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EDWD. TROUT, MANAGER.

TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, JAN. 29, 1886

THE SITUATION.

The amendment on which the Salisbury Government was defeated, though economic in form was purely political in essence. The vote had really no reference to trade or agricultural depression, on which it was ostensibly founded, and the reference to small holdings on equitable terms as to rent and security, is only a modification of the election cry which promised every laborer "three acres of land and a cow." Pictures of the identical cow which every man of them was to get were plentiful; the cow and the three acres have yet to come. Assuredly Mr. Gladstone has no panacea for trade and agricultural depression; but the motion served its political purpose. The question now is what Mr. Gladstone will do with his triumph.

The convention between France and England for the regulation of the "French shore" fisheries of Newfoundland is described in a cablegram: "France consents to permit England to establish industries in the harbours on the coast hitherto reserved for French fishermen under the Treaty of Utrecht, and abandons her rights to the salmon fisheries in the rivers; the men-of-war of England and France shall have equal rights in regard to police duty along the coast, and French fishermen shall be exempt from paying duties on articles necessary to the fishing industry." The treaty of Utrecht gave Newfoundland absolutely to the English; this was one of the points which the British Crown refused to yield. France could have no right to the salmon fisheries of the rivers, as she had no proprietary rights in any part of the soil. The free goods for the French fishermen will create a discrimination against Newfoundland, even if they do not lead to smuggling.

Gold mining in British Columbia appears to be looking up. From a pamphlet written by Mr. Peter L. Trout, giving an account of Granite Creek, it appears that rich placer mines were discovered last summer, which have yielded some days one hundred dollars a day to each hand. Other promising locations, from which fair returns are got are pointed out. In the Similkameen country auriferous veins are not easy to

trace, the surface being covered with trees and grass; but the washings in the streams point to the source whence the loose gold comes. At Granite Creek and the scenes of other recent discoveries, it is placer minings that is followed. When these fail, the gold in the matrix will be attacked. It is probable that the future of British Columbia will depend largely upon its value as a mining country.

The small pox scourge through which Montreal has passed is likely to lead to precautions against a recurrence of that or any similar calamity. So long as the neighbouring villages stood isolated, they were liable at any time to become centres of pestilence; they will never be subjected to proper sanitary regulations till they become part of the city. Fortunately the curative process of absorption has already begun. The village of St. Jean Baptiste, one of the worst foci of the late pestilence, has by a majority of more than six to one, decided for annexation. The municipalities of St. Gabriel and Coteau St. Louis, are also desirous of being annexed. The city, as a sanitary measure of self-defence, must give its consent. When these suburbs are taken into the city, they can be drained and made salubrious. One of them might have some drainage for itself if the city had not blocked the way, and the terms on which it could make use of the city sewers could not be agreed upon.

Toronto finds itself face to face with a like question. She has in her rear some village neighbours, without any adequate means of sanitation. They could drain through the city by paying for the privilege; but they have so far failed to do so. Now, it is said, they will ask the Legislature to empower them to commit a theft on the city, by using its property without paying for it. Drain they must, but they must pay, as the city does, for the privilege. The rights of the city cannot be given away. Imperfect sanitation in those villages there will be. They will be subject to extra dangers from fire, and will depend upon the city to come to their aid in case of extremity. But without water, even the city fire department could not help them much. The insurance companies have the fate of these growing dangers in their hands: they can, and if competition among them were not rampant, would refuse to insure in these places which have no adequate protection against fire. Still it is worth while to see whether they cannot agree to stop an evil which may, and almost certainly will some day, otherwise inflict a serious loss upon them.

That a railway can be built from Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay without difficulty the result of the exploration is reported to show. The road, it is said, would be neither difficult nor expensive to construct. Port Nelson is proposed of as the terminus; and it cannot be denied that its situation is more favorable than that of Churchill. But the approach to Fort Nelson is blocked by shallows which would prevent the entry of large vessels. At great cost, the obstruction might be removable; but the

force of the current from the North would have a tendency to fill up the channel after it was dredged out. Nor has the commercial value of the navigation of the Bay yet been satisfactorily settled. The experience of the two years of special tests, has not been very favorable, perhaps it has been exceptionally unfavorable, but the point is one which can be settled only by further observations, during which impatient promoters find it difficult to wait for the facts; in the absence of these the construction of a railway would be worse than a leap in the dark; it would be a leap with a prospect of a fatal fall as the result.

The New England fishermen have set up the cry of sour grapes with the determination, if possible, to wait for a chance to pluck them when the owner is asleep. The coast fisheries, they have discovered, have lost their value, the fish having voluntarily gone out to meet the New Englanders beyond the three mile limit. It is very lucky for Ben Butler's political clients that the fish has shown this accommodating spirit at the right moment. Unfortunately for this theory one of the senatorial advocates of free fish for Americans, in British waters, let the cat out of the bag. You cannot tell, he said, when a vessel is within the three mile limit; clearly indicating that his clients would rather take the risk than pay for the privilege, and that such is the meaning of their opposition to a new treaty. Fortunately the fishermen are not nearly so numerous as the consumers of fish. And with the extension of railways, the consumption of fresh water fish will greatly increase. These facts must have their weight in the settlement of the question.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce has considered the charge that freight rates by the Intercolonial on sugar are too high, with the result, as stated by Mr. Pickford, that "no less than eight cargoes of sugar for Canadian refineries were discharging in New York that ought to be discharging in Halifax." In this matter! Montreal is probably more interested than Halifax. Many cargoes of sugar that formerly went to Halifax now go to St. John. The Intercolonial may fairly be asked to do this competitive business at the lowest paying rate, but not at a loss. An appeal is to be made to the government, and no doubt the whole facts will come out. DeWolf & Son complained of Grand Trunk discrimination in the cattle trade as between Halifax and Portland; but it is obvious that cattle must take the shorter and not the longer railway route to the ocean; and, other things being equal, the rule is one which will apply to every kind of freight, for the reason that railways cannot compete with ocean rates.

The contract for the short line by the International route, is said to have been signed. The maximum grade is 58 feet to the mile, and the maximum curves will be 6° to the mile. Local interests may and do object; but a line which stretches across the continent will find it an indispensable condition of success that it take the shortest cut to the ocean. In the Intercolonial we have a national line; it was necessary to