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Manager.

TORONTO, CAN., FRIDAY, JULY 29, 1887

### THE SITUATION.

A startling and unexpected change, brought about by the pressure of the Liberal Unionists, has been proposed in the Irish Land Bill, by the government: Against the reduction of judicial rents the government had made a stand. Now it proposes to act on the plan of the Cowper commission, and grant abatements of rent for the next three years. The reason for this limitation of time is that, in three years, the Purchase Act will be in force. The announcement of the change of policy was variously received. Morley jeered and Parnell expressed satisfaction. In making the change the government looks to the fact that Parliament had undertaken to control and alter land contracts in Ireland, as well as to the decline in the price of produce. The scale of remission will not be uniform, but will be based on the varying prices in different districts. In what sense the government can, as Mr. Smith pretends, be said to adhere to the idea that judicial rents ought not to be revised, it would be difficult to explain. In making the change, the government cannot be said to be fishing for Irish votes; for these were all pre-engaged by Gladstone, who goes the "whole hog" for home rule.

With the advent of the heated season, we have a recurrence of complaints against the over-crowding of excursion steamers. The complaint is made in Quebec, and it is made in Ontario. The boats which carry the pilgrims to Ste. Anne are said to be loaded very often to double their legal capacity, and the wonder is that some great calamity has not happened. Against some of the Toronto ferry boats the same charge is made, and as there will be an investigation in one case, the truth is likely to become known. The difficulty used to be that the law provided no remedy; now, when this defect has been cured, it is a question of putting the law into operation. The shrine of Ste. Anne is credited with working miracles; but it will not be wise to tempt Providence by continuing to put on the boats an excessive number even of devoted pilgrims.

Since the first of July, when a new law went into force, a vigorous onslaught has been made on the bucket shops in Chicago. At first, the bucket shops continued their business under the pretence that all their transactions had been sanctified by being placed under the protection of the Board of Trade. But the plea was not true; the Board of Trade is the principal assailant. It seems difficult to make out whether the object of the war is to put down a certain class of transactions, or to sanction them only in the Board of Trade. If the crusade is not directed against a particular practice, wherever carried on, it is one-sided and must fail. If the transactions are improper in one place they are equally so in all others. If the distinction be between large and small transactions, morality will scarcely ratify it. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

Already the Canadian Pacific Railway bridge across the St. Lawrence, at Ste. Anne's, is completed, and the first train has crossed. The solidity and durability of the structure are commended. It is little more than a year (June 1886) since the masonry was begun. Next week, passenger trains will run over the bridge. This is the second bridge over the St. Lawrence, and a third is projected; but when Quebec will be in possession of the facility which it covets but does not feel that it would be justified in paying for, belongs to the uncertainties. The widest span of the new bridge is 325 feet; the rest, with one exception which is 104, are 66 feet; in all there are fourteen. The cost is put down at about \$2,000,000.

Such alterations in the quarantine regulations at Grosse Isle have been made as will make it easy for vessels to report in the night; and we shall hear no more of vessels coming from an infected port, or having had a contagious disease on board during the passage, passing up the river without inspection. Luckily the incident which led to the making of the new regulations was not followed by any ill consequences, and it has borne the good fruit of making impossible a repetition of the irregularity of avoiding inspection.

Fully half the fishery season passed over before a single capture for infraction of the fishery laws was made, by our cruisers, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, though the protective service has been well maintained. Two seine boats and seines, belonging to the Col. J. French and the Argonaut, were caught shore-fishing off East Point, P.E.I. The seines were full of mackerel at the time of the capture. The schooners to which they belonged got away, but were chased and may be captured. On the same day, July 24, the Gloucester fishing schooner, Annie W. Hodgson, was captured near Shelburne, by the fishery cruiser Advance, for infraction of the revenue laws. The defence of the captain is that he had lost two men in a dory, during a fog, and was in search of them; and that for this purpose he sent a boat ashore, where the missing men were found. The real facts will doubtless soon be disclosed.

New rules restricting the importation of cattle, from the United States, into Manitoba and the North-West, have been embodied in an order in Council. All previous orders on the subject are rescinded; and except for stock-breeding purposes and passing in transit, the importation of neat cattle is prohibited. All animals that come in are to be inspected, and swine are to be quarantined for twenty-one days. This new precaution against the importation of disease, coming as it does so soon after another measure having the same object in view, implies that some new necessity for it has recently arisen.

The Niagara Central Railway will require to pass over the Burlington Canal, which is federal property; and before this can be done permission must be obtained. An Ontario charter is insufficient to convey such permission. The case will come before the Privy Council in October. Meanwhile the company is restrained by injunction from interfering with the property of the city of Hamilton, at the beach.

There is an Anti-Poverty Society in New York as well as here. At a meeting of its members, the other day, the chief apostle of Henry George, Dr. McGlynn by name, made his boast: "I said last December that I would if I could confiscate all the land without one cent of reimbursement to the miscalled owner." This is the gospel of Henry George, who distinctly states that he would leave owners of land nothing but the name. The communists say this would be a good beginning; but they insist that Henry George must be logical and confiscate all property. Whereupon Henry George replies, that they must grab the land first, and when that is done take other forms of property into their unmerciful consideration. These men are the allies and the teachers of the Anti-Poverty Society, in Toronto, though some of the latter would like to disown them. Such miserably wild ideas may seem to sensible people harmless, but it is just as well that by the honest part of the community they should be discouraged.

The citizens of St. John, N. B., in public meeting assembled, negatived a resolution offered by Mr. Skinner, M. P., to place the harbor in commission, with a view of obtaining an appropriation for its improvement, from the Dominion Government. Against the proposal it was argued that the city might retain the control of the harbor, which it obtained by royal charter, and get the appropriation too. This view prevailed. It was pointed out that the harbors of Montreal and Quebec were placed in commission, while Halifax got an elevator and other expensive works without losing control. Mr. George Robertson, who was able to boast that he went to St. John with only \$8.50 in his pocket, contended that "it was time to stop grumbling and growling, and work as if they had faith in St. John's future." Manly and honest advice.

"Purchases of real estate," in the United States, "to an enormous amount," says the