

SECOND ADJOURNMENT OF THE JOINT COMMISSION.

A second adjournment of the Joint Commission, which first sat at Quebec and next at Washington, necessarily leaves its work unfinished. Till all is done nothing is done. That is a safe rule to apply to the present case. The Americans, like astute diplomats as they are, have done everything to forward the questions which they wish settled, particularly the building of war-vessels on the lakes and the catching of seals in Behring Sea and the Pacific, to which they desire to put an end in the interest of an American sealing company whose servants kill the animals on the breeding islands. The Canadians, it seems, have tried to keep other questions, including reciprocity, in which Canada is interested, on a level of advancement with those which the Americans took every opportunity to push to the front. In this enterprise they have been only partially successful. For whatever reason, the American commissioners appear to have played the waiting game, keeping from the Canadians, to the last moment, information of their intentions, which it was desirable to obtain before adjournment. One justifiable cause for delay, and one only, a more favorable composition of the Senate after the 4th of March next, is conceivable. Care has been taken, according to the most accredited reports, to ascertain in advance just what the Senate would consent to confirm in a treaty and what it would not. This precaution is absolutely necessary, for it is mere waste of time to agree upon items to which the Senate would refuse its consent. A few years ago, a fishery treaty failed to go into effect for this reason.

In Canada, people are found who are opposed to any commercial treaty with the Republic. They include, or perhaps it would be safe to say they are confined to manufacturers, but do not include the whole. They, however, do not plead their case directly; they appear as the champions of the farmer, and assume that he has nothing to gain by reciprocity, alleging that Canada imports from the States more agricultural produce than the States take from her. The question is not to be settled in this wholesale way. It would be an advantage to Canada to get for her barley and her lumber an open market in the Republic. Nobody expects that an agricultural schedule comprising all raw produce would avoid some competitions which do not now exist, but that reciprocity in raw produce would, on the whole, be advantageous to both countries is beyond question. Along a frontier of 8,000 miles, convenience of supply from one country to the other would count for a good deal. Here the same article would pass one way and there the other. And the doctrine of protection, whatever may be its significance when applied to other things, scarcely counts in the case of agriculture, for in common markets beyond their own borders both countries must enter into competition. If the farmer does not have even the appearance of protection, he will be the less tolerant of it in others. The consciousness of this fact gives him officious denouncers of reciprocity, whom he has in no way commissioned. Our western farmer wants free lumber irrespective of reciprocity in that article, it being indispensable to him, but he will not get with the consent of Canadian lumbermen. Under a system of reciprocity in raw produce, that country which best used its opportunities would make most by handling the produce of its neighbor.

On the removal of the inhibition to build war-vessels on the lakes, Canada can have no illusions. She has nothing to gain and possibly much to lose by it. The removal would be solely for the benefit of our neighbors. They wish to build vessels of war on the lakes, presumably

for reasons of economy, it being possible to obtain the materials there on better terms than elsewhere. But these vessels cannot get to their destination unless we permit them to pass through our canals, which have been constructed at a cost of \$70,000,000. The question of national defence, which would be incidentally affected by the construction of foreign war vessels on these lakes, need not be blinked. In case of war the lakes would be in danger of being dominated by an American fleet. War vessels cannot be built in a day, it is true, but there would generally be some on the stocks, in various stages of progress, which could be hurried to completion if desired. It is no doubt true that independent of this the vast superiority of the tonnage of the American commercial marine on the lakes would, in any case, give our neighbors a great advantage. This disparity is normal, but considering the vast area of our North-West, yet to be developed, it does not follow that it will always continue to exist.

Canada, with her vast interests on the Pacific, will make a great sacrifice if she gives up the rights which she enjoys in the seal fishery of that sea and Behring Sea. Her maritime rights in these seas have a special value beyond those of the mere profit derived from sealing. It is important for us to develop a marine on these waters, which are closely associated with our marvellous gold region of the Klondike. What are we offered to surrender our rights of sealing in these seas? The Republic proposes to buy the apparatus, the vessels, etc., with which we carry on the industry. What we are to get for our rights of sealing, under the Paris award, we do not know. This is a public right which it is not in the power of a few British Columbia sealers to sell along with their personal property. It is a right which, if not alienated, would descend to future generations. No doubt this right is capable of alienation by the present generation; and such alienation if once made, whatever the consideration, will be irrevocable. In a matter of this kind it behooves us to be very careful what we do.

On the whole it is clear that Canada will get no treaty with the United States which will not involve considerable sacrifices on her part. We need to see to it that we do not sacrifice our birthright. For the rest, we shall be prepared to give equivalents for what we get. On the whole a commercial treaty must be the best for private interests and for the public weal. In all such cases the political is and must be the controlling element. By political we distinguish whatever concerns the nation in its corporate capacity and on which the amity of nations depends. To this public interest private interests must, in case of collision, give way. We may regret the necessity, but we must be prepared to accept the result.

THINGS CANADIAN.

There is a tendency in this country to undervalue the worth of Canadian productions. This lack of appreciation extends to all the different fields in which men busy themselves—art, literature and commerce. In the latter branch we are more especially interested. It is the fashion now-a-days to call into question the energy of Canadian capitalists, and not until we hear of Canadian capital owning the electric tramway system of one of the largest cities in the United Kingdom, or exploiting the newly opened up resources of Cuba, to say nothing of the important transportation facilities with the Orient controlled by Canadians, do we realize that Canadian capital is able to take care of itself in world-wide competition. There are undeveloped resources in Canada, it is true, and it is not unlikely there will remain undeveloped resources for some time to come.