

citizen complains: "Being a Government road and able to saddle the taxpayer with its deficits, nothing in this direction has so far been done." It will be the work of the new flour association, working as a committee of the Halifax Board of Trade, to bring influence to bear in favor of the removal of the difficulties under which the flour trade has now to be carried on.

The Board of Fire Underwriters in Halifax has decided to re-rate the city, and when this is done to add certain percentages until such time as specified improvements are made in the fire-fighting facilities of that city. The demands of the underwriters came up for consideration at a joint meeting of the Fire Commissioners and the Board of Trade recently. According to figures submitted on that occasion, it was estimated that the additions asked for would cost \$34,000 over and above the \$29,000 which the Halifax Fire Department now costs annually. It is claimed by some citizens that the city is much better equipped with fire-fighting apparatus than many others in the Dominion. This contention is much the same as has been claimed from time to time for other cities or towns when asked by the fire underwriters to make improvements to their fire appliances or their water supply. But it is not a convincing form of argument to say, "Our city is as well provided in this respect as its neighbors." There are conditions peculiar to every city or town which may render it impossible to compare it fairly with any other in the matter of defence against fire. We learn that finally the Halifax commissioners decided to prepare a report on what they are willing to do to improve the fire service and then call a conference of the underwriters, the Board of Trade and the Fire Commissioners. It is to be hoped that in a matter of so much moment to the safety of an important seaport, breadth of view may characterize the deliberations of these bodies. Narrow comparisons on the one hand or extreme exactions on the other ought not to prevent an understanding that will be fair to both the underwriters and those whose property they have undertaken to protect.



### GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS.

There has been yet another upward movement in the price of sugar, all grades having been advanced 10 cents per hundredweight on the 16th inst. Not only this, but from several different points of the world come reports of stiffening values for raws, the consequence of which is to make holders in Canada very firm in their ideas. Some of the wholesale grocers in Ontario, however, seem inclined rather to watch the course of events, and to buy merely for immediate requirements until such time as the situation clears. It is not improbable that, while there has been and is a good deal of justification for the present extraordinarily high range of values, based on the statistical position of sugar throughout the world and on the poor crops which have been harvested in some sections, yet speculators have seized the occasion to further their own interests. In sympathy with the strong position of sugar is a very similar feeling in molasses. That from Barbados has already advanced about two cents, and a further rise is deemed not unlikely.

Another strong feature among groceries is coffee,

though during the past few days some degree of easiness has developed in that article. It is believed by most authorities, however, that the recession is but temporary, and that receipts of Brazilian coffees will gradually diminish. Teas continue dull, and both Indians and Ceylons are a little easier. Chinas are meeting a comparatively slight demand just now, while Japans continue steady. Many of the spices are very firm, with a tendency towards higher quotations.

Canned meats and canned vegetables are even firmer than they were. Tomatoes are held by some dealers at \$1.30, while in corn the pack seems now to have been a little larger than was believed at the beginning of the season. Its firmness, however, continues unabated. There is no doubt that an appreciable scarcity will make itself manifest by next spring or before, unless importation takes place from the States, which has happened before with high prices ruling here. For canned salmon there is the usual good request. The demand which usually springs up at this time of the year for dried fruits is this year fully up to the normal. Large quantities have already arrived from the Mediterranean; and dealers have been busy distributing. Valencia and Sultana raisins are both somewhat easier, though increased firmness is looked for shortly. California peaches and apricots have declined a little. Currants have declined, but there appears to be a likelihood of their returning to the former valuation owing to the general lightness of stocks, not only in Greece, but in most of the large consuming centres. Great Britain, however, a very important market, has eased off in her demand.

In smoked meats there is a good active enquiry for all lines in spite of the continued mild weather, which would tend to bring about a desire for reduction of stocks. Naturally, however, it is important to ship supplies before the close of navigation. Prices are quite firm for all provisions. Good dairy butters continue somewhat scarce, as also do first-class creameries. An upward tendency is discernible in both. Cheese is very firm, in sympathy with the strong statistical position in Britain. Dealers there would appear to have over-estimated the stocks in hand on this side. Those in this country, on the other hand, have the situation well in grasp, and, while they recognize the danger of unduly inflating prices, as was done to some extent last season, they yet mean to obtain full value for their goods. There can be but little doubt that the make in Canadian factories has not been so large as was at one time believed. It is satisfactory to note that cheese experts in Ontario consider that the September and October output from the factories in that Province shows a material improvement in quality compared with former years. Another point which may well cause pleasure to those interested in the agricultural welfare of the Dominion is the recent decision in an English court as to the purity of a large shipment of Canadian cheese, about which there was controversy. It is becoming more clearly understood that any interference with the good name of such a valuable asset of the Dominion as the reputation of its food products is a national crime.

Of eggs there are at the present time practically no receipts, the trade being supplied mainly from pickled and storage stocks. The market continues firm, but dealers do not anticipate the famine prices again which prevailed last year. There has been a somewhat better export demand lately, and dealers