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THE SITUATION.

The utility of the Maritime Congress now sitting in Washington will depend much upon the scope of its discussion and resolves. It is important that it should be truly international, if it is not to confine itself to purely technical questions. Great Britain has sent eleven representatives, besides a secretary; Germany four, besides the German Consul at New York. All four of the German representatives are experts, and Great Britain is no doubt well represented. Canada has no special representative, but her interests are in the keeping of the British delegates. This congress will fall short of its duty if it should fail to provide a solution of the actual difficulties in connection with international maritime rights. What constitutes a close sea, and what is the extent of jurisdiction which a nation may claim over the water on its coast in these days of long range cannon, are questions which require to be dealt with. The extent of jurisdiction has hitherto been regarded as having reference to the national safety, and when the distance at which damage can be done is increased, the range of safety may require a corresponding extension.

A somewhat remarkable treaty has been negotiated between Hawaii and the United States. It provides for the free admission into the kingdom of Hawaii of articles the growth, product, and manufacture of the United States, and that such articles shall be treated in all respects as home-grown. In addition to the commercial clause, there is a proposition of a political nature, by virtue of which the United States undertakes a protectorate of the islands, and the forces of the Republic obtain a right of access to all parts of the protected territory, as far as necessary; and of such necessity, it is clear, the nation with the army and navy would constitute itself the judge. Besides all this, the Hawaiian Government agrees not to conclude any other treaty with any other power, potentate, or State. The American negotiator, Mr. Carter, assisted by Chief Justice Judd, of the Supreme Court of the island, has overshot the mark. The king refuses to sign the protocols, and the people will have

nothing to do with the treaty. They probably think, and rightly, that the proffered protection would be the political death of them. The New York *World's* despatch from San Francisco says: "The action of Commander Adams in furnishing 10,000 rounds of ammunition on July 30, the day of the revolution, has not increased the love of the natives for the United States. They now look to England for protection, whereas two years ago the sentiment favored America."

Iron manufacturers in other parts of the United States are not pleased with the aspiration of the New Englanders, who desire the benefit of free raw materials, coal and iron ore, to enable them to produce all the iron they want. As often happens in such cases, they have set to work to depreciate the raw materials which free trade would place within the reach of New England. Mr. J. A. Evans, jr., who for some time had charge of the Londonderry, N. S. iron works, and is now manager of a blast furnace near Detroit, says in effect, as we gather from the *Iron Trade Review*, of Cleveland, Ohio, that neither the coal nor the iron ore of Nova Scotia is of any value. If this be true, the Michigan furnace has nothing to fear from the raw material asked for by the New Englanders. The Nova Scotia ore, Mr. Evans says, is such as would not be used by any furnace in the United States, and he adds that a ton of Pennsylvania coke or a ton and a quarter of anthracite is worth two tons of Nova Scotia coal for smelting purposes. Whatever truth there may be in these statements, we must not forget that Mr. Evans is an interested witness; and it is reasonable to suppose that the New Englanders have some knowledge of what they say when they allege that free coal and iron ore would enable them to make way against any other iron manufacturers in the Union.

In St. John, N. B., there is a railway terminal question in connection with harbor and warehouse accommodation. A committee of the Board of Trade recommends that the railway companies should provide terminal facilities for themselves, and the opinion is expressed that if the Canadian Pacific intends to use that port, it should be allowed to get possession of Sand Point, now in possession of the Government, by purchase, lease, or gift. The harbor is now managed by the city corporation, and complaint is made that the management is not the most effective. Deep water is one of the great needs of the harbor, and some dredging is necessary. It is doubtful whether the best is made of the water at present, the deepest parts being assigned to vessels that could do with less, and accommodation for large steamers being wanting. The problem is one which should by no means be regarded as impossible of solution.

A block-up of the Ottawa River between the Chaudiere and the Rideau Canal is threatened by the accumulation of refuse from the lumber mills. To sawdust is added slabs, and between the two there is left in mid-channel less than two feet of

water in this part of the river, the accumulation of debris being of great depth. This deposit, which is of course the work of years, will have to be got rid of by dredging. Hereafter it should be made a rule that greater care must be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble, which has gone so far as to threaten the practicability of the navigation of the canal. If the water had happened to be exceptionally low, it is now affirmed, boats would have been unable to enter the locks of the canal owing to the accumulation of saw mill deposit below. This is what the exceptional privileges accorded to the Ottawa saw mills has led to, and the policy which produced it, and which the Otonabee mill owners wish to copy, will have to be reviewed in connection with the facts now disclosed.

For some time there was a doubt whether Mr. Laurier, the leader of the Opposition at Ottawa, would accept unrestricted reciprocity as a plank in the party platform. That doubt has now been removed by the action of Mr. Laurier, and this question is likely to be contested at the next general election. The issue may be more or less obscured by other questions, now existing or which may spring up before that time. Mr. Laurier has strong ground for his belief that the march of Imperial Federation is not likely to overturn the policy of Free Trade to which Great Britain is committed. But this is quite distinct from unrestricted reciprocity. There are some who believe or affect to believe that Sir John Macdonald himself may accept unrestricted reciprocity when the general election comes round, and Mr. Laurier quotes the Premier as saying, "If we cannot have reciprocity of trade, we must have reciprocity of tariffs." But a tariff may be on any conceivable scale, and it is possible that Sir John and the advocates of unrestricted reciprocity, if they came to compare notes, might find themselves very far apart. Mr. Laurier admits that his party intend to throw their whole strength into this one question, but it will not be possible, without a plebiscite, to keep this issue simple and distinct from contact with others.

A ship-railway scheme by which ocean vessels may be made amphibious and taken out of water inland to manufacturing centres has been proposed by Mr. Wm. Smith, a harbor engineer, of Aberdeen. He presented it to the London Chamber of Commerce, where it is said to have been favorably received. It would be on the same principle as the Bay Verte ship railway, in which Canada is making a bold if somewhat perilous experiment, but applied to a different purpose. If the thing can be done at all, it can be done anywhere, if the distance be not too great. One would be rash to say that it cannot; but it would certainly have been wise to experiment on a more modest scale than we are doing at Bay Verte. If Mr. Smith is to be regarded as a prophet, shall we not have to vote obsolete before birth the Liverpool and Manchester canal now being made at enormous cost?