existing debentures. The attendant charges are 1 per cent. commission, and stamp duty of 1/8 per cent., which brings the rate to 4 7/8 per cent., or, with advertising and cost of exchange, makes the net cost easily 5 per cent. per annum for the first year of issue of the debenture. With Canadian cost of management at 1/2 to 3/4 of 1 per cent. to be added, the financial importer is thus provided with his raw material at 5 1/2 to 5 3/4 per cent. for the first year, or an average rate over the life of a five-year debenture of nearly 5 per cent. when we distribute the commission, stamp duty, and advertising, etc., over a five-year term.

So much for the buying price; now for the selling price. It is pretty generally admitted now that 5 per cent. is the maximum company rate obtainable on the best mortgage loans in the city of Toronto, while 5 1/2 per cent. is obtained for new mortgages, on less desirable properties elsewhere in Ontario, rarely 6 on first-class farm mortgages. In Manitoba and British Columbia, of course, the rates are higher. The conclusion is therefore reasonable, that imported money at present prices is barely profitable. Companies which have in the past ten years cultivated a home deposit business, and a corresponding independence of trans-atlantic connections, have had the great advantage of being able to obtain money at a lower rate, thus enabling them to confine their lending operations to localities where, although competition is hottest, the ratio of loss is infinitesimal.

True the latter form of obtaining supplies is looked upon as a banking business and not one which should be adopted by companies making long term loans. But it is to be remembered that in these days of more liberal charters a large proportion of the capital of mortgage companies is lent on call on the security of bonds and stocks. The vexing problem for loan company managers would seem to us to be just now how to use with profit the many millions of British money which have been brought to this country and have entered into the development of the business of farmer, shopkeeper, and manufacturer alike. The country cannot well do without these millions of money, and the question is a crucial one, how to retain it at a profit. This it would appear cannot be done at present rates. It must be acknowledged that in the exceptional circumstances of the past two years home loans have paid the Old Country people better than any we could offer them, but the war cannot last forever.

ADVICE ABOUT FIRE INSURANCE.

A very proper and indeed necessary step has been taken by the Dry Goods Section of the Toronto Board of Trade in issuing to retail dry goods merchants in city and country a circular which contains words of warning with respect to fire insurance. One sentence in this circular urges merchants to seek the best and most reliable companies in which to place insurance, and adds what is quite true, namely, that merchants buy insurance as they buy nothing else, frequently giving a line to an agent with whom it is well to be on good terms or whom they wish to favor. It is poor compensation for the "favor" an insurant has done his friend the agent, to find after he has been burned out, that the company is unable to pay the loss, or perhaps contests the claim, on insufficient grounds. But the fact remains that a great deal of laxity and unconcern is shown by many business men in their fire insurance engagements. They do not read their policies, they are not aware what they have agreed to, and they often violate the terms of their bargains with underwriters through sheer ignorance. Then if a company demurs to payment the storekeeper is indignant, and probably goes off to a lawyer, first thing.

The circular above mentioned makes some practical suggestions to the merchant. One is that he shall have a form specially printed, which accurately describes his premises and fully covers his stock. Then with the circular are sent two such forms of specification. One applicable to the stock of a general store, the other to a dry goods stock. These forms are accepted by the majority of the insurance companies. We copy below some other reminders and recommendations of the Dry Goods Section which are prudently made:

Change of ownership cancels insurance, unless the insurance companies agree to the transfer. Notify companies immediately by registered letter of any transfer of stock or change in style of firm name. If goods are moved from one building to another, the consent of the insurance companies must be obtained, otherwise the insurance is worthless. If alterations or repairs are being made to the building you occupy, get the consent of the insurance companies in writing, otherwise you invalidate your insurance while such alterations or repairs are in progress.

All notices should be by registered letter, addressed to the head office in Canada of each company interested.

Coal oil in excess of five gallons is not allowed in the building containing your insured goods, unless by permission of the companies in writing. (See special clause in statutory conditions relating to benzine, gunpowder, etc.)

Any variation in the printed conditions must be embodied in a policy. Verbal arrangements are worthless, and it is debatable whether a letter signed by an agent binds the company or companies he represents.

Some merchants depend upon agents notifying them when insurance expires. The due-dates of renewal premiums should be so noted that by no possibility could they be overlooked.

If an insurance company for any reason wishes to cancel their risk on your stock, the law allows you a reasonable time to re-insure, and you can claim five days after notification for this purpose.

PROCEDURE AFTER FIRE.

Should you unfortunately have your stock or premises destroyed or injured by fire, or its resultants, viz., damaged by smoke or water, make no admissions, sign no papers, nor enter into any arrangements with any person claiming to represent the companies, but endeavor at once to obtain someone who is qualified to act for you in adjusting your loss and place your affairs entirely in his hands.

LIFE ASSURANCE IN CANADA.

The growth of life assurance in Canada during the last twenty years may fairly be called remarkable. In the year 1881, the aggregate of insurance carried by old-line companies in the Dominion was still under $100,000,000. In 1890 it had reached $248,000,000, and last year it was $466,496,856. This marked increase is at once a testimony to the thrift and prudence of the people, and to the additional wealth which enabled them to make such investments for the protection of their families. The abstract issued last week by the Superintendent of Insurance gives, in gross and in detail, figures which show the result of the transactions of different groups of companies, Canadian, American, and British, and the totals of premiums,