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THE SITUATION.

Pressure is still being brought to bear on the Imperial Government to induce it to give pecuniary aid to the Canada-Australian steamship service, as well as the Canada-Australian cable. Hon. Mr. Reid, Minister of Defence for Victoria, Australia, is in England doing his best to promote these enterprises. He is expected to be a member of the Australian-Canada Conference, to meet at Ottawa, next June. The movement for Imperial aid to these handmaids of peace and arms of defence gathers strength; but so far there are no evident signs of the Chancellor of the Exchequer yielding to the besiegers of the treasure-house which it is his business to guard and to put to the best use for national purposes.

Mr. Edward Blake is collecting in Canada for the Irish National Fund. In a speech at Montreal he said the Irish representatives had accepted aid from the Irish race, but not a cent from any party in Great Britain. Some Irish members are not able to support themselves, and as members of Parliament are not paid for attendance, subscriptions in Canada and the United States are got up for their benefit. As Mr. Blake points out, there are several countries in which the members of the legislature are paid: they are paid in Canada and in the United States, for instance. These payments are made according to law for services rendered to the country; but the analogy fails when these examples are quoted to justify the acceptance of pay by Home Rule members of Parliament from foreigners; from men of the Irish race, if you will, but men who have renounced British allegiance and become citizens of the United States. The men who receive pay from this source might fairly be called members for Irish America. What would the Congress of the United States say and do if a portion of its members were guilty of accepting foreign gold? Would the re-

cipients not be regarded in the light of men who had accepted bribes? The receipt of such money would morally disqualify them. The receipt by Irishmen of money from Canada has not quite the same significance, since both giver and receiver are British subjects.

Having assumed a distinctive anti-British attitude, the Khedive of Egypt has been pulled up at a short turn. He has apologized for the strictures he passed upon British officers in Egypt, eaten his words and substituted praise for censure. Beneath the comicalities of this change of face, the serious fact of his anti-British bent remains; and as he was installed by Great Britain, by Great Britain he may be deposed, should his conduct merit the change. In that event his brother Mehemet would probably take his place. By the consent of Europe, Great Britain agreed to play the part of pacificator in Egypt; France declined to join in the control, but she has viewed with jealousy the role of her neighbor. The British occupation is not likely to be converted into annexation, nor is it likely to be brought to a close so long as the causes which led to its being undertaken remain. The Khedive is to make a visit to several European courts.

Once more the President of the British Board of Agriculture announces that the embargo on Canadian live cattle will be raised as soon as he is convinced that pleuro-pneumonia does not exist in Canada. The statement was made to a deputation from Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Newcastle. The men of whom the deputation was composed are not likely to leave untried any fair means to convince Mr. Gardiner; but what sort of evidence would suffice to prove the negative to his satisfaction there are no means of knowing. Much depends upon whether he desires or does not desire to be convinced; the existence of the desire is not apparent, and by many the existence is doubted.

On Tuesday the Trust companies and brokers of New York made a bid for the entire Federal loan of \$50,000,000, at the upset price named by Secretary Carlisle; a rate which would make the 5 per cent. loan equivalent to a 3 per cent. loan at par. If other bids were made at the same rate, the question of a proportionate allotment would arise; if better bids come in they would have to be accepted. Five per cent. bonds are not suitable for a basis of bank circulation; they cover too little ground for their cost. If it had been possible to offer three per cent. bonds, the banks would have been eager to get them. From the first it was evident that there was no possibility of the loan proving a failure. The attempt to block the loan by an application to the courts for injunction failed; and Senator Sherman has made a powerful speech in favor of the impugned legality of the loan.

Just now a feverish desire is shown to point out the weak spots in the navies of the world. As the most self-accusing of the naval powers, Great Britain first began the work of self-depreciation in this particu-

lar. We are now told that the Turkish navy is a mere scare-crow, utterly useless for defensive purposes; a statement in which truth and exaggeration are probably combined. M. Lecroy, in the Chamber of Deputies, tells the world that waste and disorder have been rampant in every department of the French naval administration. One fact was mentioned in accord with the general accusation: that a transport had been unable to sail because the stock of flour on which she would depend, at one of the arsenals, had been exhausted. Extensive additions to the British navy are spoken of as likely soon to be made.

Remote as the connection between Icelandic emigration to Canada, and the refusal of the action or non-action of the King of Denmark may seem, it becomes direct enough when we remember that Iceland is a Danish colony, and when we learn that Icelanders desire a particular constitution which the king refuses to grant. The Icelanders' political aspiration is assumed to be strong enough to induce a considerable emigration to Canada. When the emigrants arrive they will, no doubt, be quite satisfied with the constitution of Canada, and like those of their fellow-countrymen who preceded them, they will greatly improve their condition by the move.

In view of the spring navigation, the Montreal Board of Trade interests itself in the question of the remission of canal tolls. The Erie Canal is free, and the argument is that our canals ought also to be free. Perhaps the best way to make out a case would be to present a statement of the relative cost of shipping by the two routes; of what the two governments have done, and what shippers and forwarders have done to perfect appliances for carrying on the business of the two routes. Without such comparison, the conditions of the rivalry cannot be understood. With it, the means of arriving at an intelligent conclusion would be at hand, and action could be made to proceed on a satisfactory footing.

By a decision of Judge Tait, the commercial tax or license imposed by the Government of Quebec is declared legal. Being a direct tax, there does not appear to be any good reason for refusing to accept this decision as correct. The hardship is that the tax falls with undue weight on the cities, especially on Montreal. The only hope appears to be that an improvement of the Provincial finances may, in the future, bring relief; though when it may be expected to come no one seems to be able to predict with even an approach to certainty.

Quebec, of all places in Canada the best fitted to carry out such a design, has begun its winter carnival and general rejoicing. The presence of Lord and Lady Aberdeen and General Herbert enhanced the attractions. Similar carnivals, held at Montreal in previous years, attracted large numbers from the adjoining Republic; the depression felt there so heavily last year may prevent the usual number of such