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## THE SITUATION.

The new *modus vivendi* for the Behring Sea sealers has been ratified by the Senate of the United States. It is to last till the arbitration is concluded, though either party may terminate it after October 1st, 1893. Colonel Falconer, who went to the seal islands to look after the interests of the Republic, is reported to have expressed the opinion that the United States will "make an egregious blunder if it meant to carry out the policy of claiming ownership in seals wherever they journey through the sea." Such a claim could not fail to be laughed out of court; it is really too humorous for serious treatment. But Col. Falconer thinks that the American Government may fairly claim in Behring Sea exclusive rights which he adds Russia claimed there. But he forgets to say that the Americans joined Napoleon to set this claim at defiance; the United States and France publishing to the world, in a formal treaty, a declaration of the right to take seals in any part of the world. This was the answer of these two nations to the exclusive claim of Russia; and surely it is a little too late in the day for the Republic to plead the exclusive pretensions of Russia as a precedent which stands specially good for the United States. That treaty ought to be capable of doing good duty before the arbitrators, one of whom will be appointed by France.

"Count" Mercier is to be proceeded against for conspiracy to defraud the Treasury of Quebec, a summons to attend the criminal court in the ancient capital on the 28th and answer the charge, having been served on him, at Montreal, where he was sick in bed. He denies that he is guilty, and says he will obey the summons. The charge arises out of the Langlais contracts, in connection with the famous Court House construction. The motive of the Government for selecting this new charge on which to proceed, in the first

instance, will doubtless appear when the case is developed. He and his colleagues were dismissed from the Government on another charge; and if he can be convicted on this, it will show that there was abundant material to go upon. In a case which is not likely to be entirely divorced from politics, it would be strange if there were not one sympathizer on the jury, and one would suffice to insure a disagreement.

In pursuing its chosen line of exclusion, Newfoundland has entered on a policy that does not pay. It loses license fees and light dues, and the profit on the sale of bait. The total loss last year from these sources is put down at from \$120,000 to \$200,000, while there was a deficit in the revenue of the colony equal to more than one-third over the largest of these amounts, \$313,355. The financial policy adopted is one that will cure itself: it is only a matter of time. Besides, the exclusion to which Canada is subjected is irritating, and that part of our population that feels the smart raises the demand for retaliation. Newfoundlanders, it is pointed out, get full swing on the Canadian part of the Labrador coast, nearly 2,000 of their population reaping a large part of their annual harvest in Canadian fishery there. On supplies which they land there they pay no duty, though some of these supplies become the subject of sale. This is an abuse that would seem to require correction. Mr. Silver, of Halifax, estimates that over 50,000 quintals of cod fish is sometimes caught on this part of our coast by Newfoundlanders, in a single season, while Canadian fishermen probably do not take more than one-tenth of this quantity on the coasts of Newfoundland. These facts ought to be suggestive to the public men of the island, many of whom do not seem to realize the danger of indulging in the pastime of playing with fire.

Among the names attached to a proposal which is paraded as a panacea for labor troubles, are those of Mr. Gladstone and Cardinal Gibbons. The proposal is that a new unit for measuring the value of labor be sought in 60 pounds of flour. The inventor is Mr. Howard of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. If man required nothing but flour, there might be some reason for measuring all his wants in one article of subsistence. But, taken simply as a measure of the value of labor, the question is, has flour any advantage over gold? That flour can be eaten and gold cannot is not to the purpose. The standard of flour would suggest a connection between wages and subsistence, which in some form must always exist. But after all, that is the best unit of value for any purpose which is least fluctuating in price; and between gold and flour the comparison would not be in favor of the latter. If wages were measured in flour, the standard would be variable, and would in fact vary from month to month, from week to week, and day to day. Are the wages to adjust themselves to the standard? If so, they would constantly change with the change in the price of a single article of subsistence, and while there might be one reason for the change, there might be ten against it. How would

the adoption of the proposed standard settle the labor question? For ourselves we cannot see how it could possibly advance it nearer to a settlement.

Once more the story comes from Washington of Canadian depredations on American timber, in the region of Rainy Lake. A report on the subject has been made by Land Commissioner Carter, in which it is represented that extensive depredations have been carried on for years. If this be true, which we neither affirm nor deny, why were not measures taken long ago to put a stop to them? It is not impossible that what is attributed [to Canadians] was done, if at all, in part at least, by Americans. The Americans have a right to protect their property against spoilers of any and all nationalities; and Canada would view with satisfaction any reasonable movement made with that end in view.

Satisfaction, from the public point of view, has been obtained by Italy from the United States for the New Orleans massacre, \$25,000 having been paid by the Republic for the benefit of the families of the victims; the right of recourse in the form of private prosecution is reserved. Contrasted with the Chilean claim of the United States, the amount looks diminutive, and it is impossible to resist the conviction that the one is unreasonable from its largeness or the other from its smallness. Henceforth the central authority of the Republic stands pledged to protect strangers within its borders. Unless the United States presented itself as a unit before the nations, intercourse with it would be subjected to unusual embarrassments. The extreme doctrine of States' rights expired at the peace which closed the Civil War; and now let us hope there is an end of the State wrongs which were wont to seek shelter under the shadow of an imaginary right. At many points consolidation has replaced segregation, and elective centralization still goes on without the least risk to the qualified independence of the several States. The lesson speaks loudly to Canada, and it is to be hoped that she will know how to profit by it.

The emigration season to the North-West has opened favorably, the C. P. R. having taken 8,000 emigrants to Winnipeg in the last two months. Mr. Van Horne is hopeful of better success in future from the efforts made to attract emigrants. He thinks that by some union of effort by the Governments of Canada and Manitoba and the C. P. R. better results can be obtained. To a large extent, he points out, the emigrants from the older parts of Canada have at last been diverted to our own North-West, though the movement to the United States has not ceased, and is not likely to cease entirely. The movement from old to new settlements, to whatever point directed, is a natural one. For a long time, the eastern and middle States furnished a much larger number of westward bound pilgrims than Europe did. This movement is the law of continuous colonization in action. When it involves expatriation, it affects the relative strength of the