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THE SITUATION.

Accidents from railways crossing one another on the level are constantly liable to occur, and do in fact occur far too often. At London, Ont., there have been three accidents at the same spot within a year. At West Toronto junction, there was a collision a few days ago, between a C. P. R. train and the suburban car of the Grand Trunk. West Toronto Junction, an entirely new place, is peculiarly dangerous; and some serious accident will certainly take place there unless precautions be taken in the way of prevention. At length, report says, the authorities have resolved to have an end to level crossings, and we are sure public opinion will sustain them in doing so. The risk is always increasing, as the number of such crossings multiplies. The Canadian Pacific, when it comes into Toronto on the East, ought to be compelled to do so on an elevated track. In England, stations are often on an upper level, and our cities should, when necessary, be approached in this way. That railway companies will, on the ground of economy, continue level crossings, so long as they have that option, is to be expected; though true economy might lead to a different result. The damages that have to be paid must be put in the other scale, and these are sometimes very heavy. They will, doubtless, be greater, as the danger increases. To put an end to level crossings will be the best for all concerned.

That portion of the Northern boundary of Canada not settled by the Privy Council, as well as the Northern boundary of Quebec, is to be arranged by agreement between the government of the Dominion and the two Provincial governments. It is not alleged that the negotiations are complete, but there does not appear to be any serious obstacle in the way of agreement, if there be any at all. The two provinces without making a united proposal, could make such separate agreement as would support one another; and no doubt this has been done. Where the northern boundary of Ontario ends, in the east, that of Quebec begins; but the producing of the line east may present differ-

ent problems. If a conventional line be permissible, the difficulty is reduced to a question of agreement between the Provincial and the Dominion governments. In that case, such agreement would have to be ratified by the Imperial Parliament. As between Ontario and Manitoba, an Act will be applied for; and if the northern boundaries of Ontario and Quebec shall have been settled, the Act might conveniently make a final confirmation of them all.

The American government is anxious to obtain for American wreckers the right to operate in Canadian waters, and is willing to reciprocate, in that particular. The Canadian government, it is said, is not unwilling to enter into a reciprocal arrangement, provided it be comprehensive enough, and include coasting and towing, as well as saving life and property, on wrecked vessels. Such an agreement would open a wide field to enterprise. England throws open her coasting trade to all the world; and it remains to be seen whether the Americans are prepared to do so, on the principle of reciprocity. The wrecking question ought, in any case, to be settled. For each country to refuse to allow the vessels of the other to save endangered life must sometimes be equivalent to a sentence of death. No prospect of gain, on one side or the other, can justify such a cheapening of human life. To put the chance of gain above the saving of human life would be a disgrace to the savage state, much more to a civilized people.

Prince Bismarck's assurance that he believes peace will be preserved is accepted by many as indicating the real European position. At the same time he secures a large appropriation, which looks as much to war as to peace. And instead of meeting a defeat, as on a previous occasion, he gets what he wants by a unanimous vote. Germany, as well as the Chancellor, undoubtedly desires peace; but that does not prevent them preparing for possible war. The publication of the terms of the alliance between Germany and Austria must have had an object; and it might have been foreseen that Russia would not like it. Why an agreement, which has subsisted some years, should be published just now, is not very satisfactorily explained. Russia knew of the alliance before; and the publication of the details of a fact that was in general terms already known to her, will not be very likely to alter her course; though she may find it convenient to pretend that it will. Germany has other allies; and Russia will hold back if she finds the combination too strong for her. But from Europe she may, as one of her organs suggests, turn her attention to the east, where she is by no means ready to strike an effective blow. The Moscow Gazette advocates an alliance with England, which, if carried out, might save the two nations from coming into collision in the East.

There is some disposition in Manitoba to look forward to a compromise on the Red River Valley Railway question. The conservative association has had the matter

under consideration, and a committee has been appointed to confer with the Dominion government, which is alleged to favor compromise, to ascertain what terms can be got. The result will be reported at a future time. There is, we fear, little chance of success, through any thing which an outside political party can do. In all such cases there is danger that, for party purposes, one party will oppose what another proposes. But if there be any terms on which compromise could be arranged, they ought to be ascertained and made public. Reasonable men will look to the practicable. How to obtain the money to build the road is a question not yet answered, and so long as a doubt of the legality of the act exists, capitalists are not likely to run the risk. If it be true that Manitoba and the North-west are suffering from a serious grain blockade, the conditions of the problem are somewhat altered; and unless it could be shown that this inconvenience is not liable to recur, the demand for better facilities must make itself heard.

A Canadian Agricultural, Coal and Colonization Company is being launched in England by Sir John Kaye. The capital is put at £210,000, divided into preference and deferred shares. The promoter takes 10,000 deferred shares of £1 each in part payment of 100,000 acres of land, which he has obtained from the Canadian government and the C. P. R. Co. Most of the Canadian colonization companies, formed a few years ago, collapsed, partly because there were too many of them, and partly because they had too little capital at command; but an English company may, nevertheless, if properly managed, have a fair chance of success. Sir John Kaye's company has been fairly set afloat, the needful capital having been subscribed. On its ability to get out emigrants much will depend; and it said a number is already secured for departure in the spring.

A report comes from Washington that steps are being taken to shut the door completely against Chinese emigrants. The change is to be effected by treaty, to which China will be a party. Mr. Belmont, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations is reported to have said that the Chinese government is willing to enter into such an agreement. The objection to the Chinese comes, in the case of the Americans as in ours, from the Pacific coast. To us, in the East, it seems as if the Western people cried out before they were hurt. It is possible to conceive a state of things that would justify the exclusion of the Chinese; though it is difficult to believe that it exists now. When an inferior race like the Africans, are imported into a country in such numbers as to give them a large numerical majority, a real danger is created. This happened in the West Indies, French as well as British. The condition of San Domingo to-day is the natural outcome. The British West Indies threaten to follow in the same road. The white population is decreasing and the black increasing; and the latter left to themselves, as they probably will be, will