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THE SITUATION.

The news of the safety of the foreign legations at Peking, last week, proved untrue, in the form it was given. According, however, to last reports through the French Consul at Chee Fu, all the ministers and residents were, on the 25th ult., assembled at the British Legation, and the French, German and Japanese Legations were guarded by their own detachments.

The Congress of Boards of Trade has asked the Imperial Government to appoint a commission on trade relations, notably between the different parts of the British Empire. Upon its adoption the proposed Canadian resolutions were withdrawn. Another resolution passed shows very plainly that there are still people living whom history has taught nothing. The resolution, fathered by Mr. Haldane, urged the Imperial Government to convene an Imperial Conference to consider the question of colonial contributions to the army and navy. Canada recognizes that she ought to do something towards the defence of the Empire to which she belongs; but the question of taxation for the purposes named is one of great delicacy. We may do much voluntarily, as a matter of duty, without acting in a bargaining spirit; which might not be done if we were asked to stipulate to pay in future a certain amount for these purposes. The raising of the question now would probably be found to be premature and might do more harm than good. It would be better that the colonies should be asked to do what they can, and it might be well if they could agree of themselves what contributions they would make. The parties dealing with the question must beware not to repeat the blunder that lost to the British Empire the old American colonies.

Ex-governor McInnes blames Ottawa interference for the unsatisfactory state of things which has existed in British Columbia for the past ten months. It is not quite clear how he makes that out, as a matter of fact. Over nine months ago, he says, he urged his Ministry in favor of either an immediate session or an immediate election; the Ottawa Government, as he con-

ceives, unwarrantably interfering, forbade him to interfere as to the time of the meeting of the Legislature; this meant that the only safe thing was to leave the time for the holding of the session to those who were responsible for the act. The Governor was responsible to the Ottawa Government, by whom he was appointed, and it was not unkind or unconstitutional in them to give him advice as to the discharge of his duties, if a difference had arisen between them and him. No doubt such advice should be given with caution; the Governor desired to do things himself, for which he would not be responsible, except in the possible forfeiture of his office for unconstitutional procedure, which in the end did happen. The ex-governor probably decided wisely not to become a candidate for a seat in the House, as he has been requested to do.

Mr. R. G. Reid, who was permitted to acquire such extensive interests in Newfoundland, including territory, timber, minerals and railway franchises, now, not unnaturally, desires to form a company to work out his plans in connection with these various properties. But the Government had, it seems, left itself enough remaining power to enable it to stop him doing so, at least temporarily. The multiplied concessions with which Mr. Reid has been favored, evoked criticism, roused jealousy, and created systematic opposition. He has had two successive attorneys-general at his back, but the electorate, which stood behind, in the person of Ministers, comes forward with its objections against the transfer of his holdings to a company. If the authorities have taken reasonable precaution against the monopoly becoming injurious, the form of it does not matter much; a monopoly in the hands of an individual may be as injurious as in the hands of a company. If the mono-monopolist should not have been given full swing, the Government and the Legislature are to blame. The question is no longer what ought to have been done in the first instance, but how to deal with the live elephant, which wishes to move. Mr. Reid stops work on a hotel, at St. John's, which he had begun; and the public regards this as retaliation. They seem to think, since Mr. Reid has done so much, there is no end to his tether.

The reports of the Parliamentary Committee—for there are two—on the emergency food supplied by Canada for the troops in Africa, cannot both be satisfactory to anybody, though each report will be greedily swallowed by the political party of which it is the product, and to which it appeals. The food was something sent to meet a possible emergency, in which the Imperial supply might fail from some accident. As this food might be carried days, weeks, and even months, before the occasion contemplated for its use might come, its weight would be an addition, more or less serious, to the burthen the soldier had to carry; the qualities it ought to embrace were lightness and concentration. The proteids it contained, the most valuable qualities, were low, not much if at all higher than ordinary food; though other samples of the same sort of food differed so much in degree as to contain several times the quantity of proteids. There were some suspicious circumstances against the furnishers; they got the stuff, which came from New York, through the custom house, without payment of duty, on showing the contract to supply it, and on the promise that