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THE SITUATION.

There are many reasons for congratulating England on the Venezuelan arbitration award. The tribunal unanimously found that the claim made by England was just and maintainable, in almost every particular. The disputed territory covered 60,000 square miles, of which 59,800 are awarded to England, and only 200 to Venezuela, a good deal of it swamp. The boundary traced is nearly identical with what is known as the Schombergh line, which England claimed. She had, for the sake of arriving at an amicable settlement, repeatedly offered to take much less than the award gives. All the disputed gold fields are hers. The Orinoco is not only to be common to both countries, but is to be free to all nations. This example of the open door should tell on the policy of less liberal nations.

The appointment of a permanent Papal delegate to Canada is a new departure. It could scarcely have taken place during the French dominion. A resident Papal delegate implies constant reference to Rome. Such a connection with Rome is not a matter of course, in exclusively Catholic countries. It has by no means always been permitted, even by Spain. So far there has been much criticism of the present move.

In the Transvaal quarrel, it has probably been known to both sides, for some time, that negotiation was powerless to bring about a reconciliation. The ignorant Boers, uneducated farmers, appear to have persuaded themselves that they can conquer Great Britain. From day to day, the outbreak of hostilities has been expected, by the Boers taking the initiative. Kruger excites their fanaticism, by telling them that the God of battles is on their side, and more than insinuating that the bullets of the enemy cannot touch their charmed lives. England, hoping against hope, that peace might be preserved, has allowed herself to be put at some disadvantage, by not making a greater

effort to prepare for what she hoped might not prove to be the inevitable. This relative backwardness may cost some lives and more treasure than would otherwise have been necessary. If the vanquished pays the cost, the ultimate payment will come from the Boers. Nothing less than supreme rule, in South Africa, is at stake. The Boers, both in Cape Colony and Natal, sympathize with their friends in the two republics, and some will flock to the standard of the enemy. Conspiracies and treasons are on the cards. Canada, having offered military aid, in defence of British interests in South Africa, will feel a direct interest in the progress of events, in that quarter, and in the issue of the struggle. The occupation of Laing's Nek, by the Boers, yesterday, may be accounted the beginning of the war.

The mobilization of the Boer troops, in the Transvaal, has been going on with all speed, and some of them approached the Natal border, early in the week. The Boer general, Joubert, was at Majuba Hill, on Wednesday, at the apex of the triangle of Natal territory, which touches Transvaal border, Laing's Nek, a place of strategic importance, extending a little beyond this celebrated Hill. Troops from India landed at Durban, on Wednesday, and they will go by rail, in the direction of the Transvaal, Ladysmith probably being made the base of operations, as it is the starting-point of the bifurcation of the railway, one line striking the border of the Orange Free State, which is not far off, and the other going farther to Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal Republic. The British forces would be likely to march on Pretoria from Mafeking, the route of the Jamieson raid; by this route, the capital can be reached without the difficulties that would attend the ascent of a narrow mountain pass. Once there, we apprehend, there would not be much difficulty in an adequate force, properly equipped, taking the place, by the reduction of one of the half-dozen forts, by which the city fancies itself protected. A Boer force has been reported near Mafeking. We must not conclude from the fact that we have no accounts of what the British troops are doing, that they are folding their arms while the Boers are hurrying to the field. It is possible that, in the beginning, the Boers may score some minor successes; but in the end, there can be only one result.

It looks as if somebody in England had been guilty of a crime similar to that with which Dreyfus was charged. A copy of the Signal Book of the British navy, which is required to be kept secret, is reported missing from the dockyard at Plymouth. If not speedily recovered, a new set of signals will have to be made; if returned, it would be necessary to find out whether it was possible that it could have been copied or important notes made from it.

The business men of the city of Victoria, B.C., are working to secure connection with the trans-continental railways. Part of the scheme is to build a railway from Point Roberts to Chilliwack. With a railway to a convenient port, north of Sydney, it is proposed to connect two steam ferry boats, one for passengers and the other for freight. The mainland once reached, it is proposed to connect by rail with the Great Northern