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THE SITUATION.

A rumor that England intends to declare a protectorate over Egypt shows some persistence. A protectorate of the Sultan against all the world would imply the end of the reign of the Turk there. In 1840 Lord Palmerston held that "neither France nor any other power has any right whatever to erect itself into the protector of that subject (Mehemet Ali) against his legitimate sovereign." But things have greatly changed since then. The Porte did not charge itself with the duties of suzerain when the Upper Nile was in the hands of rebels, whom England has now subdued. France has done absolutely nothing to recover this region from the dervishes, yet the Porte is reported to have granted her a lease of the Bhar el Ghazel Province. If this be true a way out of the complication will have to be found, and it is not likely to be through the retirement of England from the scene of her recent victory. In 1840 Great Britain, Austria, Russia and the Porte settled the Egyptian question without France. She had before that event, as on the present occasion, refused to join England in taking the necessary measures in Egypt, and then complained of injury to her feelings in having the question settled without her co-operation. But in view of her previous conduct, that exclusion was just what Lord Palmerston desired and was able to secure.

France has passed through the Ministerial crisis without commotion, and revision of the Dreyfus case no longer causes dangerous excitement. Under these favoring circumstances it is possible for the French Government to evacuate Fashoda unconditionally and without any assurance of future compensation. Thus the war cloud which looked so threatening is blown away, though the preparations for war continue on both sides, as a matter of extra precaution or for some reason not known to the public.

One thing connected with the street railway operatives' strike in London is difficult to understand. The men, it seems, are relying on some agreement that outsiders are not to be brought into the city to work on the railway. Such an agreement, by whomsoever made, is against public policy, against the common rights of Canadians, and if the question of its legal validity ever comes before the

courts the reasonable supposition is that it must fail. When one State of the American Union proposed to treat American laborers from another State as foreigners to whom the right to labor might be denied, trades-unionism seemed to have run mad, and it affected the Governor of the State with the distemper. If none but citizens of London are to be employed on the street railway, and the rest of Canada would be treated as foreign to the municipality and excluded as such, we should have improved on latest American notions of exclusion between States. There is a legal and constitutional sense in which certain things belonging to one State are foreign to another; for instance, corporations owing their creation to a particular State. But the rights of citizenship, with the right to labor in any State of the commonwealth cannot be thus abridged; neither can they in Canada. Of late there has been observed elsewhere a tendency to assert restrictions upon the rights of labor similar to that which has been reduced to some sort of a compact in London. Under the old English poor laws, restrictions on the right of labor to move from one place to another were generally enforced, to the great disadvantage of labor. The right of labor freely to move from places where it is in excess to others where it is in demand, is one to which labor owes much. Restrictions upon this right can never be to the advantage of labor, however they may, under peculiar local circumstances, appear to be so.

Another feature of the London strike is the suggestion that the resident officer of the company ought to be driven out of the city. If this had come from an exasperated workman it might have been understood, but when it comes as a special mark of political wisdom, it is properly received with amazement. The other items of the quarrel are such as form the staple of all strikes. The workmen insisted on receiving recognition in their corporate capacity, and the employers did not desire to recognize the union. This is a point in the dispute in which the workmen often win. On the present occasion the company's agent explains that his objection was not to confer with their men, but only to receive a deputation from them. The distinction seems to us to be without a difference. These labor unions, if troublesome to employers, are valuable to the workmen, and the time has come when a refusal to recognize them can have little effect. But recognition does not imply compliance with all, or any demands, which a union may make. If these workmen have been relying on an agreement which assumed to secure London for London workmen exclusively they have been misled, and the sooner they recognize the fact the better. That is apparently the crux of the whole question.

Commercially the conquest of Cuba and Porto Rico by the United States is likely to prove, in some respects, disadvantageous to Canada. To the new conquest the United States tariff and navigation laws have been extended. Against Canada, the former creates discrimination, the latter exclusion. Our vessels will still have a right to go to any one Cuban port, but not from one Cuban port to another, or from a Cuban port to Porto Rico. The discrimination of the American tariff is a more serious matter. Our trade in fish with these countries may be stated, in figures, at about \$1,000,000 per annum. Possibly there may be some compensations, though it is difficult to see exactly what they will be. With increased prosperity in the islands the demand for fish will probably increase, but this demand will, under the new arrangements, be supplied by American fishermen. It seems difficult to believe that the Americans intend the arrangements now promulgated