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TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 1888

THE SITUATION.

The sudden death of Mr. Thomas White leaves a vacancy in the Ministry of the Interior. It was a ministry which, when he took it, had just passed through the tribulation of a rebellion; and he at once set to work to master the difficulties to be dealt with, paying a visit to the North-West and enquiring on the spot what the inhabitants had to complain of. He was a good officer, and there is some reason to believe that he injured his health by too close an application to his duties. The public does not readily believe in official martyrdom; but regret at the loss of Mr. White is general. The silent emotion which choked the utterance of Sir John Macdonald, when he rose in the House to pay a tribute to his deceased colleague, was a better witness of his grief at the loss which he and the country had sustained, than the most eloquent oration would have been. This department will still, for some time, be an anxious office. Underfed Indians, and half-breeds on the outlook for favors demanded in the name of justice, will keep the vigilance of Mr. White's successor awake. We do not remember a case in which the death of a public man moved the public so profoundly as that of Mr. White has done, except that of Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

The city council of Toronto raises a protest against the practice of sending out pauper emigrants to this country. Though the resolution passed without a division, it was not unopposed. Alderman Frankland said that what were styled paupers were the sort of men who, coming here thirty or forty years ago had done much to build up the country. The council probably felt that, if this were true, circumstances are now different. As a matter of fact, pauper emigrants who came here more than half a century ago, sometimes gave more trouble than the same class is giving now. They were sent out at great expense, some by the British Government and some by parishes. Some did well, others ill; on the whole, they helped in the development of the country. There are plenty of farmers in the country worth from \$50,000 to

\$100,000 each, who came here without a dollar in their pockets, and who from the first day made their own way. But they are made of different stuff from the men who crowd into cities in search of charity. Of professional paupers no country desires a present; and it cannot be denied that we have had enough of these, though Mr. Carling says they constitute only a small portion of the whole.

Emigrants from the congested districts of the Western Highlands of Scotland are to be sent out to North-Western Canada, through means advanced by the British treasury and the Scottish people; the Chancellor of the Exchequer having consented to put £10,000 in the estimates for this purpose, and a public subscription having been opened in Glasgow. The money is advanced on condition of repayment. It is an experiment, foreign to all experience in this country. Should it succeed, this will prove to be the beginning of a new and copious stream of emigration, which will pour into the North-West and British Columbia. That repayment must often be difficult, where the best disposition in favor of it exists, is to be expected. There are no certain bases for predicting anything of an untried experiment; and it is best that it should be made, as it will be, on a modest scale, though large enough to obtain an average result.

A return of all the treaties which prohibit British colonial legislatures discriminating in favor of British goods and against the foreign treaty countries having been asked for in the Imperial House of Commons, is now in course of preparation for that body. Formerly it used to be a standing instruction to the Governor-General of Canada not to assent to any bill imposing discriminating duties in favor of any country, including Great Britain herself. That clause has now fallen out, but the treaties which bar the way to discrimination in favor of Great Britain cannot readily be got rid of; in the opinion of Sir James Ferguson, it is not desirable to terminate them without careful consideration. This reply will not be without its use to Imperial Federationists, if they read it aright.

Though the fishery treaty is not likely to be ratified at Washington this session, neither will it be rejected by the Senate, the only body which has the power of life and death over it. The Democratic members, who are in favor of ratification, suggested that the treaty be left in suspense till the views of the fishermen upon it can be learned, and the suggestion has been accepted by the Republicans. But the rights of the fishermen will not meanwhile be under the treaty, but under the arranged *modus vivendi*. They may thus come to harbor notions about the treaty different from those which might result from actual experience. But this misapprehension is not likely to become general. By this time, most of them probably know pretty well what the treaty provisions are, in a general way. There can be no objection to their being heard, though the decisive voice is not theirs. They are not backward in

stating objections or possible grievances, and if they were opposed to the treaty they would have said so, in tones that would have reached Washington, long ago. The delay agreed upon is the next best thing to ratification. The fishermen are not the only people interested in the fate of the treaty, as may be made apparent at a future time.

When did the Central Bank become insolvent? This is a question to which a decision of Mr. Justice McMahon gives importance. He has decided that a deposit put into the bank the day before it closed was fraudulently received and must be paid back. All other deposits received after insolvency must follow the same rule. On a previous occasion, Mr. Foster, solicitor to the liquidators, argued that the bank was no more insolvent on the last day of doing business than it had been six months before. But here we are brought into the presence of the impossible: it is impracticable to draw a line between two days, and be certain that on the first of them the bank was solvent, and on the second it was insolvent. But if an approximation can be arrived at, through the dates of heavy losses, there must still be a period regarding which certainty will be impossible. Should the insolvency of the bank be decided to go far back, the amount of the dividend which depositors will receive will be considerably reduced.

American fishermen are not anxious to have the law enforced against foreigners coming into the country under contract to labor, in their own case. They boldly deny that pre-engagement has been practised. The district attorney, who was instructed by the President to enquire into the facts, should be able to get at the truth. The law can be easily evaded, and in such a way that no remedy will be possible unless all emigration is to be stopped, for as a rule all emigrants go to the States in search of employment. The enforcement of the law in case of foreign (Canadian) fishermen will count for something; for many a man would leave his own country on the certainty of an actual engagement, when he would stay at home if he knew that he must take his chances when he got abroad. We expect to hear every day that Mr. Vanderbilt has been deprived of that treasure of a Frenchman, his pre-contracted ten thousand dollar cook. The Canadian fishery, now paying well, is likely to attract additional capital and enterprise to aid its development; and in that case temptations will be offered to Nova Scotia fishermen to keep their labor at home.

Mr. Prior, speaking in a discussion, at Ottawa, on the Alaska seal fishery, is authority for the statement that he received a telegram from a sealer, making the foolish threat: "We demand protection, or we will protect ourselves." The telegram was laid before the Government, and the sealers were warned that they must not attempt to carry out their threat. It is natural to conclude that steps will be taken to prevent any folly of this kind being indulged in. The rights of our sealers are a proper sub-