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EDWD. TROUT, MANAGER.

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THE SITUATION.

A rumour comes from Newfoundland, via Halifax, that President Cleveland will again recommend to Congress a fishery commission to deal with all the questions that demand settlement. Since last Session of Congress, new questions have arisen: on the west side of the continent the Americans have made claims of the same kind, and far greater, than any made by Canada, in the east. The result is that the claims made by classes or corporations in the United States practically neutralize one another; leaving room for the moderate and legal claims of Canada, made on both sides of the continent. The difficulties that have arisen in the west will prove a check on the extravagant demands made by New England fishermen, in the east; and the necessity of reconciling American conflicting claims will be strongly felt. Besides, the New England fishermen find that they can carry on a poaching business undisturbed, and that there is more chance of profit in a legal settlement than in a defiance of the law; the catch of mackerel this year having been only about one-sixth as much as last year. Possibly the appointment of a Commission will not meet the same opposition next Session of Congress that it did last.

The Canadian Government has asked for the release of the fishing vessels captured in Behring Strait and taken to California, and according to one statement a release has been granted. But the questions which the seizure raises have yet to be settled; and the release of the vessels would not debar any claim which their owners may have for damages. In 1872, Secretary Boutwell expressed the opinion that his government did not possess the right of excluding foreign fishing vessels from the Alaskan seas. The three mile limit will, of course, stand good. It is satisfactory to know that the American Government will in respect to these vessels, follow the course taken by the Government of Canada in dealing with American vessels captured for breach of treaty or infraction of law, on the Atlantic coast. If there be any formal decision, it will be judicial not departmental.

The British Trades Union Congress, which met at Hull, Yorkshire, resolved that the reform of the land laws must include compulsory cultivation of waste land. The products derived from these lands would be very small in proportion to the amount of labor spent on them. If the laborer were his own employer and had no rent to pay—such lands would not yield rent till a heavy expenditure had been made on them—he would get much less than the average return in the shape of wages. But it is intended that these lands shall be cultivated at the expense of capital: they would be made lands, that is, their productiveness would be entirely owing to the capital-moved labor employed upon them. They would, for purposes of utility, not differ from any other creation of capital effected by the purchase of labor. The application of Mr. George's doctrine to lands so reclaimed, would be robbery as unmitigated as the stealing of a watch or a purse. To some extent the demand of the Trades' Union Congress will fit into the Irish policy of the present government.

Many of the sailors employed on American fishing vessels are Canadians. One of these being drowned, the vessel put into Arichat, N.S., to make known the sad event to his relatives, without officially reporting. This was a violation of the customs laws, and the vessel owner had to deposit \$400 before she could be allowed to proceed. It is a hard case; but it is easy to see that if such irregularities were passed over, any amount of smuggling might go on, undetected.

A decision has been given by the Treasury department at Washington, which narrows the rights of Canadian, and indirectly of American, vessel owners, as they have been hitherto exercised. A Canadian propeller, the "California," took on passengers at Cleveland, Ohio, then called at the Canadian port of Sarnia, and proceeded with her passengers to Chicago. This is held to be coasting, an offence punishable with a fine of \$2 for each passenger. If this decision be valid, it is so for the vessels of both nations, and it will affect the fortunes and interfere with the plans of both, though perhaps in different degrees.

Fresh Canadian fish is entitled to enter American ports duty free; but the Treasury department has decided that this privilege can be allowed only to fish required for immediate consumption. There will be considerable difficulty in carrying out this decision, as each custom house officer will have to decide whether, in his opinion, the quantity of fresh fish imported is more than is required for consumption. This rule places almost unlimited power in the hands of collectors, whose decisions must, from the nature of the case, be more or less arbitrary.

University federation, at Toronto, goes on slowly but surely. The Methodist Conference, by a vote of 138 against 113, has decided in favor of it. But before Victoria can remove to Toronto, a considerable sum of money will have to be raised.

Mr. John Macdonald, the well-known Toronto merchant, offered to give \$25,000 towards carrying out the resolution. Mr. Cox, of Peterboro, offered \$80,000 conditionally: provided \$450,000 could be raised in all, which proceeds on the lines of the elder Gordon Bennett's scheme for paying off the war debt. Mr. Wm. Gooderham would give a like amount. Mr. Mulock will give \$5,000 free from conditions, as all offers to be valuable must be. Munificent offers were made, on condition that Victoria should go to some other unlikely places, but they have no real significance. The best way to help federation is by giving unconditional subscriptions to carry it out.

Mr. Parnell's Land Bill proposes to suspend evictions on payment of half the rent overdue. Two serious objections to this measure at once suggest themselves. There must be tenants who are unable to pay half the rent due; they are the poorest and, if poverty is to be the rule, the most deserving of consideration: for them the bill provides no relief. The second objection is that the bill authorizes every tenant to refuse to pay more than half what he owes to his landlord; instead of meeting a necessity, the bill authorizes the refusal to pay by all who wish to shirk their obligations, and who are dishonest enough to aver that they are not able to pay. Since rents were judicially fixed, there has been no fall in prices to correspond with the proposed fifty per cent. reduction in rent; though the two percentages need not necessarily be equal.

The Ohio State Board of Agriculture makes the recent importation of diseased cattle at Point Levis an occasion for demanding that cattle going from Canada into the Western States should be subjected to quarantine. But the real ground of the demand is probably to be found in the fact that for some time Canada found it necessary to exact quarantine upon American cattle. The Board adds that sheep also, going into the States, ought to be subjected to quarantine, as an alleged preventive of foot and mouth disease. A notion of protection to American sheep raisers is probably responsible for this suggestion.

At the Dominion Trades Congress, which met in Toronto last Friday, Mr. O'Donohue said "he did not want to have it understood that land was like other property, absolutely within title of the men who assumed to own it. The title to land was in the State, and that principle should be affirmed." If a farmer were told that he does not own the land which the State sold to him, and which his labor has made productive, but that the State, which took his money for it, still owns it, he would not be found to be peculiarly receptive of the idea. It can scarcely have been to discuss this question that a Trades Congress committee was appointed to confer with a committee of Grangers.

The remigration of French Canadians, who went to the New England factories, is now proposed on a large scale. Arrange-