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TORONTO, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1901.

THE SITUATION.

The grain interest of Montreal has appealed to the Dominion Government to suspend the navigation laws for the remainder of the season, to enable it to employ American bottoms, without which owing to loss of time by bad weather the members say they will be unable to fulfil their contracts. Capt. Gaskin, of the Montreal Transportation Co., being applied to, says in his reply: "We would not object to granting the request of the Montreal men for the balance of the season," adding, "we do not know of any Canadian bottoms available at present." Marine men generally do not share the liberal views of Capt. Gaskin, but object, as they did before, to permitting American vessels to do a coasting trade in Canada, under the exceptional state of things which then existed, and now again exists in this country. When two interests thus oppose one another, it is difficult for the Government to grant the suspension asked for by the grain men; and it is not surprising that the government has refused the request of the grain men of Montreal.

In a speech delivered the other day, Hon. Mr. Sifton stated that the Yukon royalty on gold is to be reduced to one-half its present amount. When this is done, there ought to be less difficulty in collecting the royalty, the motive for concealment losing half its force. The miners don't want to pay any royalty, but in that they are unreasonable; the cost of governing that distant region is considerable, and to the Government the rich gold region ought not to be a cause of loss. Ten per cent. is a high royalty, especially as it is levied on the gross output, taking no account of expenses, which in certain conceivable cases may represent but small profits or none at all. But as the profit or income could not be got at, there was no alternative but to deal with the gross output. It will be interesting to see how the reduction will act on the revenue, whether it will cut that in half, as the rate of royalty will be. This may prove a measure of past concealment.

Of the British war critics Lord Salisbury says: "England is, I believe, the only country in which during a

great war, eminent men write and speak publicly as if they belonged to the enemy." The habit is an ingrained national characteristic. Fox, who was as loyal as Pitt, sometimes spoke like a public enemy, and to imitate Fox public men of the present day think quite allowable and even meritorious. There is, however, a strain of folly in a policy which places a party on the same platform as the enemy under arms. The sudden change of attitude of Cassius M. Clay, who supported the Mexican war which gave California to the United States, after it had begun, though he had been one of its determined opponents before, better represents the true ideal of a patriot than the present attitude of some English statesmen towards war in South Africa.

Thirty-five thousand iron-workers in Berlin are idle. If this be the effect of American competition, it is easy to see whether Germany or the United States is going to make the greatest progress in this industry. When such a state of things exist, the farming class of Germany insist on making the food of the iron-workers and other manufacturing operatives artificially dear. The bill for this purpose has passed one ordeal where it could have been amended to suit the circumstances, with very little alteration from its original form. One prominent iron mill owner recommends a course directly opposite to that which the legislature is likely to pursue. He wants the duty on provision meat abolished, which the Agrarians will never permit so long as they have the power to prevent it. Thirty-five thousand idle men on the brink of starvation should furnish an argument which only a heart of stone could resist.

Australians admit, through the mouth of Premier Barton, that their idea of manifest destiny is that they shall become predominant in the Southern seas. For this purpose, they cherish the ambition to annex New Guinea. But here France stands as a lion in the path; it is not known that she would be willing to relinquish her rights in that quarter for a consideration; and if she were willing to do so the question would arise who is to furnish the consideration.

There is a party in Norway which is desirous to see emigration checked by a tax. The ground of this idea is that the young men, just when they have got a free education, and are becoming capable of adding by their labor to the resources of the nation, emigrate, and are lost to their native country. This is true, but not the less it will be difficult to prevent emigration. The young men whom it is desirable to keep at home would find means of smuggling themselves away. It is proposed that the tax should be returned, if the emigrants return; but this is a premium that is not likely to tempt many; an immigrant who once pays the tax is not likely to return; he is more likely to shake the dust of Norway off his feet when he departs and to take an oath never to return to a country that infringed his natural liberty. At the same time, it is clear that his departure inflicts a direct loss on the country that gave him birth and education.

Great Britain has, up to the present, charged herself with the protection of the natives in Nicaragua. But it is believed that the time has come when Nicaragua can perform this duty for herself, and it is said that as a result of long negotiations, England is to devolve this duty on that State. It looks as if England was to relinquish her rights on the Mosquito Coast, which have lost their main value;