

bought goods in this way from wholesale houses in different parts of Canada. In this respect he is no worse than many others. An honorable importer dare not object, while dishonorable firms encourage it because they can thus get favors worth thousands of dollars annually.

The arrest and conviction of Mr. Watters shows the wisdom of putting business men in the Government. An inexperienced man must depend largely upon his assistants, often themselves without the necessary training.

An experienced business man, such as Hon. Mr. Wallace, will not allow his deputies to run things. He will know the why and wherefore of everything. He will not take chances on anything. This is why he has made a success of his Controllership of Customs.

The developments in this case also show the necessity of a Dominion Board of Appraisers, such as they have in the States. With such an organization importers are independent of the whims of local appraisers, and they need not fear that importers at other points can get goods in at lower rates.

### MUNICIPAL FIRE INSURANCE.

MUNICIPAL insurance is booming just now, and an attempt is being made to introduce it into Canada. The idea is that each municipality should insure all the buildings in that particular city, town or county, and collect the premiums as a sinking fund to cover losses, and if above this to reduce rates. This plan, it is said, will save agents' commission and managers' high salaries.

A draft bill by Ald. Lamb, of Toronto, is now before the Ontario Legislature. The bill is called the Municipal Fire Insurance Act, and provides that the Municipal Council of every county, city or town desirous of adopting the provisions of the Act may submit a by-law to the electors qualified to vote on money by-laws. The said bureau shall consist of three members, to be called Fire Insurance Commissioners, two to be appointed by the Municipal Council, and the third by the Local Board of Trade. One of these shall retire annually. The commissioners shall deposit \$10,000 each, and shall receive salaries of between \$3,000 and \$5,000. All buildings within the municipality shall be insured in the bureau to the extent of two-thirds of their assessed value, but the commissioners may refuse to take a risk on a particularly hazardous structure. The commissioners shall fix the premiums on the properties, which said premiums shall be collected in the same manner as an ordinary assessment tax.

Mr. Stapleton Caldecott, president of the Toronto Board of Trade, when asked his opinion of the municipal bureau idea remarked that he had not given Ald. Lamb's particular scheme much attention, but that personally he was inclined to think it not sufficiently comprehensive. He did not favor the municipal plan, but he would advocate the establishment of a Government bureau. The secret of the success of insurance companies was the fact that their risks were scattered over a large part of the world. But one municipality should not insure its own property, for one great conflagration might ruin it.

Mr. P. H. Sims, vice-president of the Board of Underwriters, has also expressed his views on the question to the writer. He holds that the introduction of Ald. Lamb's scheme would attack and destroy the credit of the city. Such a scheme

he says, would be unworkable in a congested district like the city of Toronto. One extensive conflagration might ruin the corporation. For safe insurance it was necessary to scatter the risks held over an extended area.

A second point made by Mr. Sims was that under the Ontario Insurance Act provision was made for citizens, if they so desired, to form themselves into a corporation to effect insurance at a minimum of cost. This Act afforded every facility for citizens to insure themselves outside of the insurance companies, and it would be wrong to pass another law, making it compulsory for them to do what they had not seen fit to do already of their own free will. It would be a manifest injustice to compel every property owner to become a shareholder in the risks of the underwriters.

In conclusion, Mr. Sims stated that municipal insurance would be entirely inadequate to satisfy the requirements of loan companies, and parties loaning money on real estate.

### JEW AS MERCHANTS.

ALL business men are divided into two classes: honest business men and dishonest business men. In each class are found men of every race, such as the English, the Irish, the Scotch, the Canadian, etc. But, unfortunately for the reputation of the Jewish race, they are usually found among the class who are the opposite of honest.

It is claimed that a fire which was started recently in a certain building in Toronto was in the interest of a Jewish firm who occupied the building. The fire was discovered and put out before it obtained much headway. It was afterwards found that these Jews had \$5,000 insurance on a stock which was sold a few days later for \$1,250.

A newspaper report says that a fire occurred recently in Plum Coulee, Man. Simon Goldtaub, a merchant, was burned out, and put in his claim to the insurance companies. The insurance people engaged detectives, who found the goods from Goldtaub's store in a stable, covered with hay. Goldtaub is in jail.

A leading wholesaler remarked to the writer, the other day, that a jobber couldn't sell to a Jew for cash without being "done up" by shortage claims, etc. To sell them for credit he described as utter folly. He mentions, as an example, that his firm had just received a dividend on one estate which amounted to 7 per cent. He never knew of their selling to a person of this race without losing, to a greater or less extent.

Canada is big enough and free enough to accommodate a large number of any race of men. But each race must create and sustain a reputation for honesty, if it desires to retain the rights of citizenship which are so freely given under the guardianship of the British flag. Once it has lost this reputation, it must become a hatred and a burden to society. It is to be hoped that the Jewish race will never attain this unenviable position in Canada.

### GOOD ADVICE AND MANY BRIGHT POINTERS.

Mr. W. J. Ferguson, Stratford, an old subscriber to THE DRY GOODS REVIEW, writes: "Herewith find \$2 on subscription account. I find it a very practical visitor to my office, containing much good advice and many bright pointers."