

obtaining a reciprocity agreement with the United States. Mr. Bond has the inquiry or negotiation in hand. As Newfoundland is a colony standing alone, she seeks to make an agreement for herself only. If the Americans care more for our bait than they do about keeping out free fish from Newfoundland, some agreement may be come to. There can be no question that the withholding of bait from the French fishermen has struck a heavy blow at their industry. The Americans sometimes allege that they have no difficulty in obtaining bait—all the bait they want—but the statement does not obtain universal acceptance. Should the mission of Mr. Bond prove successful, our fishermen would feel themselves relatively at a disadvantage. There is nothing in the McKinley tariff to authorize reciprocity with Newfoundland. Any arrangement with that island is a long way off, as it must be preceded by legislation. The only chance of its being brought about lies in the American need of bait, though how pressing that need really is must be set down by outsiders as uncertain, being fully known only to their own fishermen.

INADEQUATE FIRE INSURANCE.

The wholesale dry goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade desires the fact to be made known that it has reached a firm conclusion with respect to dealers who, having come to grief through insufficient insurance against fire, press their creditors for a compromise. The circular issued reads as follows:

Whereas, the losses sustained by fire having been found to be most serious, and an evil requiring united action, the Wholesale Dry Goods Trade have agreed that they will not consent to, or accept, any compromise from their customers when it is found that the failure has been caused through insufficient insurance.

And in furtherance of this object they have agreed that the minimum amount of insurance on the stock, chattels and buildings must be at least sixty per cent. of their value under this agreement.

We are told that this step has been found fault with by certain retail dealers as being "arbitrary," and of the nature of an interference with the liberty of the subject. Something depends upon what sort of people make this criticism. Well-to-do and competent merchants are not likely to make it; careless and impecunious ones cannot afford to make it seriously. Where a dealer's ability to pay his debts in case of fire depends upon the amount of his fire insurance, such a suggestion as that contained in the agreement above given is most salutary. As to the bugaboo of oppressive combination which has been summoned in opposition to such moves as this, we cannot forget that much good has been effected by the circular already sent out by this section of the Toronto Board of Trade, combatting the common practice indulged by retailers of returning goods for insufficient reasons. The result of united action by wholesale dealers in this matter has been that a country storekeeper who orders goods and has had them delivered, now feels that he has bought them, and not that he has them simply on approbation, to be returned on the hands of the importer whenever they do not readily sell.

SHORTER CREDIT.

We observe that the Dominion Wholesale Grocers' Guild has taken a step in the direction of shortening credit and giving inducements for cash buying. The houses composing it, namely, every wholesale dealer in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, with two or three exceptions, are, we are told, unanimous in the conclusion of which notice is now given to their customers. Hitherto four months' time has been given on general groceries and sixty days on sugars, molasses, canned goods, fish and produce. It has however been decided that from 1st November next, the terms of credit for general groceries shall be three months, and for sugars, produce, fish, &c., thirty days, an allowance at the rate of 12 per cent. per annum for the unexpired term being made in either case for cash payments.

The effect of this desirable step taken by the grocers must be felt throughout the wholesale trade of the country. It will probably occur to the dry goods importer or to the boot and shoe manufacturer to ask: "If my customers can pay for their teas in ninety days and their sugars in thirty days, why do they need six or eight months' credit from me?" Then it can hardly fail to stimulate the country retailer to collect more sharply from his customers, many of whom at present are getting too long, and very likely too much, credit. The terms proposed are not yet so short as those of United States wholesale grocers.

THE TORONTO WATER-WORKS BY-LAW.

On the 16th of the present month the Council of the city of Toronto submitted a by-law to the ratepayers asking them to vote \$424,000 for the following purposes:

\$200,000	for new pumping engines.
42,000	" Larratt Smith property.
58,000	" Companion mains.
60,000	" House services.
15,000	" Coal shed.
2,500	" Machinery.
3,500	" Stand pipe.
43,000	" Discount on debentures.

\$424,000 Total.

The by-law was defeated, the vote being 555 for and 1,488 against it. Let us recapitulate the circumstances, and see whether adequate reasons existed for its defeat.

The two hundred thousand dollars for pumping engines was asked on the advice of expert engineers, who, from time to time, have looked into the necessity for extra pumping accommodation, and all have agreed that a reserve pumping power to the extent of 20,000,000 gallons is absolutely necessary to guard against the dangers of fire and drought, as well as the possible break down of the engines now in use. It is asserted that the present engines are either old or of such design that they are not economical in the use of fuel, so much so that it will be a saving in yearly cost to procure modern high-duty engines to furnish the entire ordinary supply for the city, and then to hold the present engines wholly as reserves. The present daily capacity of the existing engines is 14,500,000 gallons,

but this will be increased to 22,000,000 when the new steel conduit pipe is finished in November. The first thing to do, obviously, was to enlarge the conduit to the capacity of the engines, and this will very soon be completed. The average daily consumption in a drought, and often during the winter months when taps are allowed to run, is 18,000,000 gallons. What would happen at such a time if one of the engines broke down? Does not the necessary answer to this question involve an outlay for reserve engines, and is not the Board of Underwriters justified in seeing to it that such a catastrophe as a water famine shall not occur?

The \$42,000 asked to pay for the Larratt Smith property would give the city authorities the approach to the Rosehill Reservoir, under which their pipes are laid, and to get to which all conveyances going to the reservoir had to pay toll. The \$58,000 for companion mains was for the laying of duplicate water mains on King, Yonge and Queen Streets, so that when permanent pavements are laid on these important thoroughfares, as they soon are to be, they will not have to be ripped up for every new house service. The refusal of \$60,000 for house services virtually says to new water-takers that they are not to have the water taken into their houses, although the Local Board of Health has in many instances made those people close up their wells on sanitary grounds. It is a mean spirit that induces one man to refuse his neighbor what he already has himself. The coal shed built last year enables the city to buy its coal in the summer delivered on vessels, effecting a saving of \$1 per ton, equal to something like \$10,000 a year.

In April, 1889, a by-law was submitted to the rate-payers asking \$577,857, which sum was granted. The estimates for the various items was in the aggregate \$171,744 more than the contracts were let out at, thus:

Service.	Appropri- ation.	Contract price.	Estimated surplus.
High Level Station	\$102,000	\$ 66,406	\$ 35,593
New conduit	284,337	152,475	131,861
36-in. p'p'g main..	25,000	20,710	4,290
Distribut'g mains.	166,250	166,250

\$577,587 \$405,842 \$171,744

This sum of \$171,744 should be further reduced by \$40,000, the discount on the debentures. The mistake has been made in spending this surplus, \$131,744, on laying distributing mains. It is true the city saved the interest on the money necessary to lay mains and the interest on this unused amount by applying it to other purposes, but this does not justify such a proceeding without leave.

In addition to the \$166,250 voted in April, 1889, for laying distributing mains, eleven additional miles of mains were laid last year and some ten miles this year at the rate of \$5,280 per mile, so that the surplus under the April by-law has been drawn upon for these purposes to the extent of \$110,000. To provide money for these mains it is not necessary to go to the people. The course adopted in 1888, when on representation to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council that the mains would yield a revenue of ten per cent., he approved a by-law for the issue of debentures to the