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THE SITUATION.

The session of Parliament which closed at Ottawa, on Wednesday, was of unusual length, though not conspicuous for the legislation passed. The sugar duties removed were only partially replaced by others. The protection of the cattle trade received attention; the loading of vessels became the subject of regulation; the registration of trade marks was provided for; the Vice-Admiralty Courts were placed on a better footing. The connection of these matters with commerce is close, and they may be expected to have a beneficial effect. The future government of the North-West was dealt with in a liberal spirit. In this list, if there is nothing ambitious there is also nothing objectionable or specially contentious. The session has been one of ordinary legislation, called for by the exigencies of the moment. The repeal of the sugar duties is an exception, and it remains to be seen whether it was more ambitious than wise. The question of the liquor traffic was got rid of by the promise of a royal commission to tell the Government what to do, after getting a hint from the Government what it should recommend.

In the revelations of the corruption committees, during the session, there are startling facts which made many Canadians hang their heads in shame. The process, if unpleasant, was necessary. Without exposure of the evil practices, there would have been no cure. On the whole, the enquiries were conducted in a fairly satisfactory manner, and with an evident intention to bring about amendment. The drawback was that the proceedings were not free from party bias. Accusations which rested on substantial ground were supplemented by the suggestions of political rancor, and at least one charge, that against Governor Schultz, was proved to be baseless. On the other side was observable the occasional obtrusion of a political element in the defence, as in the case of Mr. Cochrane.

The result of a party contest at the polls raises issues on which parties can neither agree nor meet in a judicial spirit. But apart from these defects and some personal observations, the enquiry was conducted in a way likely to bring the condemned practices into universal discredit, and to produce amendment. The civil service, like the liquor question, is to have the attention of a royal commission.

Lieutenant-Governor Angers, of Quebec, has fallen under the censure of one political party while the other feels it a duty to sound his praise. He is described by one party as a tyrant who is violating the constitution and creating a great danger. It is too late to make accusations of this kind. If his advisers had continued to resist the appointment of the commission to investigate the Baie des Chaleurs railway subsidy, he and they would have stood apart, taking antagonistic positions. But this did not happen. The Lieutenant-Governor and his advisers stood before the country as a unit on the commission. It matters not that the commission was first suggested by him; when it was agreed upon, the responsibility falls upon the Ministry. If the act be objectionable, on them must rest the blame, which cannot be transferred to the Governor. Attacks levelled at the Governor for the issue of the commission fall short of the mark, and hit in a tender spot his advisers who guard him in the front. The Lieutenant-Governor had a duty to perform in bringing the charges to the notice of his advisers, and they have agreed with him that a commission is necessary to investigate them; what they accepted they must be held to have advised, and for that advice they, not the Governor, will be held responsible before the legislature and the country.

By favor of the Ameer, Russia has got a trade footing in Afghanistan. The means used to obtain the concession are said to have been tempting presents such as Russia is in the habit of making whenever they can be made to tell. Though the Ameer was put into power as the friend of England, he has since been found to be not incapable of intriguing with Russia. The trading facilities obtained by the Czar will be used for political purposes, looking to the final occupation by Russia of the country. At the moment the concession is obtained, Russian troops are seen flitting along the Afghan frontier, a few of them entering Afghan territory, and the Moscow Gazette is candid enough to say that England's attitude in regard to the Dardanelles will cause Russia to seek her revenge in Asia, where England must maintain her position single-handed, and without the aid of the Triple Alliance, on which she might count in Europe. If Russia resolved to assault Constantinople, she might at the same time attempt a diversion by menacing British India, and whether the demonstration were intended to be serious or not, preparations to meet it would have to be made. At such a moment hints are thrown out that Gladstone, if returned to power, would put an end to British occupation of Egypt in the shortest possible space of time.

Up to this time, the rule continues to be that Canadian fishermen cannot buy bait in Newfoundland, owing to a prohibition enforced by the local Government. The reason assigned for this restriction, a fear that bait might reach French fishermen, cannot be the true one, American fishermen being allowed all the bait they desire to purchase. Mr. Tupper, Minister of Fisheries, hopes that this grievance will be removed by the opening of next year's fishery. The interference of Canada to prevent Newfoundland making a separate trade arrangement with the United States, to the prejudice of the other British provinces, did not justify a denial to Canada of rights it was understood she would enjoy when the Newfoundland Bait Act received the royal assent. Contiguous colonies with similar interests should act together in negotiations with other countries; if they deal in detail, each for itself, they will suffer as a whole.

Before the close of the session at Ottawa, an address to the Queen was passed, praying that the Canadian Copyright Bill of 1889 may be brought into operation by the necessary proclamation. The address finally passed as a matter of course and without discussion, the last word on the subject having been said. The right to legislate on copyright is one which cannot be withheld from a self-governing country like Canada. We cannot admit that Great Britain has a right to legislate for us, where the right to legislate for ourselves is clear. Hitherto the pugnacity of English authors has been allowed to bar the way. The bearable limit to this obstruction has now been reached, and we expect a favorable response to the address of Parliament. Canada desires the Imperial Government to give notice of her retirement from the Berne convention.

When the German Chancellor Von Caprivi gives Europe the assurance that not one of the sovereigns wishes to disturb the peace or provoke a European war, he says more for the Czar than many find it possible to credit. No doubt what he says is true of every other sovereign. This is a year of scarcity in which the ordinary horrors of war would be doubly intensified. Russia has an uneven harvest, with famine in spots of her vast empire, and on the whole a short harvest, though it may be sufficient for her own wants. The shortness of the wheat and rye crops ought to operate as a peace preserver, and it would do so if rulers and military guides were amenable to reason. Naturally, Von Caprivi does not wish to appear as an alarmist; but his assurance that no European sovereign desires to break the peace will fail to remove the misgiving that exists in regard to Russia.

China finds it difficult to fulfil her duties to the rest of the world with which she has treaty relations. Foreigners to whom protection is guaranteed have suffered at the hands of the mob, and the Government is very tardy in punishing the wrong doers, and apparently wants, if not the will, the power to do so. Complaints have been