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THE SITUATION.

Canada is now in a fair way of getting an Atlantic cable of her own. The efforts of Mr. Dobell as promoter are reported to have been successful, and it is said that the manufacture of the cable, which will be of the best kind, will be vigorously pushed next year. The cost is put down at \$1,500,000, for which sum the work can be done. If, as alleged, Canadian cable messages count 800 a day, it would be a mistake to assume that they will ever all go by one cable. Like all new cable companies, this one appears to contemplate a reduction of the rate charged for messages; but, with few exceptions, competition has led to amalgamation of competing lines, and a serious waste of capital has resulted from the multiplication of cables. Canada ought, for some reasons, to have a cable of her own. Our press despatches, it is sometimes complained, are filtered through a foreign channel, but it is certain that the Canadian press cannot compete with the American in the collection and transmission of press despatches. Still it may do something on its own account, without breaking off existing connections.

Representing the Grand Trunk, a large tax-payer in Hamilton, Manager Hickson proposes, through the mayor, a plan by which he believes the cost to the city of furnishing the right of way, within its borders, to two projected railways can be saved. His proposal is this: "The Grand Trunk will afford to the two companies access to and egress from the city by its various lines for a reasonable distance from the city limits, and facilities over its lines and in its stations and yards within the city." And if the yards require enlarging to accommodate the additional traffic, it will enlarge them. Such an arrangement ought to ensure economy. Questions of precedence, the amount of rent to be paid, the natural desire of all railway companies to be independent of rivals, may stand in the way of its acceptance, and in this direction things are evidently moving. If the city has made a binding promise to furnish the right of way, the new companies are sure to enforce it, even if the cost of reaching the top of the mountain be somewhat

greater than the rent they would have to pay. As for the city, it would probably be about as well served by the plan suggested by Mr. Hickson as by the other.

The branch experimental farms at Indian Head and Agassiz are producing results that will be useful for the guidance of farmers. A frost break of a strip of trees hundred feet wide has shown that trees planted on the prairie grow with facility, the failures not exceeding five per cent. And fruit trees have done well. It is found that a grain crop grown after a summer fallow is three times as productive as one grown on fall or spring ploughed land. A new mode of treating winter sown wheat has been tried with success; the wheat being put in the ground just before the frost sets in, and left to germinate next spring. It must be nearly impossible, however, accurately to time such sowing so as to ensure the desired result. Whatever doubt there might have been about trees doing well on the prairies of the eastern slope, there could have been none about their success in British Columbia, where Agassiz is situated. Apples, pears, cherries, and apricots all give promise of arriving at perfection, and some very fine specimens of some of these fruits have been grown. The farmers appear to appreciate the efforts which are being made on the experimental farms for their benefit.

The credit of the Canadian Pacific Railway has undergone a decided improvement since the time when it found it necessary to seek the Government endorsement of its loans. It recently made a loan of £903,375 sterling, in the form of perpetual four per cent. consolidated stock. The price was 90, and five times the amount asked was offered. The company betters its position by paying off preferred stock to the amount of \$3,240,000, which bore five per cent. and was issued by the Atlantic and North-West Railway Company. Part of the new loan will go to complete the branch line from Mission, B. C., to the International boundary, where it will connect with an American line now being built to Seattle, Puget Sound. When this is done the connection of the Canadian Pacific with the Gulf of California will be complete. Something, too, goes to the completion and equipment of the Atlantic and North-West line. The odd figures of the new loan would look as if the several items of capital expenditure had been added together to cover a total mainly ascertained and the balance estimated, so as to keep the capital and revenue accounts, as they ought to be, distinct.

Two items of colonial investment which previously paid probate duty in England have by the action of the British Legislature now been freed. Previously if a resident of Great Britain held bank or other stock which was on a colonial register, it was necessary to take out letters of probate in Britain in respect of such shares whether the owner had died there or not. Henceforward when shares are on a colonial register, and the owner dies elsewhere than in Great Britain, probate duties will not be

exacted there. But, as we understand it, if he dies in Great Britain, probate will still be required in both countries. A worse case was that of life insurance policies issued in the colonies by companies whose headquarters are in Great Britain, the amount payable under such policies being treated for purposes of administration as assets in the United Kingdom. This anomaly has been removed by providing that when persons so insured die it will not be necessary to have recourse to a court in the United Kingdom for authority to pay the amount due to his heirs.

Peru is making great efforts to secure a large immigration. The Government has admitted and the Senate approved of a grant of 2,000,000 hectares, over 5,000,000 acres, of land for colonization purposes. Apparently a company would have to be dealt with, as irrigation works will have to be undertaken in connection with settlement. The concession, probably to meet local prejudices or interests, is to be made in four different parts of the country, in quantities of 500,000 hectares each. As three years are allowed in which to begin the colonization, the presumption is that much preliminary work will have to be done. While such bids are being made for immigrants, Canada cannot afford to put obstacles in the way of immigrants, to please Trades Unionists or any one else. The great want of Canada is population, chiefly agricultural, and unfortunately there is reason to fear that we are losing population faster than we are gaining it—that our emigration exceeds our immigration.

In New York the money market continues firm with a fairly active demand. Call loans have commanded higher rates this week and last, but time loans are steady. Local banks being compelled to add to their reserves called in their loans somewhat freely last week, but there is now an excess of surplus reserve over the legal limit. The *Shipping List* of 23rd instant says, "The rates of domestic exchange on New York in the principal interior cities indicate that funds are still being absorbed from this centre. Call loans at the Stock Exchange and bankers' balances have fluctuated from 6 to 12 per cent., with business chiefly at 7 to 9 per cent. Time loans are quoted 6 per cent. Foreign exchange has ruled dull and lower in N. Y., owing to the moderate demand and plentiful offering of commercial bills."

According to the *Boston Post*, the total bank clearances last week in thirty-seven cities of the United States aggregated \$1,218,980,289, against \$1,074,955,634 same date last year, an increase of 11.8 per cent., while out of New York city the total was \$425,968,783, against \$407,850,472 last year, an increase of 1.9 per cent. Business in the States appears generally active, speculation is subdued, exports of produce are large, and the iron and steel industries show substantial improvement. Although money is tight in New York, foreign exchange is lower.