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THE SITUATION.

Our dream of a rapid Atlantic steam service is not to be realized in the way which the public had been led to count upon. The contract with Mr. Anderson has fallen through. It is stated that when Mr. Anderson entered into the contract he relied upon his ability to form a company to perform the work, and that he has failed to do so. The Allans have all along contended that the high rate of speed demanded would deprive the contract of whatever temptation it might otherwise offer, and it is probable that their view is the one which has convinced the British capitalist. If this be so, we may have to consent to a reduction of the proposed rate of speed or pay a larger subsidy, and neither alternative will be welcome. A new contract will have to be made with somebody. The failure of Mr. Anderson to carry out his bargain carries with it the negative consolation that, in the estimation of those who understand these matters, the Dominion had got the best of the bargain. We may not fare so well next time as we did in this sterile contract.

Those portions of the Grand Trunk Railway which are in the United States are of course subject to the Interstate commerce law and the rulings of the Interstate Commission. The commission has just decided on a complaint against this company. The complaint contained two counts: one that the company charged an excessive mileage rate on grain between Port Huron and Buffalo, ten cents a hundred lbs., as compared with the through rate of fifteen cents between Chicago and Buffalo. The commission held that other considerations besides distance had to be taken into account, including the terminal and ferry expenses at Port Huron, the Niagara bridge charges, and the Buffalo terminal expenses, and that the difference between the through and the local rate charges was not unreasonable. On this point the commission decided in favor of the Grand Trunk. On another point, the charge of an eight-cent rate on grain and ten cents on grain products from Port Huron to Buffalo, the decision was the other way. When complaint of discrimination of this kind is made, the

company put on the defensive is required to justify its action; and in this instance the commission held that good reason for the difference was not shown. It is evident that the commission has done its best to hold the scales evenly, and it would be difficult to say that it has not reason on its side.

Senator Evarts is said to be haunted by the phantom of the possible physical negro supremacy in the Republic. He finds that since the civil war a generation of negroes has grown up in ignorance, and he believes that to educate the race has become a political necessity. He sees that the Southern States are not doing this, and are not likely to do it, and so he argues in favor of the work being undertaken by the nation at large. The question whether Congress possesses the power which this suggestion implies he treats in a way that would not be likely to convince the Supreme Court; he hints that it would be sufficient for Congress to know that it was acting in the public interest. In one form or another, the negro question will have to be faced. The ignorance of the negro, while it is a source of danger, is to the race a source of weakness; and a vast preponderance of physical force in the negroes, which is a long way off, would avail little against the intelligence, wealth, and energy of the whites. The danger to the Republic of the ignorant negro lies in universal suffrage, by which he is invested with a numerical proportion of the legislative authority.

An instance has just occurred which shows how the Post Office Savings Bank limit of individual deposit is got over. A resident of Wakefield deposited \$1,000 in his own name, \$1,000 in his wife's, and an equal amount in his sister's name. In making his will he dealt with all three sums as his own; and after his death the two women went and drew the money which stood in their names, as they had a right to do so far as the department was in a position to know. When a lawyer began to look into the matter, he found the \$2,000 drawn, and he seems to have thought it hard that he could get no "satisfaction." The women who drew the money are the only ones who can afford him any consolation under the circumstances. Depositing money in the name of people who do not own it may be deemed a smart trick when the Savings Bank limit has to be got over; but it is different when third parties take it into their heads to treat the deposit as their own.

The complaint of Canadian millers that they are unfairly discriminated against in the duties on wheat and flour continues to be heard. Last session, the Government took the ground that it does not admit the existence of unjust discrimination. Under the circumstances, steps ought to be taken to place the facts beyond doubt. So far neither party to the dispute has done what it might to put the public in possession of the real facts. Of naked assertion there has been no lack; but assertion and denial

are only useful in so far as they tend to make the issue plain. Now that we know what the issue is, production of the evidence, on each side, would be in order. A royal commission might sift the evidence, but the objection is that such a body could only be appointed by the Government, which is a party to the dispute. Perhaps the matter could be settled by appointing a commission on which the millers would have one or more representatives. It is essential to place the facts beyond doubt, and if a better way of doing it than the above can be suggested, it ought to be made known.

Japan has a representative in Canada, in the person of Mr. F. Yamashita, who is accredited as consul to Vancouver for that Government. This gentleman, on a recent visit to Winnipeg, stated the desire of his Government to develop a larger commerce with Canada, both in exports and imports. Japan requires grain, flour, lumber, cottons, and other manufactured goods, and is able to supply in turn tea, rice, silks, syrups, and such ingenious articles of Japanese manufacture as we are all familiar with. He thinks the principal trade of Japan with Canada will be with the region west of our great lakes. This may be true of Canadian exports, but the imports from Japan must necessarily go farther east, where the great body of consumers are to be found. At any rate, this must be true for some time to come; in future, a large consuming population will be found on our western prairies and in British Columbia. Mr. Yamashita makes careful enquiries about the elements of the trade which he is anxious to see established between Japan and Canada.

The International Maritime Congress at Washington, having organized by appointing for President Admiral Franklin, one of the British delegates, may be expected now to get to work. The scope of its objects is not large, being, so far as now appears, confined to agreeing upon an improved code of marine signals, which shall speak a language of their own and be understood by the seafaring men of all nations. This belongs to the technics of navigation, and though important, excludes maritime law in its higher sense. It is said that Herr Sievking, one of the German delegates, an authority on maritime law, will endeavor to enlarge the scope of the discussion, with a view of settling the principle which should determine disputes like that growing out of the Behring Sea fishery, and that should he fail in this, he will propose a subsequent conference on the excluded questions. Germany has taken an active interest in the trade of the Pacific, of which Behring Sea was formerly regarded as forming a part, and in some of the groups of islands she has more at stake than Great Britain has. She cannot therefore afford by her silence to acquiesce in the extravagant claims of the Americans in Behring Sea. This we take to be the meaning of the proposal made by her distinguished representative, Herr Sievking.