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THE SITUATION.

Labrador, which has so long been allowed to sleep the sleep of the unknown, has at last had some of her mysteries explored. As Sir William Logan remarked, in his time, the geological department of Canada, when it precedes the land surveyor, has, in addition to its own proper work, to do that of the explorer. From a preliminary expedition of this kind, extending over sixteen months, Messrs. Lowe and Eaton have just returned. The result is a valuable addition to our geographical and geological knowledge of the interior of Labrador. Their report, when it appears, ought to make us acquainted with lake Michikamau, in the North-East. This lake is said to be larger than Mistassini, being 100 miles long and 80 wide, and free of islands. Several other lakes, each larger than Lake St. John, came into view. The northern part of the country is represented as a perfect network of waterways, and the country as rich in fish. The falls of Hamilton River, which our explorers cannot claim as a discovery of theirs, extend over six miles, with an aggregate height of 800 feet, the principal fall of the series being 300 feet. It was visited from below on the ice, in winter, and the photographs taken will make us familiar with the narrow gorge into which it passes, its ice cone, and other surroundings. While the principal falls are higher than those of Niagara, they fall far below them in magnificence and power. Extensive iron ore deposits were found in the northern part of the country, extending to Ungava Bay. Of course the mere existence of even rich economic materials does not prove that, under existing conditions, they can be economically worked. The valuable timber will doubtless be utilized.

At the end of the first year's operation, there is some doubt whether the Manchester Ship Canal will prove a paying investment. The deficit is over \$500,000, but the directors are said to have hope in the future. One thing is certain: the canal managers, in the event of the work not paying, will be unable to unload upon the Government, as the Welland Canal Company did, in its extremity. People who talk about increasing the capacity of the St. Lawrence canals to twenty feet of water generally take no account of the returns to be expected; in other words, they do not look at the matter from a business point of view. The cases, it may be admitted, are not quite parallel; but

a great work, like the deepening of the St. Lawrence to twenty feet, ought, if undertaken at all, to be on the basis of a return equal to the interest on the investment, especially as this route can have no rival in the facilities it is capable of affording.

It begins to look as if there would be some objections to the amount of the Behring Sea claims made by Canada, when it comes to a question of Congress voting the money. Any member can raise a question over the amount. There is no reason to suppose that the executive will assume an unreasonable attitude on the question: it remains to be seen whether all parties in Congress will be equally fair. There will probably be developed a disposition to go into the details of the items before a committee. This would entail the bringing of witnesses from a great distance, at heavy expense. Some delay would be caused, though it could not well exceed the length of a session. If there be any means by which the British can assess the damages, and if this be done, the amount might not correspond with what a committee of Congress would find to be due, and the task of harmonizing the two would remain. The amount already agreed upon between the American Government and the British ambassador ought, in reason, to be taken as the amount found, on either side, to be due and be paid accordingly. But it is not certain that this course will be followed.

Labor Day as a name for a holiday is a harmless misnomer that does not mislead. We have just passed the first Labor Day, which, in Canada, is annually to recur on the first Monday in September. Instead of honoring a dead saint, we shall give rest and distinction to living labor. St. Crispin and his compeers may imagine themselves concerned in this modern unification of labor. This unification may extend by absorbing municipal holidays. The multiplication of days on which labor is suspended is a serious matter in some countries: it is even a little serious in Quebec. Labor Day need not multiply holidays, while it unifies them. One day in a year affords little rest from toil, and in the light of rest it can be little regarded. Though the length of the working day varies greatly in different countries, the policy of the Internationals is to reduce it to a common standard. Such a standard is, perhaps, far off. As time goes on, the tendency is to demand a shorter working day. In the '80's ten hours was the least asked for; now the demand is for eight. It is obvious that unless production is to be greatly lessened, there must be a limit to the progressive curtailing of hours. There is a conceivable day in which the maximum of result can be produced; without overstraining the faculties or doing injury to the system. There will always be men willing to work up to their full capacity; there will be others, and more of them, who will try to get off with as little exertion as possible. As under the Melbourne administration, when the Tories, in mere opposition to the manufacturers, advocated a ten-hour day, so now political parties lay themselves out to get the favor of labor for the vote with which modern policy has endowed it. In this way, if at all, the current hours of labor will be lessened.

Beside hastening the sweep of fire over forest and lea, the drought, which in some places came to a halt on Sunday, shrivelled up the grass and seriously interfered with the development of root crops and some kinds of fruit. In the Western States wheat and corn in addition have suffered severely. In irrigation there has been very little experimenting in this part of the world, but where practicable it is the true preventive of drought. California owes much to this expedient. In our North-west the experiment of irrigation is to be made by the