

duction. One new design which we had only a few days before delivered was in evidence. I closely examined this, a piece of my own work, and, while doing so, a shopman came to me and said: 'A lovely piece of work, sir!' I said I thought it was fairly good. 'Yes, sir! made in Berlin for us.' 'Indeed I should have thought not; I see evidence of British handicraft.' 'Oh, no, they can't do it in this country, sir.' There is more of this kind of thing than the general public imagines. The Scotchman's prayer, "Lord, give us a good conceit of ourselves," was a most sensible one. It is not well for the people of any country to estimate foreign more highly than home-made goods, as such preferences hinder development by discouraging enterprise, depressing inventive talent, and driving young men of exceptional ability out of the country.

This question is one of many that shows how general questions of trade and commerce have a direct bearing on insurance interests which are most intimately associated with everything relating to the business of the country. The development of a taste for foreign in preference to home manufactures means a very serious restriction of insurance business, for the property necessary for producing at home, property demanding insurance, is enormously larger than the product of foreign mills which can be covered by insurance as part of a stock of store goods.

#### THE ACCOUNTS BETWEEN THE DOMINION AND PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

In the report on the Public Accounts of Canada submitted by the Honourable W. S. Fielding, Minister of Finance, dated 11th December, 1901, there is a statement of the accounts between the Dominion and the Province of Quebec, which is a new feature. It is published as the award of the Honourable Sir John A. Boyd, the Honourable Sir Louis N. Casault and Honourable G. W. Burbidge. These judges acted as arbitrators under Acts passed by the Parliament of Canada, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the Legislature of Quebec, "for the final and conclusive determination of certain questions and accounts between the Dominion and the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec." Their statement and award does not, however, fulfil the above requirement, for, in the concluding clause of the award, they explain that:

"As certain matters, among others, that respecting the common school fund have not been finally concluded and determined, and as the principal or capital of certain funds held by the Dominion of Canada for the Province of Quebec have not entered in the said statement to the credit of the Province, this award is without prejudice to our authority in the final statement of the account." Their report indeed is only up to the end of 1892.

On going through the statement, the reflection will be forced on any business man that for such an account to run on for thirty-four years, 1867

to 1901, with entries and cross entries going on all the time, without a settlement having been made at any one time is much to be deplored. Every person familiar with accounts knows how desirable, how necessary indeed to avoid complications and disputes, it is for the accounts between two persons or firms, to be regularly adjusted and a settlement effected periodically. The accounts between the Dominion and Province of Quebec are crowded with 89 interest items, both debit and credit, charged or allowed on balances as they stood from time to time. Now the award is given on these accounts, it is useless to criticise these details of interest, but, if other of the Public Accounts are kept in the same way, with balances unsettled for years on which interest is chargeable or allowable, these accounts should be brought under the system which obtains in business houses. It is evident that instead of certain sums due to the Province of Quebec and credited thereto on certain days, being paid in one sum, the practice has been to pay such debts by instalments. On the 1st July, 1867, for instance, \$473,626 was credited to Quebec, and on 20th July the first payment for this made of \$35,000, then 6 small instalments followed. Half-year after half-year, for many years, this piecemeal system was followed involving interest payments on every instalment which makes the Dominion of Canada appear to have been like a very impecunious debtor who shuffles along by paying his creditors a few dollars at a time. Such a system is shiftless, unbusinesslike and certain to develop disputes. In this case it necessitates the submission of the accounts to three eminent judges whose decision is that, on 31st Dec., 1892, the Province of Quebec was indebted to the Dominion of Canada in the sum of \$1,096,325. How the account has worked out since then is not stated.

OTTAWA CLEARING HOUSE.—Total for week ending 17th April, 1902, clearings, \$1,834,114; balances, \$424,638.

THE MUNICIPALITY INSURANCE CLAUSE in the bill being promoted by the London County Council, has been dropped. On second thought the members of the Council decided to leave municipal insurance alone, probably, however, it was the result of their first thought for the decision of municipal insurance proved lack of thought.

INSURANCE OF WATCHES against being stolen or lost, or rather indemnity if stolen or lost, is the latest fad in insurance. It opens up an easy way of both "eating your cake and having it," by first insuring your watch, then swapping it for a better one, and getting the insurance money on the plea of the watch having been stolen or lost.