condition of being allowed to tax all other denominations for the benefit of his Church he is quite willing to barter his political influence. He has the dexterity to keep within the letter of the law, and the priests acting under his orders manage to do their political work in such a way as to avoid conviction for exercising undue influence.

THE decrees of the Council of Baltimore will not acquire binding force until they have been examined by Roman Congregations composed of cardinals and theologians and confirmed by the Pope. Two years not unfrequently pass between the holding of a Council and the promulgation of its degrees. The decrees are liable to be amended by the authorities at Rome before they are allowed to go into force. The enforcement in the United States of the canon law of Rome, as laid down by the Council of Trent, was undoubtedly one of the objects for which the Council of Baltimore was called. By some of the most Catholic nations the decrees of the Council of Trent have never been accepted in their entirety. France accepted the dogma, but rejected the discipline. The question in the United States is one of discipline; and in this particular the power of Rome may soon become greater in the United States than it has ever been in France. That this advance movement on the part of Rome would possess a deep significance the Guibord case makes clear. But for the intervention of the civil law the censorship would in that case have been enforced with all the terrors which Rome, unchecked, holds in her hand. In a free Republic, which already counts a larger number of Roman Catholics than there is in England and Ireland, the discipline of the Council of Trent would not be long in making itself felt. The seven millions of nominal Catholics in the United States to-day is one-eighth of the population; at the beginning of the century, the proportion was less than one in two hundred. An increase by conversion there has not been; the proportion of Roman Catholics among the immigrants has been greater. The difficulty of retaining the new comers within the fold has been great; the hope of Rome is that the stricter discipline of the canon law will prevent desertion, and that the proportion of Catholics to the population, which was not at one time more than one in two hundred and fifty, and which to-day is one in eight, may be largely increased in the future. If the mere increase of numbers be regarded and the nominal be treated as real, Rome may well look upon the United States as the most promising field in which she has to work. But it is very improbable that it will prove to be as fruitful as a roseate view of the situation may seem to promise.

ENGLISH creditors complain that they are made to suffer exceptionally by the absence of a bankrupt law in Canada. They seized the occasion when the Canadian Premier was in England to call his attention to the desirability of re-enacting a bankrupt law which Parliament, without Government initiation, took upon itself to repeal. The abuses which had been committed under the law were made the reason for its repeal. No bankrupt law ever did or ever will give satisfaction, because creditors are not satisfied when the debtor's obligation is discharged by a payment of less than the full amount owing. Still when they get all the assets of the debtor divided among them there is no more to be got. The wisdom of desiring to withold a discharge, when no fraud has been committed, may well be doubted. The demand for an insolvent law without a discharge clause is one which the Federal Government doubts the power of the Ottawa Legislature to pass. A bankrupt law containing a discharge clause would be free from such doubt. Some of the Boards of Trade have been fighting against a discharge clause. English creditors would be satisfied with a Canadian bankrupt law modelled on that recently passed in England; and some such a measure it may be necessary, by way of compromise, to accept. At present Canadian creditors too often get undue preference. If the English creditor were in as good a position as they are to look after his rights, it would be his own fault if others got preference in advance of him; but he suffers from his absence from the country and from the conflicting insolvency laws which prevail in the different Provinces, and of which he can have only the most imperfect knowledge. As he is in the position of a man who cannot protect himself, Parliament ought to guard his interests. The present state of the law is a discredit to our Legislature and a reflection on the honour of the country.

THE law which gives settlers a right of pre-emption to one hundred and sixty acres of public land in the United States has at length been perverted to the purposes of speculation and monopoly. No less than five hundred thousand acres have been got possession of by speculators by means of fraudulent entries in which fictitious names have not unfrequently been used. The Land Commissioner and the Secretary of the Interior concur in the recommendation that the pre-emption law, under which these frauds have been perpetrated, should be repealed. In different parts of Canada a similar law is in force, and here, too, the necessity of guarding against its abuse has been made apparent. In the North-West the vehement demands made in the name of squatter sovereignty not unfrequently covered intended evasion of the law. Pre-emption for the settler is too valuable a privilege to be lightly parted with; and it would be a real misfortune if no other remedy against fraud could be found than the repeal of the pre-emption law.

THE charge that some members of the detective branch of the Toronto police force were the confederates of burglars has not been proved. Whether the investigation before the Police Commissioners was thorough there is some doubt. Garner's evidence oozed out, his second examination being a contradiction of his first, and when he had done, his confession had evaporated. He seems to have played a sharp trick in pretending to act as a witness for the Crown, and it is difficult to see in the act the evidence of good faith which should entitle him to be let off without a trial. If he invented the story which he first told, he was entitled to no consideration, and if it were true, the charge against the detectives ought not to have collapsed. The impression on the public mind remains, and it is strong, that the detective department of the Toronto police is not what it ought to be. Its inefficiency, to say the least, is notorious, persistent and hopeless. As an agency for unravelling the intricacies of crime it is practically useless. Incapacity, in the absence of proof of corruption, is a sufficient ground for making a change, and the time for remedial action has come. A detective force, from the nature of its occupation, can never be entirely above suspicion. It is obliged to consort with criminals of every degree, and it is often under temptation to share the plunder of the men whom it is set to watch. Instances are not wanting of detectives, in other cities, becoming the allies of criminals. Some years ago Toronto narrowly escaped the danger of getting for chief of police a man who had arranged with burglars to rob some of the banks. A detector of detectives has occasionally been employed with advantage. Armstrong did a great stroke of business of this kind. His theory was that it is always necessary to look for weak spots in the police force, especially in the detective branch; and he made good his theory by discovering a connection between some members of the police force and criminals, in more than one American city. The ineptitude of the detective force of Toronto has risen to the height of a public danger, and some cure for the evil will have to be found.

"BYSTANDER" ON CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

AMONG the acts of the Confederates there was one which extorted applause even from Federals. It was the amendment of the Constitution extending the President's term to six years and putting an end to re-election. This reform is now proposed, in the shape of a motion for a Constitutional Amendment, to the Legislature at Washington. The impotence of that body, with its two Houses swayed by different parties and its sinister swarm of intrigueing interests, is at present such that even the most obvious improvement, and that respecting which there is the greatest unanimity, can hardly be expected to pass. But there can be no doubt that the proposal will be heartily welcomed by the reflecting part of the nation, and especially by the representatives of Commerce. Such a convulsion, such an unsettlement of everything, such an orgy of passion and corruption as we have just been witnessing under the guise of a Presidential Election, repeated every four years, and extending its malign influence over at least the two years preceding, is enough to tear any commonwealth to pieces in the end. A term of six years will give the community a breathing time of four. The abolition of re-election will secure, as nothing else can, the independence of the Executive, and the confidence of the nation in the impartiality of its chief. There probably reform will end. It must be taken as an axiom of politics that concessions made to democracy can hardly ever be recalled. An attempt to take the election of the President out of the hands of the people, and thereby put an end altogether to these moral civil wars with all their evils and all their dangers, would most likely be hopeless. Yet nothing could be further from the minds of the framers of the Constitution than the system of popular election. They wavered between election by the National Legislature, election by the State Governments, and the plan which at last they unhappily adopted, without the slightest anticipation of its real effect, from which, had they been able to foresee it, they would most certainly have recoiled.

WE are now told that not only the Independent Republicans, but Conkling's personal followers, the extreme Stalwarts, bolted to Cleveland,