

THE LATE MR. JAMES MCGREGOR.

An outstanding figure in fire insurance and one of the very few remaining members of the old school of fire underwriters in Canada, passed away on April 24th in the person of Mr. James McGregor (briefly referred to in our last issue) after a tedious illness extending over two years. The end came at his residence 515 Roslyn Avenue, Westmount. Of gentlemanly bearing, a kindly unassuming disposition, and consideration for everyone associated with him in business, the deceased gentleman endeared himself to all. He was one of the oldest, and most esteemed members of the Canadian Fire Underwriters, and its president in 1902.

Mr. McGregor commenced and ended his business career in the service of the Commercial Union, a most unusual record. In 1868, as a junior clerk he entered the office of Moreland Watson & Co. at that time the company's agents for Canada, some years later on the appointment of Mr. F. Cole as Canadian manager, the latter appointed Mr. McGregor to the position of chief clerk, and on Mr. Cole's death in 1888, Mr. McGregor assumed the management for Canada, and at the time of his death, he was for over half a century connected with the Commercial Union and for thirty-one years its Canadian manager. He was also Canadian manager of the Palatine and a director of the Canada Accident. He was much respected by the Head Office authorities. Mr. McGregor's underwriting career in Canada, was marked by signal success. The business of the Commercial Union grew and prospered under his supervision. Its net premium income has increased from \$285,000 in 1887, to well over \$1,000,000 in 1918, in Canada. In the exercise of wise judgment and able supervision of the company's business under his control, Mr. McGregor has had the loyal support, and able co-operation of Mr. W. S. Jopling, the company's assistant manager for Canada and an old official of the Commercial Union.

At a meeting of the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association in Montreal, promptly convened on the 25th April, by the president, Mr. P. M. Wickham with a full attendance. Both the chairman and some of the older members of the Association, including Mr. M. C. Hinshaw (Atlas) and Mr. T. L. Morrissey (Union) referred to the sad occasion of the meeting, caused by the death of Mr. McGregor and paid feeling tributes to the many admirable qualities of the deceased and expressed their sense of loss and regret. The following resolution was carried by a silent standing vote.

"The members of the Canadian Fire Underwriters' Association have learned with profound regret of the death of Mr. Jas. McGregor, manager for Canada of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, Limited, and they desire to place on re-

cord their high appreciation of his sterling character and kind disposition.

"Mr. McGregor has had the somewhat unusual record of being associated with one Company during his whole business career, covering practically a period of half a century, and has filled the position of manager for Canada of the Commercial Union Assurance Co., Limited for the last twenty-five years. He was at all times ready to give the assistance of his valuable experience and advice to the work of the Association and was President in 1902-1903.

"The sincere sympathy of the members is tendered to his widow and family in their bereavement."

MONEY RATES AND BOND YIELDS.

Money rates and bond yields mutually influence each other, since both represent the return on the use of capital; but since the term "money rates" is applied only to loans for short periods, changes in these rates are chiefly dependent upon temporary conditions, while changes in bond yields are chiefly dependent upon conditions of a more permanent character.

Unusually high money rates and the minor and temporary upward swings in bond yields are commonly due to an over-extended condition of bank loans—that is, a scarcity of credit accommodation. Scarcity of credit means that borrowers must pay a higher price for it, so money rates rise. And if a higher rate of interest is obtainable from short loans than from bonds, capital is temporarily attracted away from the bond market, and owners of bonds are tempted to switch into commercial paper or time loans, so that bond prices fall and yields rise.

MERCHANTS BANK.

The advance of ten points in Merchants Bank shares since the beginning of April is understood to foreshadow an increase in the dividend from 11 to 12 per cent. with the next declaration, which will be payable August 1. The dividend for the current quarter was payable April 24th and according to all accounts will be the last at the present rate.

The bank increased its regular rate from 10 to 11 per cent. last year and at the beginning of this year paid a bonus as the result of the prosperous period the institution has been enjoying. Unless the tape is mistaken, another one per cent. is in store for the shareholders.

Heretofore nine Canadian banks have been paying 12 per cent. but one of this group, the Bank of Ottawa, is now cut out and the entrance of the Merchants would keep the balance even.