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EDWD. TROUT, MANAGER.

TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, NOV. 13, 1885

THE SITUATION.

The contracts for building the new railway bridge over the St. Lawrence river, near Lachine, have been let. The bridge, which will be of the cantilever mechanism, will form a connecting link between two parts of the Canadian Pacific system, which will connect at one end with the Atlantic, and at the other with the Pacific oceans. The work has been let to experienced contractors, and is required to be finished by the 30th November, 1886. A million and three quarters of dollars seems a small sum for the estimated cost of the work; but it is not likely that the mistake of making an under estimate has been committed. The Victoria Bridge, with which the Lachine bridge will be a companion, is one of the very few heavy railway works on this continent which have been built for a sum largely below the estimated cost. A great system like the Grand Trunk or the Canadian Pacific, would be incomplete without an independent bridge across the St. Lawrence. The construction of a second bridge comes sooner than could have been expected; and now that the contracts have been let, it is reasonable to suppose that the work will be pushed on to completion as rapidly as possible.

Small pox patients on public conveyances sometimes escape the vigilance of the medical inspector. Last week, one Connors, while suffering from a severe attack of small pox, went by steamer from Montreal to Quebec, and was not noticed by the medical officer. On arriving in Quebec, he breakfasted at a public restaurant, promenaded the streets and mingled freely with the citizens. "Now," asks the *Chronicle*, "what is to prevent a recurrence of this?" And the answer given is more reasonable than would in practice always be found pleasant: "Whenever there is reason for doubt, the physician ought to insist on seeing for himself whether the holder of the certificate is vaccinated or not, whether he is diseased." This is clearly the duty of the medical officer, and no squeamishness should interfere with its performance.

Mr. Bright's peace principles cause him to deprecate war with Burmah or the annexation of that country. But it is not certain

that war or annexation can in this case be averted, desirable as the avoidance of war undoubtedly is.

The cable reports Mr. Bright as saying that "the Canadian duties on British goods were generally higher than on other European goods, but that the colonies would soon sever their connection with England if the experiment [of taxing them] were tried." In the sense of being differential, the Canadian duties on British goods are not higher than on foreign, nor are they higher in any other sense. Mr. Bright, if correctly reported, has made a mistake to the disadvantage of Canada. Lord Salisbury's suggestion of retaliation on foreign nations which tax British goods more than those of other nations, Mr. Bright pronounces absurd. And having said this, he went on to ask why retaliation should not extend to Canada, giving as a reason to Lord Salisbury an inaccurate statement of the facts. Correction will now be in order, if Mr. Bright does not object.

A despatch from Craigellachie Eagle Pass, British Columbia, brings the welcome intelligence that the last rail on the Canadian Pacific has been laid and the last spike driven. It is safe to say that no work of equal magnitude has ever been accomplished by a population of five millions of people, in any other part of the world. The achievement is one of which Canadians have good reason to be proud. The construction of the railway across the Rocky Mountains was the price paid for the acquisition of British Columbia. When Canada came under an obligation to build the road Americans shook their heads and said we had undertaken a work beyond our strength and that we must fail in the attempt to make good our bond. Many Canadians, for some time, shared the doubt. The first attempts to get the road under way through the agency of a company proved abortive. The Syndicate which finally undertook the contract has carried the work to a close, not without some extra aid in the strengthening of its financial resources by the credit of the government. In so stupenduous an undertaking obstacles of all sorts were sure to be encountered, and it says much for the energy and perseverance of the Company that they have all been overcome. There is doubtless a good deal of work yet to be done in perfecting the line in the Rocky Mountain section. But meanwhile it is possible to run a train all the way from Quebec to the Pacific ocean, though regular traffic on the western section will probably have to wait till next spring or summer.

The stoppage of the heavy expenditure on construction, when it is complete, will be felt in various directions. If analogy is worth anything, something like the local stagnation which followed the completion of the Grand Trunk may be expected. The labor released from employment will, for some time, cause a surplus of hands; but luckily the means of transporting them to any point where they may be in demand are ample. Some of the more thrifty of the laborers will settle on the rich lands of the North-West. In this way a considerable

increase in the number of settlers will probably take place. The cessation of the demand for merchandise caused by the work will be felt in the quarters whence the supplies were drawn. The company's banking operations will henceforth be comprised in lesser figures though they will still be very large. The working expenses of the road will at first swallow up a larger proportion of the receipts than they will when the business has increased by settlement along the line; and the immediate future will probably prove the most critical period for the company; but that the road will ultimately become a valuable property can scarcely admit of a doubt.

Hints have been thrown out that a commission may be appointed to enquire into the working of municipal government in the cities of Ontario, with a view of ascertaining whether the work done by the municipal councils, in these places, could not be as well or better done by commissioners. There are people who believe that the change would be an improvement, but they must have paid more attention to the doings of Boss Tweed than to those of Boss Sheppard. Boss Sheppard, who was appointed commissioner for the expenditure of some \$10,000,000 of Federal money, in the District of Columbia, rivalled Tweed in corruption and iniquity. An elected council can be called to account every year; commissioners would have no such check upon them, no fear of electors before their eyes, and if they became corrupt there would be no end to the mischief they might do. What guarantee could be had that they would always remain pure?

Some of the Irish Nationalists wish to get a general agreement of that party to a scheme for boycotting English manufactures with the view of substituting in their place the products of Irish industry. But the boycotting of English manufactures would not necessarily lead to the substitution of Irish manufacturers, and it could do so only if the manufactures of Germany and other nations were also kept out. The shutting out and disuse of all imported manufactures would be impossible; and if it were possible Ireland would be the greatest loser by the exclusion, the effect of which would be to forego the use of cheap and good manufactures for such as were produced under conditions which would make it impossible for them to be either cheap or good.

At a conference between the Quebec Board of Trade and representatives of the Ship Laborers' Benevolent Society a resolution was passed appointing a joint committee to confer on the propriety of amending or repealing certain by-laws of the society. If the by-laws were amended it was understood the merchants would do what they could to meet the reasonable views of the men. Among the arbitrary rules of the society are the restriction to eight hours labor, the denial of the right of steamships to use their own steam winches in loading, refusal to allow men willing to work on holidays to do so. The men get