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THE SITUATION.

"Death to the House of Lords" is the cry raised in England over the rejection by that chamber of the Irish Home Rule Bill and the amendment of two English bills. At a given signal the organs in the press which speak for the ruling party, with one acclaim practically demand the abolition of the House of Lords. These utterances have a machine-made sound, and some of them can be traced directly to organizations which have a suspicious resemblance to the American caucus. They are not to be confounded with the spontaneous opinions of the electorate, though the electorate may take up the echo. No doubt an hereditary chamber is an anomaly in legislation; but this is no more true now than it was before the sudden discovery that the House of Lords is an anachronism and a bar to progress. The principal occasion of the condemnation of the House of Lords is one in which that chamber is backed by a majority of the English electorate; and it would be strange if that electorate should condemn the Lords for agreeing with it in opinion. One thing is clear: the House of Lords cannot be abolished without an appeal to the people; and the result of such an appeal would be doubtful. Canada escaped an hereditary chamber through the wisdom of Fox, who was not always wise or reasonable; and if ever the day should come when the hereditary chamber shall cease to exist in England, the Crown-nominated Senate of Canada could not long survive.

What is called the sweating system in connection with the clothing trade of Toronto has of late excited some attention. At a meeting of representatives of workers, the formation of a union was suggested as a remedy, and is in fact to be tried. The complaints made of small wages paid generally have reference to women. Some contend that women ought to be

paid the same rate as men; but apart from the question of what ought to be done, what is possible thrusts itself as a practical element into the enquiry. When women come forward to share work which has hitherto been done by men alone, a new factor in competition comes into play, with the inevitable result that wages are reduced. Most of these women workers at low wages are said to work at home; and one suggestion is that this should be prevented by law. Such inhibition might be in the interest of a male monopoly of this kind of labor; but it would be cruel to deprive these poor women of their only resource. Very often they must have home duties to divide their attention, and they can best perform the double function where it is pretended they ought not to be permitted to exercise one-half of it. Sometimes when the male worker urges his female fellow-laborer not to work for less wages than he is paid, the advice may not be entirely disinterested; and the demand to interfere with women working in their own homes, however tricked out in the disguise of benevolence, is an attempt to deprive them of their most sacred rights by cruel and arbitrary action.

The president of the Imperial Board of Agriculture professes to be anxious to reopen the British ports to Canadian cattle, and to be eagerly awaiting information from Canada which will enable him to do so. The Canadian Government has prepared the information which is expected to serve the purpose required. The Canadian experts, it is said, repeat in emphatic terms that no pleuro-pneumonia exists in Canada.

Strong dissatisfaction is expressed in India with the silver policy of the Government. Some want security from a continued declension in the price of silver, in the form of an import tax on the metal, the opening of the India mints for the coinage of silver, and the renewal of minimum rate for India council bills. To none of these proposals is the British Government willing to consent.

Inquiry in the United States Senate is not likely to be used to block the way of the Wilson tariff bill. The Democrats are not willing to go over the same ground of inquiry in the Senate that was covered by the House; believing that this, not being necessary, would be merely a waste of time. Still, from the care which it is necessary to exercise, the progress may be slow. The cause of the suspension of many manufactories has come to be understood to be that they naturally desire to wait for free raw material, promised by the bill; but where this is the true cause, the stoppage is often set down to the ruin which the bill is alleged to threaten. The barley and the malt duty may be put at 20 per cent., though this is quite uncertain; while the sugar and iron and coal interests are doing all they can to get concessions in their favor. The coal men have been trying to get 50 cents per ton, and, failing that, 35 cents. Senator Hill is intriguing against the President, and is ap-

parently, with true Tammany instinct, prepared to do anything to forward his own purposes.

Mr. Kidd, Postmaster-General of New South Wales, declares Mr. Fleming's Canada-Australia cable routes impracticable, the stretches being too long and the water too deep; repairs would be impossible. All this must have been considered before, and it is remarkable that the discovery now announced should have been left to Mr. Kidd, till this late day. The objections may only mean that he is opposed to the project. If so, his prediction that the Australian Governments are not likely to aid the project can be understood, though the value of it would still remain unappreciated. Meanwhile it is certain that Australia will come to the convention here at a date not yet fixed.

Ill guarded, indeed, must be the platform of the Imperial Institute, London, when a Mr. Muddock is permitted to jump upon it, and under the guise of a lecture, libel the founders of the Canadian Pacific by pretending that there were scandals connected with the work which, if revealed, would be found to rival those of the Panama canal. Not one special charge was made to give countenance to the story. Lord Herschell, chairman of the governing body of the Institute, apologizes to the persons maligned by explaining to Sir Charles Tupper that the protectors of the Institute's platform were remiss in their duty, but promising that it shall not occur again. The real trouble has been explained to be that Mr. Muddock had asked from the C. P. R. a ticket to Japan and been refused.

Sir John Thompson, at the Macdonald Club on Wednesday night, said "he could give the names of men in Ontario and Quebec who were paid for the propagation of doctrines" which had for their object to set one section of the community against the other," and to try to induce the people "that they should change the Government, change the constitution, even change the country's flag." Sir John consents to leave these alleged prostitutes "to the contempt deserved by those who try to sell their country for money." Without quarrelling with the nature of the punishment, we must observe that contempt cannot fall on unknown objects; and if it is to be inflicted at all, Sir John must speak out. Articles have appeared in the *New York Sun* and the *Philadelphia Free Press* within ten days, which, we must say, look not unlike the malicious work of some degenerate son of Canada. Among other things, the abolition of the bonding privilege is demanded as a means of bringing Canada to her knees. They are evidently written in the interest of American railways, and the inquiry naturally suggests itself whether the railway companies furnished the ammunition.

Mr. Bowell, before the Manufacturers' Association, showed how Canadian trade with Australia, in agricultural machines, has been successfully opened; and he dwelt on this fact as a ground for the possi-