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EDWD. TROUT, MANAGER.

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THE SITUATION.

The condemnation by an Alaska court of the captains of the Canadian sealing vessels, captured in Behring Strait, some to fine and others to imprisonment, does not necessarily dispose of the matter. Ordinarily the decision of a local court, in International cases, is final; but here there is a question of the extent of American sovereignty over the waters in which the vessels were fishing. If the decision has been based on the assumption of a right of sovereignty over these waters, a distance of a hundred miles, it cannot hold. Diplomacy may be relied upon to settle the international law, and when this is done, it will be plain sailing. A Washington telegram now speaks of three marine leagues—nine miles—as the extent of American sovereignty over the Strait; but it is difficult to see by what rule three leagues should be given in American waters, while three miles is the limit in British. But this alleged claim is unofficial, and will probably never be made. If it should be made, the reasons for the difference noted would require to be clearly given. It would be well if the New England fishermen would take to heart the words used by the judge in passing sentence: The defendants "had no more right," he said, "to go into the waters of another nation and interfere with its industries, than they had to go upon another man's land and appropriate his crops." This is true; but the question on the facts remains: are the waters in which the seals were caught at a distance of sixty miles from shore, the common heritage of mankind, or the exclusive property of the United States?

The town council of Minnedosa has resigned in consequence of a judgment obtained against the corporation for \$8,000. Though the object of the resignation is to defeat the execution that would otherwise follow, the town does not ask a reduction either of principal or interest; an extension of time being all that is aimed at. We trust the case will not assume any worse phase than this, and that Minnedosa will in reality, as well as in name, continue to repudiate repudiation. It is to be regretted that one of the concomitants of repudiation

is present in the transaction: the resignation of the Council, with a view to defeat execution, is an old trick of repudiators, the copying of which is the reverse of a favorable omen. We trust these Western municipalities will learn the value of reputation, if they be guided by no higher principle in dealing with their creditors.

Once more the announcement is made that Mr. Hugh Sutherland, President of the Hudson's Bay railway, has succeeded in completing arrangements for the construction of the road. It is added that rails are now in course of shipment, and that work will be begun this season, on the return of Mr. Sutherland, who was to sail at once. But it seems, from latest accounts, that the undertaking has not actually been floated. The English capitalists appealed to have replied that it behoves the Province to show its faith in the work, by beginning the construction. In response to this appeal, the local government has agreed to give sufficient aid to build forty miles. But it takes security on the land grant, which thereby becomes unavailable as a basis for future operations. The actual floating of the scheme is now put off till October.

A copyright convention, securing a reciprocity of privileges to authors and artists, in the countries embraced in the arrangement, has been signed at Berne. We have heard a great deal about international copyright in Canada; but the aim of the publishers who took a principal interest in the movement, was rather to destroy the British copyright, that can be procured here, than to extend the principle. The only authors thought of in this connection, were British authors, and we fear that they were regarded less as objects of protection than of spoliation. The Berne convention must be the opposite of this, though the details have not yet reached us.

The gambling spirit, as manifested by the clients of Cordingley, of Montreal, may surprise the uninitiated, but its existence is a fact of which it is well to take note. The game is described as a pure game of chance, performed by a "clock." It is certain that the proprietor could not manipulate the machine so as to secure the odds in his favor? On the supposition that the chances were equal between the proprietor and his clients, this form of gambling, which was pure and unadulterated, was not more dangerous than some other forms, such for instance as those in use in bucket shops. The proprietor of the "clock" made money out of "commissions," so called, upon transactions, all of which appear to have been fictitious, if he did not make it in any other way. The clients of the clock-keeper at least knew that they were engaging in a mere game of chance, and this is quite as much as the customers of bucket shops know, and perhaps a little more. Nevertheless, Cordingley was very properly convicted on the charge of keeping a common gambling house.

The large majority in favor of the by-law to raise money for the improvement of the Don river, in the eastern part of Toronto, shows how popular assent to an appropriation for a public improvement can be obtained, when a large number of people are personally interested in it. Assent to this by-law was very properly made a question by itself: if it had been complicated by being tacked on to something else, the mixed motives that would have come in would have prevented a distinct issue on a single question. When the question of preserving the Island, on which the harbor of Toronto depends, had to be decided, everybody being interested in a general and nobody in a special way, the proposed appropriation was negatived. How will it be with the trunk sewer, on which the health of the city depends? Here and there a crank can be found, who professes not so believe in the necessity of a trunk sewer; but the general intelligence of the community ought to be strong enough to overbear all opposition.

The Parnell Half-rent-stay bill has been rejected by a large majority. And the commission to enquire into the Irish land question has been announced. The supremacy of the law will be maintained. On behalf of the government, it is alleged that the condition of the tenants has greatly improved since 1881; certain it is that complaints made in their name, by politicians, have become louder. The alleged decline of prices of Irish produce was a gross exaggeration; a pretext was offered where proof was required, and very naturally Mr. Parnell failed to make out a case to the satisfaction of Parliament.

There is every reason to believe the correctness of the statement which has been published, that the Clemow company has failed to raise money on the bonds of the North-west Central railway company, which is equivalent to a failure to carry out what it had undertaken. Unless other arrangements be made at once, the whole season will be lost; a result which there would be much reason to deplore. The Clemow company has done nothing but demonstrate its own weakness and incapacity, and it will probably be glad to withdraw, if it can do so without loss. It made a deposit of \$50,000, in some form; but whether it was so made that a forfeit could be enforced, is doubtful. What is now requisite is a company with means to make the necessary deposit, in a *bona fide* way, and be ready to enter upon the work at once.

A scheme for constructing a net-work of railways, sanctioned by the Sultan of Turkey, to connect the Black Sea with the Gulf of Persia, is being floated in Paris and Berlin, 600,000,000 francs having been subscribed. This road will probably be between eight and nine hundred miles long, and it will give Turkey means of rapid communication between the centre of its political power and the Persian Gulf. One result may be to strengthen in the mind of the Russian autocrat a desire for an outlet at the Gulf of Persia, the realization of