

this Seigniorship was conceded by the King of France to the Christian Indians, in 1651, and that the Jesuits by false representations obtained a grant of the same land in 1669. It is necessary it seems for the Crown to lend its name to this contention against the Jesuits, and this has been done. The false pretext charged against the Jesuits is that they had made considerable sacrifices to establish the Indians beyond the limits of the Seigniorship of Sillery. The allegation is also made in the name of the crown that the Jesuits never had a legal existence and were incapable of accepting grants of land. The decision of this point may have far-reaching results and may possibly lead to some inconvenience. Whatever may have been their legal right to do so, it is certain that the Jesuits in Canada did hold large areas of real estate during the French Dominion. If it should be decided that they at one time had a legal existence, the Crown would appear to meet a defeat, and though it is not probable that any legal claim to the restoration of the Jesuit's estates could be enforced on the strength of this incident, it would be used as a political lever in attempts to compel restoration. The Jesuits' estates would in any case have escheated to the crown on the death of the last member of the order in Canada; and the fact of the Jesuits once having had a legal existence would not affect the title to the property. But as a political leverage, a decision favourable to the Jesuits would give them the opportunity for which they have long been looking.

Mgr. BOURGET, who, for reasons which were held sufficient at Rome, was some years ago invited to exchange the substantial power of Bishop of Montreal for the shadowy title of Archbishop of Martianopolis, last week celebrated his eightieth birthday. Since he went into the retirement which his nominal title implies, Mgr. Bourget has ceased to play a leading part in the politics of Quebec. There was a time when his hand was felt in the political movements of Lower Canada, and in an open quarrel with Sir George Cartier, then at the head of the Government, he came off victorious. Not only did he divide the Parish of Montreal against the protest of the Premier, but he drove his antagonist from his old constituency at a general election. Mgr. Bourget's avowed aim was to subordinate the civil to the ecclesiastical authority; but in the pursuit of his object he showed so little discretion that even Pius IX. was obliged to bid him and his followers halt. Since then the ecclesiastical pressure of Rome on the politics of Quebec has been exercised with less ostentation, but not, perhaps, with less effect. In the recent attempt to form a Coalition in that Province, both parties recognized the fact that to succeed they must first get the consent of the Church. On that occasion no undue pressure was used by the Bishop or Archbishop whose consent was sought; both parties voluntarily offered their submission and meekly begged the acceptance of a surrender of their independence. But, if the Coalition had not broken down in the initial stage, the time for the Church to use pressure would have come. At the election that would have followed the Bishops would have given the priests the hint how to act. The recent elections in Beauce and Megantic do not show that any great curb has been put upon the disintegration of the Bleus. In Megantic the Opposition majority has been reduced since the previous election from four hundred and forty-four to the narrow margin of fifteen. But Mr. Irvine, who obtained the large majority, was a Castor, and besides all the Opposition votes would get some from the old friends on whom he relied when he was in the ranks of the Bleus. Deduction being made of the personal element, the result is what might have been expected. In Beauce the Bleus win, but they win by a greatly reduced majority; and it is probable that the Church did not exercise its influence one way or the other. The game of the Castors is to outbid the Bleus in devotion to the Church. This game was once played with success by the authors and adherents of the Programme Catholic, but it is not probable that it can be repeated with a like result. One sign of the times is that Anti-Masonry is carried much farther by the Castors than by the Bishops; and so little do the Ultras find encouragement in high quarters to put the brand of Masonry upon numbers of men who are innocent of any connection with the Order, that some of the Bishops have gone out of their way to show their disapprobation of the exaggeration.

BETWEEN Montreal and Saint Paul, projectors have been convinced, the railway distance can be shortened by two hundred miles. The comparison is between the present route through Toronto and Chicago and a line which would form an extension of the Canadian Pacific from Algoma Mills to Sault Ste. Marie, and thence to Saint Paul. Promoters are busily engaged in asserting the claims of the American part of this line, and report says that the Canadian Pacific Company is prepared to co-operate with an independent party to ensure the success of the project. A saving of two hundred miles, in this distance is a matter of great moment in these days

of sharp competition; and, if the Canadian Pacific Company is voluntarily to throw off the armour of its legal protection, it must be in a position to compete for the traffic that crosses the boundary line of Manitoba and the North-West.

UNDERSELLING is one of the obstacles which business men who pursue an honourable course have to encounter. The man who habitually undersells runs in a crooked groove at every turn of which bankruptcy is written. Goods sold below cost cannot be paid for in full, and very often they are not paid for at all. The trader who pays his way must sell at a profit, and he cannot afford to cut below others in the same line. The bankrupt stocks which this kind of trading brings into the market will of course be sold below the original cost by the jobber by whom they are bought at forty cents in the dollar; but this exception only proves the rule, that habitually to sell below cost is to incur the risk of bankruptcy. It is a mode of appropriating the proceeds of goods without paying the purchase money, and when carried on with deliberate design is a form of fraud which no more deserves to be condoned than shop-lifting or pocket-picking.

No business upon an equal scale is in so unsatisfactory a condition as that of underwriting in Canada and the United States. Diligent enquiries have, from time to time, been made into the causes which strike with sterility an enormous amount of capital employed in the business of Fire Insurance. The Canadian Underwriters Association, which comprises nearly all the British and American as well as local companies doing business here, has been endeavouring to find a possible remedy for the present unsatisfactory state of things. At a meeting of the Association, recently held in Montreal, co-insurance was suggested, but nothing beyond a recommendation that it should be adopted was ventured upon. It was felt that the time had not come for making such a resolution mandatory. Recommendations which no one will assume the responsibility of binding himself to carry out are generally meant for neighbours and rivals, and they are made in the spirit in which the American humorist resolved to sacrifice all his wife's relations in the civil war. Excessive insurance must be a temptation to dishonest persons to find the way to sending their goods to the highest cash market by the light of a conflagration. Co-insurance, by which the insurer would be made to take a joint risk to the extent of say twenty-five per cent., if it could be universally applied, would remove this temptation; but excessive competition among the companies for business would probably make it impossible to apply this restriction universally, and the difficulty of applying it to special classes of property would probably be enhanced by the invidious nature of the discrimination. The recommendation that mercantile stocks should not be insured for more than three-fourths of their value is not likely to be enforced. It implies that the losses caused by incendiarism in this class of risks are so great as to require the application of this check, and the necessity for extra precaution can easily be understood. But surely there must be room for discrimination. The whole body of traders cannot without great injustice be open to the dark suspicion which lurks in this recommendation. In attempting too much the Association is in danger of ending by doing nothing. The cases of actual incendiarism are probably not so numerous as some insurance experts assume; of constructive incendiarism arising from wilful or half-conscious neglect, there is probably much more. Before the resolutions now in the shape of recommendations are made imperative, it will be well to consider whether they cannot be advantageously modified. To put the business of fire insurance on a footing more satisfactory to insurers there is urgent need; but it would be useless to attempt any change which it would be impossible to enforce.

THE importance of railways as the leading interest in America, and one affording scope for the highest business capacity, has found recognition at Yale. During the current academic year, Mr. Arthur T. Hadley, a well-known writer of authority on transportation, will deliver a course of lectures to the students on the history of the transportation system of the United States; railroad business methods, and their effect on the community; foreign railways and railway legislation, and American railway legislation. All the vexed questions of pooling, discriminations, and enactments aiming at control of railway property, will be explained and criticized. Mr. Hadley will conclude his course by pointing out what he deems the present prospects and needs of the railway system. Yale does well to lead in this thing of providing students with well-reasoned knowledge of the chief business of their country. Railroads have cost perhaps one-tenth as much as the total wealth of the United States. A sound understanding of this vast and complex interest will touch and illustrate every great department of the continent's commerce.