

give a fair return for the risk incurred which is impossible of attainment unless the rates are based upon the combined experience of the various offices. To secure this basis is the main object of an Underwriters' Association.

In this respect there is a necessity for a "combine." But, that such a union of interests comes within the meaning of "criminal combine" is preposterous.

The fire companies so associated can neither force the public to place their insurance with them, nor prevent the entrance into the country of independent companies, nor stop the formation of new ones.

The underwriters have had long experience extending over many years during which they have seen 60 companies retire from the field partially or totally disabled. Having no desire to follow in their wake they have decided upon a course which will prevent such a calamity, a disaster that would be felt by the whole community.

It is in the congested district where the great bulk of insurable value in Montreal is crowded together and until something is done to lessen the conflagration hazard we cannot see why the companies should be blamed for not shutting their eyes to the danger.

One of the aldermen at Monday's meeting, praised Toronto for attacking the Plumbers' Supply Company, but it would have been better and more to the point, if he had suggested following that city's lead in inaugurating the high pressure system of waterworks, and instead of growing angry at the publication of the report of Inspector Howe, a civil engineer of large experience, the council would have best fulfilled its duties by following out the suggestions of that report and endeavouring to make Montreal equal in fire protection to cities of similar size on this continent, which statistics prove clearly it is very far from being.

If the City Council in place of blaming the underwriters for simply protecting themselves, will, to use a homely expression, "Take the bull by the horns" and make the improvements in the water service and fire brigade asked for, we are certain the underwriters will carry out their part of the contract, which will be found is the only method of solving the question of high insurance rates.

SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY IN THE OUTLOOK IN CANADA.

The President of the Canadian Pacific Railway has been giving his views on the situation in Canada and on various questions now before the people, to an American contributor to the Manitoba Free Press.

Sir Thomas is well known for the frank, outspoken style in which he conveys his ideas. He goes straight to the point with a terseness, vigour and directness which are very impressive. When asked whether Canada desired a reciprocity treaty with the United State he said:

"What Canada wants of your country, the United States, is just what you have been giving us for the past 20 or 30 years. We want a tariff wall between the two nations so high that you cannot climb over it. We want to profit by the same policy, which has so aided in building up the United States. We believe in protection and home industry, and we shall keep our tariff high enough to encourage it."

"In that case, Sir Thomas, the American manufacturers will get trade by coming across the border and building branches here. Will they not?"

"That is just what they are doing now," was the reply. "Many millions of dollars of American capital have already gone into such branches. Nearly all the chief industrial institutions of the States are establishing them. Take the American Locomotive works, for instance. They are building steam engines for the Canadian Pacific Railway. They put up a number for us last year, and we shall buy more in the months to come. We are glad to welcome such institutions. We want their goods, but we want them made on Canadian soil and with Canadian labour."

He went on to say:

"I regard a political union as even a greater improbability than a commercial one. I do not know a single Canadian who advocates the annexation of Canada with the United States, nor one who wants a political union of any kind. We believe we are better off by ourselves. We don't see that we would gain anything by uniting with you, and we believe it is better for the United States and for us to have competition.

"At present our relations with the British empire are all that we could wish, and we expect them to continue so. We feel that we can work together and benefit each other. There is no sentiment in Canada in favour of breaking away from Great Britain."

In regard to the American settlers in the Northwest, as to whether they become Canadians or continue their allegiance to the United States, the judgment of the President of the Canadian Pacific is authoritative, as it is also upon the question of immigration and the acquisition of land by new settlers. Sir Thomas declares that:

"Most Americans who settle in the Northwest become Canadians and enthusiastic ones. I took out my naturalization papers within a year after I came to Canada, but I am, you know, of Irish descent, and the change was only going back to the mother country. It is not difficult for an American to become a Canadian. He finds the laws and customs much the same as at home. He is fully as free as at home, and he has an equally large part in the Government. He finds here good schools, and, in fact, all that he considers desirable at home; and when, in addition, he perceives that he can make money faster and thrive better he easily becomes a