clearances would take out more or less of supplies of provisions and other goods for use on their several trips, it is manifest that the aggregate of such supplies bought in Canada must amount to a very large sum. Even if the average for each was $50, the total would be over five millions of dollars. If to the total cost of such supplies there was added the total amount spent by the crews of vessels while in port for articles not taken aboard, the gross total would be a sum, which, if known, would give a very impressive idea as to the value to Canada of what we may term the incidental, the unrecorded and generally over-looked trade arising from our shipping business.

The number and tonnage of sea-going vessels cleared from Canadian ports in 1896-97 and 1897-98, grouped by Provinces, were as follows:—

Province.	1897 8 Number.	1897 8 Tonnage.	1896 97 Number.	1896 97 Tonnage.
Quebec.....	854	1,592,553	649	1,160,818
New Brunswick,....	2,125	652,327	3,078	795,112
Nova Scotia.....	2,740	1,149,750	2,408	1,066,561
P. E. Island	114	62,891	94	59,872
British Columbia....	2,256	1,884,163	2,215	1,670,463
Not Classified.....	5,508	877,999	6,067	810,618
Total.....	13,597	6,219,683	14,511	5,563,464

In the past year there were 110 steamers built in Canada, having a tonnage of 13,028, and 109 sailing vessels with a tonnage of 9,398. Out of the above total number built, 2,191, there were 39 sold abroad, so that Canadian shipyards supplied 180 new vessels for the home trade in the year 1897-98. The more the above statistics are considered the deeper the impression they will make as to the enormous value of the shipping trade of Canada, the more will sanguine hopes of its development be seen to be justified, and the more will the conviction be deepened that no more pressingly important duty rests upon the Government than that of making every possible effort to protect our water-ways from danger, and to render our ports attractive to shipping, both domestic and foreign. Amongst the words called for in this connection, the nationalizing of the port of Montreal, and the enlargement of its accommodation, and the improvement of the channel by which it is reached, stand pre-eminent.

FIRE INSURANCE COMPANIES VERSUS STATE OF ARKANSAS.

The First Round of the Fight.

In THE CHRONICLE of the 7th ultimo we told how, on the last day of March, the Attorney-General of Arkansas filed no less than 126 suits against the fire insurance companies doing business in that State, and we pictured the consequent confusion—no insurance policy being obtainable at any price. The suits were brought under a new anti-Trust law, which was passed by the Arkansas Legislature, prohibiting even affiliation of companies with any association of underwriters for rating purposes. As the penalty sought to be imposed by the Arkansas Attorney-General upon the companies amounted to the tidy sum of $315,000, the agents very naturally declined to do business in the State pending same settlement of the question at issue. The situation of affairs brought about by the Attorney-General's interpretation of the law has been most unbearable and expensive for the companies and their clients, and serves to accentuate the many faults observable in our neighbour's system of supervision of the insurance business.

However, in the first round of the legal fight following the action of the Attorney-General, the companies have won a decisive victory. On the 27th ult., Mr. Justice Martin sustained the companies' demurrer, and, in giving his decision, held that the act of the Arkansas Legislature was highly criminal and penal in its nature, and the gist of the defence was not the doing of business in the State but the conspiring to control prices; that, while the Legislature had power to prohibit altogether a foreign corporation from doing business in the State, it could not pass a criminal act with extra-territorial force; that, being a criminal act, the meaning of its words should not be extended, but should be rigorously and strictly construed, and that the words "any corporations" in the act referred to any combination in the State of Arkansas. The court said that so far as it knew there was no decision of any court holding that the laws of one State could punish a person or an individual for a crime committed in another, and that the words "corporation, individual, associations and persons" were all used in the same connection, and if possible every word should be given a meaning in construing the act; that they could all be given a meaning if the act was construed to apply to conspiracies to control prices within the State of Arkansas, and he held that it was the intent of the Legislature to punish conspiracies formed in the State.

But the companies are not blind to the glorious uncertainty of the result of litigation, and, as the State Attorney has given notice of an appeal to the Supreme Court of Arkansas, they have virtually decided not to resume business in the State just at present. It has been pointed out by prominent underwriters that the United States Supreme Court has practically held that a State can prescribe its own requirements for the admission of outside insurance corporations, and if it cares to may make the most oppressive condition.

Under all the circumstances, the companies have good reason to rejoice at the decision of Mr. Justice Martin.

It is to be hoped that public opinion in the United States will be so thoroughly aroused by the troubles of Arkansas and the revelations of the rottenness of a system almost universally condemned that some measure of relief may be devised. No better solution of the question has been found than that advanced by "The Journalist" of New York, which, in an excellent and convincing manner, has resented this perpetual meddling of a paternal government with the business of insurance, and has styled the system of State super-