not married, do not make the bank premises their headquarters in the evenings. They use it just as they would use a club, and they play cards, and smoke and amuse themselves with freedom. I know some managers who take part with their clerks in amusements and games of this kind, and they do it with a good object. And this is how they justify it. They say it is better for young fellows to stay around the bank office at nights and amuse themselves in this way than to go to a billiard room or a village drinking place, and so they would rather stay with them. For you know young fellows will have amusement of some kind. Maybe you will say this is loose discipline, but there might be worse things than this, because if a young man stays in the bank at night, he is kept out of worse places."

To show how thoughtful men in the smaller places think of such things from an ethical standpoint, we quote from a subscriber in Grey County, Mr. J. E. Murphy, of Hepworth, who on October 27th, writes: "While THE MONETARY TIMES is invariably interesting and newsy, the last issue was more so, to me, than usual. Your article on 'Bank Clerks and Other Clerks' was well chosen, and should have great influence in counteracting wrong notions, and the unseemly display of gushing interest in such trials as the one at Napanee." One of the worst notions, and possibly the most insidious, is that for a variety of reasons, it is necessary for a young man to keep up a certain style of dress, to belong to certain associations, and to conform to certain customs. Nothing is "necessary" that is immoral; and to live beyond your income, spending money on fads, is neither moral nor gentlemanlike.

SOME BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS.

The letter of "Traveller" in last week's issue, entitled "Who Suffer by Fires?" brings up the subject of the conflagration hazard, instancing Windsor, N.S., and the Ontario forest fires. It also brings forward a consideration of especial interest to bankers, namely, the extent to which insurance carried by traders is to be thought of as an element in credits given them. This matter has been discussed by boards of trade and commercial bodies in Canada, notably by Toronto business men a few years ago, when a scheme was outlined whereby the mercantile agencies of the country should take steps to ascertain each merchant's fire insurance. But nothing came of it. Probably, however, the circumstance mentioned by "Traveller," namely, a possible loss sustained by several banks as a result of the Windsor conflagration, for want of sufficient insurance on the part of a number of persons or firms whose notes they had discounted, will have some effect in re-opening a question which has a very clear bearing on the extent of credit that may be safely granted to a merchant. What our correspondent says is very true, that in these days of complicated business relations, it behooves banks, insurance companies, wholesale merchants, in fact, everybody interested in business affairs, to see that those who get credit carry sufficient insurance. It is equally a duty to see that adequate means are adopted to prevent conflagrations.

A LOAN COMPANY LIQUIDATES.

The directors of the Farmers Loan and Savings Company have recommended to the shareholders that the company go into voluntary liquidation. Accordingly, an approximate statement of the company's affairs has been made public, and a full statement will presently be submitted to the shareholders.

The reasons given for this step are the continued depression in real property in Toronto and its suburbs, where a large share, probably the larger share, of the company's loans have been made, and the reduction of the margin of profit in the mortgage loaning business. The former is, perhaps, the reason which has most influenced the present decision, but the latter is not without weight. Of late years, private capital and the money of insurance companies and trust companies has come into competition with the loan societies in Canada in loaning on mortgage and has narrowed the field. Hence, and by reason of "boom" losses, the reduction of their dividends of late and the suggestion heard here and there for the amalgamation of too numerous companies, which are not likely to earn in the future any such dividends as they paid in earlier years.

We have every reason to believe that the company's liabilities to bondholders and depositors will be paid in full, as those of Canadian loan companies have always been. Its largest stockholders for the last quarter century have been wealthy and respectable individuals and estates, and whatever loss may be entailed by realizing the company's assets will fall upon the holders of shares. Liabilities to the public are something over $1,300,000, of which total deposits form about $250,000; Canadian debentures $200,000, and sterling debentures, nearly $900,000.

—It is not so often Canada is honored by the attention of British consuls abroad that she can afford to disregard a trade hint when it comes from that quarter. It appears that the Canadian Department of Trade and Commerce received on Saturday last from the British Secretary of State, a report of the consul at Barcelona, Mr. W. Wyndham, drawing special attention to Spain as a market for Canadian lumber. He describes the depletion of the Spanish forests and tells us that Spain is now deriving her lumber supply from Russia, from the Baltic, and from Norway and Sweden. This year the first cargo of Canadian lumber was imported. It went forward from Quebec, 680 standards for Barcelona and 175 for Valencia, all of which sold at good remunerative prices. The information should be of service, but the business of forwarding more timber should not be gone about hastily. Mr. Tripp, Canadian commercial agent on the Island of Trinidad, in the West Indies, draws attention to the great agricultural show to be held in the port of Spain from Feb. 8 to 12 next, as a good opportunity for showing Canadian products.

BEET ROOT SUGAR POSSIBILITIES.

The cultivation of beets on a large scale and the establishment of refineries to produce sugar from these vegetables has been the subject of different experiments in Canada. The attempts to build up this industry in the Dominion have been confined mainly to the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. But although considerable money has been expended in different ventures, only a nominal quantity of sugar has been produced. It is now proposed to exploit the farm lands of Manitoba, especially in the vicinity of Winnipeg, as a possible centre of sugar beet cultivation.

In the event of the beet sugar production obtaining a foothold in Canada a number of interesting problems suggest themselves. Under the present tariff arrangement the tax collected on sugar imports forms a by no means insignificant part of the revenue. In 1896 the duty collected on sugar entering the Dominion amounted to $1,139,042. The growth of domestic sugar production must decrease this amount, and should the Canadian markets be captured by the domestic producers, must wipe it out entirely. Mr. E. F. Atkins in a recent contribution to the *Forum*, pointed out that the countries of Continental Europe have been fostering the beet sugar industry, with the result of producing 2,300,000 tons more than their own consumption. Their Governments are levying taxes upon their people to obtain means to pay export bounties to the sugar manufacturers, and are actually making sugar expensive at home in order to supply it to foreigners at less than cost, and regard this as the height of economic wisdom. The world's stock of sugar August 1st, 1894, was a little over a billion tons; three years later, in spite of the ravages of war for two years in Cuba, the stock of sugar was not much less than nineteen hundred thousand tons. Though Cuba's crop fell short 800,000 tons last year, the total production increased 582,000 tons.

So long as the sugar market is maintained in this false and arti-