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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1902.

THE SITUATION.

The correspondent of the Times, at Brussels, is authority for the statement that the British delegates at the sugar bounties conference have agreed, in consideration of the abolition of the bounties, to an undertaking by which Great Britain will not adopt a preferential tariff in favor of any British sugar producing colony. The bargain is thus one of equivalents, though their forms are different, one being positive and the other negative. The fear of a countervailing duty was the principal motive that moved Germany to make the agreement; but the fact that she exacted from Great Britain an undertaking not to enact a preferential tariff in favor of any British sugar colony shows that such preference was dreaded, and the prospect of it might in some cases have a potent effect on international tariff negotiations. But colonial preference as a general policy for Great Britain seems about as far off as it has ever been since it was definitely abandoned.

The commission on Chinese labor, which appears to have confined the evidence taken to what could be found in British Columbia, has made a report which looks to the ultimate exclusion of the Chinese altogether. The present capitation tax of \$100 on each immigrant is declared by the commissioners to be inadequate, and two of them recommend that it be raised to \$500, preliminary to total exclusion. The third favors \$300 for two years, and then if a prohibitive treaty be not obtained, the amount be raised to \$500. We do not expect that England, which is contending under arms for an open door into China, will consent to bar out the Chinese from a part of the British possessions. The position needs only to be stated to make clear the inconsistency of the contrary contention. If we are right in supposing that all the evidence taken by the commission was gathered in British Columbia, the question naturally arises whether the rest of the country is in accord with that province. Organized labor in all parts of the country would give its voice for exclusion; and if, as we are inclined to think, exclusion by treaty be unattainable, it is not impossible that the same end might be attained by raising the tax to the maximum named by the commission. Even this course would bring

from China protests addressed, not to Canada, but to Great Britain. But if the voice of Canada were for exclusion, the Chinamen would have to be barred out. In British Columbia, some miners favor the free admission of the Chinese; others would not object to his exclusion.

Marconi has at last, in the presence of witnesses, performed a feat in wireless telegraphy which he had previously announced that he had done without them. When returning to England on the steamer "Philadelphia," he received a message of four words from the station in Cornwall, a distance of 1551 miles. Even when the distance was 2,000 miles, he was in frequent communication with the same station. Four of these messages were received on a tape in presence of the captain and chief officers of the ship. All doubt as to the possibility of wireless telegraphy across the Atlantic may now be dismissed. Marconi himself regards the achievement as depending simply on the necessary power. A permanent station will shortly be put up in Cape Breton for the use of the Marconi company. As to the fear that wireless messages can be intercepted, Marconi, on a recent occasion, denied that they could, and defied any one to intercept them. He goes very far, it seems to us, in making so dogmatic a claim. The new invention will affect the cable companies more or less injuriously, but it must be of great benefit to the public, by making long distance telegraphy possible, in many cases where it was out of the question before.

While the estimates were under discussion, in the Ontario Legislature, Mr. Latchford, on the authority of Mr. Russell, the engineer, said that the whole line of the Temiscaming railway had been surveyed, the profiles and the plans are under way, but neither of them completed. The North Bay route is the one selected, though some people have been trying to persuade Ottawa that the line ought to run westward from Mattawa, paralleling, as Mr. Lumsden, the member for Ottawa in the House, pointed out, the C.P.R. Temiscaming line for 40 miles. Mr. Lumsden favors the route chosen, and defends his preference before his constituents. In the Legislature he spoke in the highest terms of the region to be opened up. All the cereals grown in the older parts of Ontario, experiments have shown, can be raised there. A company holds a charter to build a railway, the construction of which might have saved the Government the necessity of entering on the work; but there is a general opinion that the Government did well to undertake the enterprise directly itself. Great things are promised in the name of New Ontario, and we trust the expectations raised will not be disappointed.

The legislature of Manitoba has unanimously passed a resolution in favor of an extension of the boundaries of the Province, so as to embrace a portion of the districts of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan, and northward to Hudson's Bay. In this matter, the Province will have two parties to deal with: the Government of the North-West Territory and the Government of the Dominion. It is intended that representatives of Manitoba shall confer with both. The first step would seem to be to get the consent of the local Government, whose area would be reduced by the success of the scheme proposed. It does not appear that any claim for land will be made in connection with the movement. Neither Manitoba nor the Government of the North-West Territories originally possessed any land; the territory which they embrace having been bought and paid for by the Government of Canada. In this respect both differ from the old Provinces which, before Confederation,