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TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, AUG. 26, 1887

THE SITUATION.

From Washington comes a despatch which purports to give the true version of the Behring sea sealing imbroglio, in which Canadian vessels were concerned. The Canadian vessels captured last year were released, but the release settled nothing. They were released because the captains, as well they might, pleaded ignorance of the American law which assumes to exclude them, and not them only but all American citizens who are not shareholders in the Alaska company. The captains whose vessels were released, are said to have promised not to offend again by going after seals in Behring sea. This means that they did not want to be captured again; but their promise to obey the American law settles nothing; it is a promise made under duress, and could not even take away the rights of those who made it. Congress may have power to exclude from this sea all its own citizens except a limited number forming a special corporation; on that point we have nothing to say; but there is a ready answer to the demand that all the rest of the world should obey an act of Congress making this a closed sea, and it is one which the Americans have themselves supplied when dealing with the Atlantic fisheries of British America. The municipal law of the United States, when it conflicts with the public law, as it does in this case, is not entitled to supremacy.

The announcement was recently made that the Imperial government had communicated with leading Colonial governments to ascertain whether they would contribute towards carrying into effect an extensive plan of emigration. The British hive still overflows. The British contribution to American immigration is growing proportionately greater than it was, and greater than that of Germany. In 1881, Great Britain contributed 179,423, and Germany 250,630 emigrants to the United States; in 1886, Great Britain sent 160,783, and Germany only 106,559. In other words, as an emigrating country, Great Britain is showing greater persistence than Germany. The British contribution, large as it is, is still less than it was; but in spite of this

the stream still continues to run strong. To what extent is emigration capable of being directed and diverted from the channel in which it now flows? At present, it self-directed, and is therefore not likely to be liable to control to any great extent. But there may be other would-be emigrants who are unable to move for want of means, and who might yet make useful settlers. If some aid were given, by way of loan, to this class, it could be distributed among the colonies. In 1881-2, the largest number of emigrants that ever set sail for the United States, reached that country; and last year was, in point of numbers, the fourth on the list. In a short time, there must be a change; simply from want of public lands in the United States, emigrants will have to come to Canada. It is land they are in search of; and where the land is there they will go.

The combination of the cotton men and of the sugar men cannot be said to have carried the public with them; the first a renewal of an old combination, the latter being now originated. The theory on which protection was asked and granted was that domestic competition would supply the place of foreign, and so prevent a rise of price. Now this ground is abandoned, and in the place of domestic competition we have combination. If prices be relatively low, that fact is due to other causes, not to a cause which has ceased to operate. Do the cotton manufacturers think this fair treatment of the public? The public requires to be convinced, for it holds a different opinion.

After ten weeks of idleness the carpenters of Toronto, who went on strike, have had to lower their flag. The result to them is a heavy loss in money, and no gain on the line of the demands they advanced. This loss is irrecoverable, and there is besides a loss of prestige. The men will be lucky if all of them can now get back to work at the wages which were within their reach in the spring; we trust they may succeed so far, but it is doubtful whether they will. The masters have been put to inconvenience and suffered some loss. Beyond this, it is not certain that there has been any loss to the community in general. Toronto is a well housed city; it has a reasonable number of houses to come and go upon; there was danger that too many rather than too few would be built. That danger has been avoided by the strike; and the real estate movement was steadied by the slackening that resulted. This did no harm, but rather good. Now that the strike is over, the effect of the removal of the impediment it imposed, increased activity, in both these directions, may be counted on.

The Minister of the Interior, when in British Columbia, was met by a budget of wants, which the Province asks the Dominion to supply. The list includes the establishment of county courts and of immigration agencies in the Province, the development of the deep sea fisheries, the creation of a signal and life-saving service, steam communication with the west coast of Van-

couver Island, harbor improvements, and to continue the Nanaimo railway to the northern frontier of the Island, as well as aid to the Shuswap and Okanagan railway, the settlement of the Alaska boundary with the United States, the sinking of artesian wells for irrigation purposes, and dealing with the Indian question. Some of these are proper matters for the Federal government to deal with, and others are not; but it is neither reasonable nor prudent to present so formidable a list all at once. Preparations are being made to settle the Alaskan boundary. The establishment of county courts is only a matter of time; and no doubt the fisheries of the Pacific will claim some attention from parliament, in one form or another. The making of artesian wells is emphatically not the business of the Federal government, and there are other requests to which the same answer will have to be returned. It does not follow that because they ask so much, the British Columbians expect to get all they ask.

Admiral Luce, of the United States navy, who was sent into Canadian waters, in connection with the fishery imbroglio, has been censured by his political superiors, and in return is reported to have offered his resignation. When he arrived in our waters, he appears to have been at a loss how to answer American fishermen who applied to him to be informed as to the extent of their rights in these waters. In this dilemma he addressed a series of five questions on the subject which he presented to Captain Scott, of the Dominion Protective service, and to which he got answers, he then distributed both the questions and the answers in print. No doubt Admiral Luce, with the best intentions in the world, committed an error of judgment in not applying to his own government for the information required. Much of the information given was necessary for American fishermen to be in possession of, but on some points the American government might have expressed a different opinion from that of Captain Scott. It is impossible not to have the highest respect for the good intentions of Admiral Luce, or to regret that he should have incurred censure for an act which sprang from a sincere desire to secure in an amicable way the exact extent of the rights of his own countrymen; without infringing upon the rights of others.

The compilation of Clearing House returns for the principal United States cities made by the Boston Post shows that the total clearings last week in thirty-six cities aggregated \$806,510,706 against \$889,017,242 in 1886, a decrease of 9.2 per cent., against a decrease of 9.5 per cent. the previous week. The total is \$301,003,104, against \$265,494,378 last year. The returns make a better showing in the aggregate both when compared with those of the previous week and with those of the corresponding week of last year. A heavy loss at New York has brought down the aggregate somewhat. The cities outside of New York very generally show big gains when compared with the corresponding week of last