

facturers do not want new facilities given to their American rivals, and the preference, which Canada has accorded to British goods, stands in the way. We can see no possible influence strong enough to overbalance these two; what may crop up before the middle of November cannot be foreseen.

At last the Montreal Harbor dispute has gone beyond words and has come to deal with the facts. When Mr. Tarte vetoed what he deems an experimental scheme of elevator, he brought prominently into view the merits and demerits of the proposed plans. The experts of the Public Works Department, Messrs. Vantelet, Roy and St. Laurent, condemned Mr. Jamieson's plans. Mr. Tarte says that Mr. Jamieson has made no tests to guarantee the experiment; that he has no experience in such structures, having only built one wooden elevator. Mr. Tarte is the responsible Minister, and practically the custodian of the public money to be spent in the construction; and as such he cannot be blamed for resolving and saying, as he does, "I am not going to approve of any plan until I am assured that it is practicable and in every way satisfactory and suitable." Mr. Vantelet, who is also consulting engineer of the Canadian Pacific, and is doing their bridge work, reports that the concrete foundations proposed by Mr. Jamieson would be crushed to pieces under the load they would have to sustain. Mr. Tarte says he could get up plans within the month that would have every guarantee of reposing on scientific principles. The experts of the Department of Works, as we have before pointed out, afford the best security that the proposed work will be properly done, and for these the public would not willingly see some inferior authority substituted. The question of abolishing the Harbor Board of Montreal has been raised. If the Government advance, by way of loan, is not intended in good faith to be repaid, decidedly the work ought to be done under the guarantee and responsibility of the Government, otherwise no practical responsibility would exist.

Mr. Bond, Premier of Newfoundland, who went to England last April to urge a settlement of the French shore question, and to get influence brought to bear on the Canadian Government to induce it to consent to the Bond-Blaine treaty, does not seem to be making much headway. Five months ago he wrote a letter to Mr. Chamberlain asking him to use his influence to secure the latter result. According to a despatch from St. Johns, he is yet awaiting an answer. The mistake was in trying to get imperial influence to bear on Canada, as if this Confederation did not know its own mind. We are not likely to agree to the Bond-Blaine treaty; its negotiation was irregular and unauthorized, on the part of Mr. Bond, and it was made, so far as it was made, at the expense of Canada. As for the French shore question, we recognize the grievance which Newfoundland is suffering, in this connection; but diplomacy moves slowly when one of the parties to it has a long and tedious war on its hands. The more Mr. Bond shows his impatience, which we admit is natural, the more the other party to the dispute raises its terms or finds additional motives for delay. International difficulties can be settled only by common agreement of the two disputants, and one of them cannot command conclusions by its own volition. We are sorry to see the heavy draft on the patience of Newfoundland, but it is use-

less to lose patience at what is under the circumstances impossible. Let not the sorely tried patience of Newfoundland permit itself to be transformed into unwisdom or despair. The part of wisdom for Newfoundland is to await, under whatever disadvantages, till a more favorable opportunity.

REGULAR LIFE ASSURANCE INCREASING, ASSESSMENT SYSTEM DECLINING.

Canadians are finding out that the assessment plan of life assurance is not trustworthy, and not a few of those who have relied upon that system are giving it up for something more substantial. This is proved by the Report of the Canadian Insurance Superintendent. Referring to the latest issue of his report, we find that the total certificates in force in assessment concerns reporting to that official, amounted to \$128,034,000, where in the previous year they were \$129,805,000. In the year 1898 they were \$132,181,000. Here is a decline of four millions in three years, while the aggregate of life assurance in the regular companies increased by ninety-seven millions, namely, from \$895,394,000, in 1898, to \$936,869,000, in 1899, and to \$992,332,000 at the close of last year. This is pretty conclusive testimony that while Canadians, in their present era of material prosperity, are wisely increasing their life assurance, they are not increasing it on the assessment system, which they have often found to be a weak if not a broken reed.

Writing on the general subject, the London Review declares that assessment assurance is doomed, for when a life certificate holder drops out, he leaves practically nothing behind to help to provide for the sickly ones. In an ordinary life assurance company this situation is reversed. That journal goes on to say: "The assessment life assurance offices seem to be finding their proper level in Canada at last. Insurances, in spite of the new business during 1900, showed a marked falling off at the end of the year, for £1,000,000 sterling worth of policies disappeared from the Mutual Reserve in 1900; £100,000 from the books of the Woodmen of the World; and £800,000 from the Independent Order of Foresters; in other words, the I.O.F. lost about 6 per cent., the Woodmen 9 per cent., and the Mutual Reserve nearly 30 per cent. The intelligent Mohawk Chieftain, who runs the I.O.F., tries to argue against this, but the Canadian Monetary Times very properly points out that no ordinary life assurance company ever fell away and died on account of excessive death losses produced by lapses. This is a solid fact."

CANADIAN TRADE ABROAD.

It has been urged repeatedly, by correspondents in England and editorially in our columns, that there should be Canadian commercial agents in the United Kingdom. Hardworking, sensible men, with a knowledge of Canadian trade and manufacture, are needed for such positions. The idea has also been suggested in our columns of a warehouse or warehouses in the business part of commercial cities abroad, where Canadian products may be placed on exhibition, and their prices, etc., obtained. That such suggestions have a precedent is illustrated by an editorial writer in the Mercantile Guardian, of London, England, who in one issue