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TELEPHONE No. 1485.

EDW. TROUT,
Manager.

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THE SITUATION.

General Booth, of the Salvation Army, proposes to establish, in South Africa, an agricultural colony for the reclamation of ignorant, vicious and poor people, who are first to be brought together in the British metropolis, where they are to be supported on broken victuals, and clothed with cast-off clothes, till they are ready to depart for their permanent home. There will be some selection, only the best of the class rescued being sent out. It is proposed to operate on a scale that will require £1,000,000 sterling for the realization of the plan. General Booth must have great faith in the proposed colony, when he assigns to every colonist the task of building his own house, and expects that he will refund the cost of his removal to South Africa. Colonization schemes containing several of the points found in this have heretofore been planned at different times and in different countries, and put to the test of experience. They have, as a rule, been found to contain elements of failure. At the same time, the plan of General Booth has much in its favor. It is among the most unobjectionable of all possible means of relieving poverty, enlightening ignorance and removing vice. In favor of the self-supporting feature of the plan, which makes reformation come from within, it would be difficult to say too much. General Booth is sanguine, and the success of his aims would confer a great blessing on the most miserable class of people to be found in England. Misdirected charity may do more harm than good; charity that reforms the object of it can do only good.

There is an obvious limit to the total amount which a small town or city can vote in bonuses to manufactures. And that limit seems to have been suddenly reached in one of the most promising of the new manufacturing towns of Ontario, West Toronto Junction. A by-law granting a \$80,000 bonus has been defeated there by the property-holders. Persons who accept bonuses do not care to grant them to others, and if their employes take the same view, bonus granting in time gets a set-back from the force which originated it.

But West Toronto Junction has possibly another resource, in private subscriptions in aid of incoming manufacturing concerns. Some considerable offers of assistance have been made by individuals. And this is not the only place where like aid is proposed. But if the municipal bonus failed, private gifts in aid would not go far towards supplying their place. The number of persons likely to make gifts must be small. Still something may be done in that way, and it is one to which, resting on a voluntary foundation, no serious objection can be taken.

After the decision of the Montreal Conference, there remained no ground on which the Senate or the Regents of Victoria College could maintain their opposition to Federation. The legal contest was at an end. The Board of Regents were restrained, by the judgment of Mr. Justice McMahon, from carrying confederation into effect, only till the assent of the Senate was obtained. Both the Regents and the Senate have given up the fight, yielding with a good grace to the decision of Conference. Some misgivings survived the opposition, but a short time, enthusiasts believe, will see them disappear. What degree of economy Victoria will snatch from Federation will depend upon herself. If she be content to confine herself to theology the gain will be great, but if she keeps up an arts staff and enters the arena of science on her own account, there will be great waste, without, perhaps, in the latter, satisfactory results. This decision must, in one sense, strengthen the University of Toronto; still it remains to be seen whether it will be entirely free from peril for that institution. There are at present no grounds for predicting that other denominational universities will follow Victoria into Federation at present. They retain their individuality, with more or less of weakness, arising from the limited scale of their several endowments.

A new tariff has been presented to the French Chamber of Deputies by M. Roche, Minister of Commerce. Like previous tariffs, it comprises a maximum and a minimum; the latter applied to countries which reciprocate in favor of France, the former to countries which do not do so. But some of the items in the agricultural schedule form an exception to the general character of the tariff; on these items, there is only one scale of duties, and no prospect of reciprocation is held out. To this the free list makes some exceptions, wool and green hides, which are classed with raw silk and raw cotton, the object being to place at the disposal of French manufacturers free raw materials. High duties are to be put on cereals, live stock, and meat. The taxing of bread is inconsistent with the policy and arises from the necessity which protectionists everywhere feel of propitiating the farmer as a means of upholding their system. So far as we know at present, the new French tariff is not likely to alter the position of Canada one way or the other.

A combination of Canadian flouring mills was stated a few days ago to be in process, Ogilvies, the Lake of the Woods, and the Hudson Bay Company's mills being named as leading in the combine. A denial as to the second of these mills has since been made. These are the largest mills in the country, and if once united they might expect to force the smaller mills to surrender their independence. The millers got the legislation for which they asked last session, and it now looks as if it was but the first step to a combination which will place the public at its mercy. Without a tariff capable of serving the purposes of a monopoly, a combination is not likely to be a very dangerous thing, because outside competition will generally give relief. To combinations of this kind there are two sides; manufacturing of any kind can be done at less cost on a large than on a small scale, and if there was any guarantee that prices would not be raised, or a decline of prices, which might otherwise have come, would not be prevented, the public could afford to look on with indifference or even approbation; but as no such guarantee is forthcoming, the public alarm at combinations continues to be awakened. Whenever monopolies are created, they must in some way be made amenable to regulative laws designed for the protection of the public. But before society determines what the form of the remedy shall be, monopoly may enjoy its carnival without serious molestation. And it is above all things desirable that no mistake should be made in the application of the remedy.

Cable advices represent France as having consented to negotiate for the surrender of her fishing privileges on the coast of Newfoundland. She is said to ask by way of compensation territory in West Africa, and England is represented as offering a money compensation. France will do well to act while she has any real rights to sell; otherwise the decline of her fishery on the coast of Newfoundland foreshadows an ending similar to that of the right which Spain once enjoyed in those waters; and if she does not sell now, it is probable that before many years her Newfoundland fishery would die a natural death. The rights of Spain in this fishery were at one time less restricted than those of France are today or have at any time been, though she had none on the shore. They were acknowledged by the Treaty of Utrecht, subject to the ability of the Guipuscoans to make good their claim; by the Treaty of Madrid, 1721, the right to fish for cod was extended to "the seas of Newfoundland," without exception or restriction. So completely have Spaniards ceased to fish in these waters, that the fact of their ever having had the right to do so is now almost universally forgotten. At one time, the French fishing vessels in the Newfoundland waters were counted by hundreds; to-day they number less than the fingers on two hands. Verily the French will do well to sell out before they drop out by the force of natural law.

Newfoundland is trying to ascertain whether there is any prospect of its