enterprises when their business has been undertaken by a municipality, has been overlooked in statements as to the economic result of the municipal ownership of business undertakings. The recent collapse of the Toledo City gas works is an impressive lesson as to the hollowness of the plea that a municipality can supply lighting more cheaply than a private enterprise. It is a significant fact that in Glasgow, where the City Corporation has taken up the municipal ownership scheme on a great scale, the taxes are high. The citizens are said to be paying back in their tax bills what they save by cheap car fares, etc. There is a reaction in progress from the movement to provide services of a trade character by municipalities, as experiences have proved, that it is more to the public advantage for mercantile enterprises to be controlled by private capital, and more desirable for economic reasons for a municipal body to confine its activities within the sphere of local government.

AVERAGE ADJUSTING CENSURED.

The Liverpool "Journal of Commerce" of recent date contained a letter from a merchant of that city, in which a sharp attack is made upon average adjusting as now practiced. The writer narrates his experience with fire insurance offices after a fire in his neighbour's premises in extingushing which his goods were damaged by water. The fire office in which these goods were insured sent an inspector which resulted in prompt payment of the indemnity to which he was entitled. This experience he contrasts with one he had with a marine insurance company. His statement is as follows:

"A fire broke out on board a steamer from a United States port to Liverpool and was extinguished by the ship's company. The fire took place forward of the engine room, and my goods being aft were unaffected by it. All the same, on presenting my bill of lading I was compelled to sign what is called an average bond, obliging me to contribute pro rata to the repairing of the loss and damage which the fire had occasioned. In addition to signing the bond I had in Scotch phrase, to implement it by depositing an amount estimated to be the proportion due from me in respect to the loss and damage referred to. After months had elapsed, and the incident was well nigh forgotten, I received a draft for the excess levy which had been made upon me. Along with it, for my perusal, came a copy of the general average adjustment, and, although there were not many more consignees of the cargo than there were tenants in the building where the other fire took place the statement—there was none in the other case—by reason of its damnable iteration, was almost as bulky as a volume of the 'Illustrated London News.' Rather than wade through such a mass of padding and columning, I accepted my check, and returned the statement unexamined, except as to the concluding items of the disbursements. These showed that those concerned with the preparation of the document were uncommonly kind to themselves, for, between fees and printing, something like 650 guineas were charged for averaging the loss of a little over £800 among about sixty consignees. In other words, the loss of £800 was, through this parasitic system, which is peculiar to marine insurance, swollen to upward of £1,500!"

As marine insurance is used as a means of security against the dangers to which ships and goods are liable at sea, and fire insurance is a like security against the danger of fire to which commodities or houses are continually subject on land, the merchant fails to see why their should be any difference in the mode of dealing with marine insurance as compared with fire insurance casualties. He attributes this to "the supineness of ship-owners, shippers and underwriters." He concludes his vigorously written communication as follows:

"In fire insurance the loss rests where it falls, and I submit that the march of reform bids marine insurance to conform itself to a like rule. When my neighbour's goods were burnt in the warehouse neither I nor the other tenants were asked to contribute to his loss, nor were the adjoining warehouses, in whose interest, the fire brigade exerted itself mulcted to the extent of a single sixpence. In suggesting that goods in a ship should be precisely on the same footing in the matter of insurance as goods in a warehouse I make no secret that I am aiming at the demolition of a craft that should never have been allowed to come into existence, or at all events to have attained proportions which are now a distinct peril. General average, as I see it, is an antiquated contrivance and a downright nuisance, and I therefore cordially lend a hand to draw imposter's last tooth."

This attack upon average adjusting has excited very lively interest in shipping circles and doubtless will call out some interesting replies.

IS THE DISEASE DIABETES HERITABLE?

The Medical section of the "Baltimore Underwriter" is always interesting and valuable though apt to be disagreeable reading at times. In the last issue the question of the heredity of diabetes is briefly discussed. Before giving the views of the very able contributor to above journal we may cite the case of a Canadian, a stalwart highlander, who informed us that no member of his family had been known to live over 60 years. Yet he died at 73, a victim to diabetes. So the dread disease seems to take a long time to kill. His children and grandchildren are all fine specimens of manhood. Now the question is, are they liable to develope this disease hereditarily, when no sign of their father, or grandfather having been afflicted, appeared until his children were grown up? Would