

the exercise of their powers. In the joint pastoral no names are mentioned, but a large number of ex-members and present candidates were clearly pointed at. If the priest may not say—and this is the tenor of all the decisions—that the electors should vote for or against a particular candidate, it is quite clear that in the present contest some will have over-stepped the limits of their authority. The collective letter of the bishops in 1876 went even beyond the present joint pastoral, for in the opinion of Dr. Angelus, a professor of Roman Law at the Vatican, the words used were large enough to cover political liberalism, though Catholic liberalism was the chief target for the bishops' arrows. In Ontario, the re-election of Mr. Clarke Wallace as Grandmaster of the Orangemen, coupled as it was with a censure on all who are friendly to remedial legislation, will tell against the Government party.

This has been a week of calamities. The neighboring States have been visited by severe cyclones in different places as far north as Michigan, and the end of one of them, not yet wholly dispersed, crossed into Canada at Tecumseth, on Lake St. Clair, and spread modified havoc on a narrow course, sixteen miles in length by a breadth of about half a mile. At St. Louis, Missouri, from three to four hundred lives were lost by a cyclone, which levelled houses, churches and bridges, and sunk many steamers. A street car leaving the track and plunging off a bridge at Victoria, B.C., drowned 60 or 70 persons on Monday. A destructive fire at Deseronto burned property of the Rathbuns and others to the amount of \$250,000. The fine early spring in Ontario gives promise of an abundant harvest. In Manitoba, unfortunately, heavy spring rains retarded the sowing of the grain crops, and we need not look for a return similar to that of last year. The spring in Ontario seems to be early, almost beyond precedent. On the Queen's birthday many maples shed their seed-pods in a condition of complete ripeness.

A Bill to prevent the manufacture of filled cheese has been introduced into Congress, at Washington, and it is safe to say that Canada will welcome its passage. Spurious cheese, filled with lard, manufactured in the United States, has often been passed as Canadian. This, under our laws, would probably be impossible in the future; but should the Bill now before Congress become law, it will remove a possible danger to Canada.

#### CASH VERSUS CREDIT.

Is there anything new to be said in favor of cash buying and cash selling? Some people will reply that there cannot be, for it has all been said, and often said. Still it is possible to put some of the old considerations in a new way; and a very fair specimen of the direct, straight-from-the-shoulder concrete argument is that used before the Merchants' Convention the other day by W. D. Hopkinson, of Paris, Michigan. The speaker had been contrasting cash trade and credit trade, showing that money is the fruit of past industry, while credit is the pledge of future industry, and when a man asks for a line of credit, he is asking you to take, and you do take, his pledge of future industry. "You are, therefore, carrying his risk of future and continued prosperity. Properly speaking, you have insured him without the customary premium. Losses are inevitable if you do a credit business, and we are in the habit of under-estimating these losses." And in this connection he gives the object lesson we should like all our credit-giving retail readers to observe, thus: "Did you ever stop to think how many goods you would have to sell to make up the loss of a \$40 account? Counting the net

profits at the percentage of profit on which we are at this time realizing, you would have to sell over \$800 worth of goods to make up this loss!"

Retail business should be done for cash. This is the language of Marshall Field, the famous Chicago merchant, who has been long enough observing and navigating the currents of business to entitle his words to weight. He gives his opinion thus: "Retail business should be done for cash. There no longer exists the occasion for long credits in retail business that did years ago, as even the farmer these days can get cash for anything he has to sell. Merchants who keep their business well in hand, sell for cash, and pay for goods at short time, taking advantage of all cash discounts, keep good habits and give strict attention to business, very rarely fail." But no one, probably, will deny the advantages of cash trading. What most traders will deny is that it is practicable in their particular cases. And not alone the traders, but their customers. Well, where the impossible cannot be done, and an absolutely cash-over-the-counter rule observed, both dealer and customer can surely lessen the evil of long and excessive credit.

#### WEST INDIA TRADE.

That our trade with the West Indies has grown within the past few years in a marked degree is shown by the trade returns. Why it has not grown still further may well be considered. Light is thrown upon the question by a gentleman who has been engaged in the trade as a forwarder, Mr. W. A. Black, of the well-known firm of Pickford & Black, of Halifax. Visiting London during the present month, Mr. Black imparted his views to the *Canadian Gazette*. Referring first to the flour trade, which, as we recently took occasion to remark, has not shown the development that it might have done, Mr. Black says that while cheaper wheat in the United States militated against Canadian flour for the West Indies in 1895, Canadian dealers do not yet seem to realize as we should like that they must meet the peculiar needs of the market.

The West Indian trade is full of specialties, and sellers must have a known and easily recognized brand, or it is useless to try and do much business. Then we have orders, perhaps, for flour in 25 lb. lots; the Canadian firms insist on sending 60 lb. or 80 lb. lots. In the way of butter we have been handicapped by the absence of uniformity. If a West Indian purchaser likes a consignment of fifty tubs of butter and wants a duplicate of the same quality, he often cannot get it. This difficulty is happily being done away with now by the adoption of the creamery system in Canada, so that we get even grades of butter. Fish is, of course, a large item of export to the West Indies; boots and shoes are also going down in considerable quantities, and every ship has its supply of coffins, too.

An important consideration is mentioned by Mr. Black in the fact that, speaking generally, Canadian produce and manufactured merchandise compete favorably in the West Indian market with those from the United States on the score of quality. But—and we ask attention to the "But"—not on the score of regularity of supply. Things are improving in this respect; but we suspect that Canadians are, like Englishmen, too careless of the demands of the market where they differ from what our millers and manufacturers are accustomed to at home. We quote again from Mr. Black:

In the way of imports from the West Indies we get hides, cocoa, coffees, sugar, rum, etc. Sugar was formerly duty free on entering Canada. Now there is a small duty of half a cent a pound, which applies to raw sugar from all countries. Owners who have always sent sugar to the States are now beginning to send our way. Why, Canada took three hundred million pounds last year, and Montreal has at least four very large refineries and one or more medium-sized ones. The Canadian refiners are encouraging the West Indian trade, giving New York prices, and so are the people in the Maritime Provinces.