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THE SITUATION.

In the collapse of Leiter's wheat speculations is seen another proof that it is not in the power of anyone permanently to corner the bread supplies of the world. What Leiter did succeed in doing was to make smaller the loaf of the man who had the greatest difficulty in obtaining bread. For a while, he raised the price of wheat, by which the grower, in the exceptional cases in which he had not parted with it, benefited. Finally, he appears to have paid about \$2,500,000 for the exhilarating amusement in which he engaged, on the wheat market. If the cause of his failure, as he sees it, be correctly reported, it is plain that he was wanting in ordinary sagacity. The prices of futures, he is reported as saying, went down more rapidly than present real prices, when, he perversely reasoned, they should logically have advanced. Precedent and probability, if he could only have seen the facts as they are recorded and discerned the truth in the outlook, should have taught him a different lesson. The price of wheat is generally highest in May, and the growing harvest is one of great promise. To sell in May was his only chance of salvation, but he lost his balance and fell, being buoyed up with hopes which had no rational basis. Other enthusiasts will walk in the path in which he met his fate, and it will be no cause for regret if their end be like his.

What may be called the renaissance of the Senate is the distinctive feature of the Parliamentary sessions just closed, at Ottawa. On those who believe that the Senate is not constituted in the best way, the change will not have any effect. The awakening being signalized by the rejection of the provisional Klondyke Railway contract, created exasperation in some quarters, and gave rise to threats against the life of the Senate; but it is quite clear that an issue so full of peril will never be seriously made, on grounds so little advantageous for an attacking party. Though this road will not at present be built, the large land subsidy which the Dominion would have given, if the provisional contract had been confirmed, is saved, and another road, but not an all-Canadian road, is being built without any subsidy at all. The second case in which the Senate took independent action was in rejecting a bill to transfer to

the Government of Manitoba \$300,000 of the School Fund of the province, for which the Dominion Government is trustee, to the Local Government, without the guarantee of an undertaking that the amount would be replaced to the credit of the School Fund. Two reasons for the transfer were urged: one was that the abstraction of \$300,000 from a fund which will probably reach \$5,000,000 would be scarcely a perceptible impairment; the other alleged a precedent for the transfer. This latter plea was answered by recalling the fact that the previous transfer took nothing permanently from the School Fund, since it was made under an obligation to re-transfer. Authority for the Drummond County Railway purchase by the Government, by which the Intercolonial would be continued to Montreal, blocked by the Senate in the session before the one just closed, was not completed last session, though it is intended to be in 1899. The Dominion Elective Franchise Act was repealed, and in future Dominion elections will be controlled by the local laws of the provinces, which are not uniform in their provisions, which, objectors point out, vary from one man one vote to one man and many votes, and some of which do not provide for appeals from the voters' lists to the courts. The Senate amended the bill so as to secure such appeal, but the House, on the initiative of the Government, refused concurrence, when the Senate withdrew its resolution and left the responsibility of the change where it belongs. The dominant feature of the session, apart from the renaissance of the Senate, was railway legislation.

On the Canada fisheries question, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decides that "the enactment of fishery regulations and restrictions is within the exclusive competence of the Dominion Legislature, and is not within the legislative powers of the Provincial Legislatures." Thus, all the fishery legislation of Ontario would seem to become null and void; but we must not accept this conclusion, for the words above quoted are immediately followed by the assurance that "it does not follow that the legislation of the Provinces is incompetent merely because it might have relation to fisheries." A broad distinction is drawn between the right of legislation and proprietary rights. Proprietary rights which were at the time of Confederation vested in the Provinces remained there, unless they were transferred to the Dominion by express enactment. No proprietary rights in the fisheries were conveyed to the Dominion. What rights individuals or Provinces had in fisheries, each retained after Confederation. Whatever grants of such rights could be made before could be made after Confederation. Such individual proprietary rights of fishery, as to times and seasons, etc., are subject to modification by Dominion legislation. But the legislative power cannot confer on others proprietary rights when it possesses none itself, though the Dominion may impose a license tax as a condition of the right to fish. The right which the Dominion has assumed to exercise of granting exclusive fishery leases, in property not belonging to it, is not recognized. The improvements of the rivers, not the beds of the rivers, were transferred from the Provinces to the Dominion. That public harbors became vested in the Dominion is a matter on which the Privy Council has no doubt.

To provide cheap money for farmers is the task which the Government of British Columbia has taken upon itself. The plan to be acted upon is described as one of co-operative credit. Farmers, traders and artisans are to combine and pool their assets, and lend to each other, according to their wants and the security they can give. Each partner