of Trade and other public bodies here, would do all in their power to get the obnoxious tax abolished.

**Death of
Mr. Henry Hague.**

Mr. Henry Hague who for a considerable time was manager of the New York Branch of the Merchants' Bank of Canada, died recently at Glen Ridge, N.J., at the age of 72. He was a brother of Mr. George Hague, formerly general manager of the Merchants' Bank, and of the late Mr. John Hague, for many years the esteemed editor of THE CHRONICLE.

FIRE INSURANCE ITEMS

SPRINKLER PROTECTION that is inefficient is worse than worthless. Again and again this has been demonstrated—more recently by two half-million-dollar losses at Dover, N.H., and at Springfield, Mass. In each case the water supply had been cut off, in the one case to replace a leaky sprinkler head and in the other to replace heads which had been set off by a small previous fire. The shutting off of water really converts sprinklered into unsprinklered risks, and it might not be inequitable—though perhaps unpracticable—to stipulate that in such cases companies should not be considered liable for losses incurred.

A HALF-CENTURY OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY on the part of President, Wm. B. Clarke, of the Aetna Insurance Company was the occasion recently of a notable reception in his honour given in the Aetna's new and handsome home building. Over five hundred representative business men and insurance officials assembled to congratulate the man who for half a century has been so closely associated with the financial progress of the City of Hartford.

A NEW SPECIAL HAZARD TARIFF for use in the Western States is to be prepared. The new tariff will be somewhat like that so successfully used for rating of mercantile risks, and will be prepared under the direct supervision of an actuarial committee of three, a sub-committee of the Governing Committee, which will employ all the available rating experts in its preparation and testing before any definite schedule is formally adopted. The purpose of the new tariff is to secure a consistent and uniform schedule, readily adaptable to any changed conditions.

SPRINKLERED RISKS in New York City are covered by the recently issued annual report of Superintendent Groves, of the Fire Patrol. Forty-four fires are listed, of which in the case of sixteen there was no claim for loss to contents and in twenty-four instances there was no claim for loss on buildings.

FIRE MARSHAL CREAMER, of Ohio, has condensed for his current bulletin the fable for children on "The Wicked Matches" for which the British Fire Prevention Committee recently awarded a prize to Mr. J. W. Bengough, of Toronto.

THE DEATH OF EDWARD M. TEALL, of Chicago, last week was particularly lamented in insurance circles, Mr. Teall having only two weeks before been elected president of the Chicago Board of Underwriters.