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Toronto and Mr. Carnegie. It is said that Mr. Andrew Carnegie has offered to give to the city of Toronto the sum of \$350,000 for the purpose of erecting a new public library in this the 'Queen city of the West' on condition that the city will give \$35,000 annually towards its maintenance. Toronto has at the present time the finest and best equipped free public library system in Canada and the addition of this amount offered by Mr. Carnegie will easily place it among the largest in America. Of the amount now offered \$475,000 is for a cent of library and \$25,000 for each of three branches. The librarian states that the present income of the library amounts to nearly what the city is asked to raise annually. The subject is to come up for discussion at the next meeting of the City Council. The question to be decided is, Shall the grant be accepted? As the Carnegie library question has provoked much discussion in other cities it will be of interest to many to see what Toronto will do in the matter. The feeling of the library board when it received the offer was unanimous in favor of its acceptance. But library boards and City Councils are two very different institutions. It is just possible that a vote of the people may be taken as to the wisdom of accepting the offer. The gift is a most generous one and the benefits which ought to accrue to the city, if accepted, would be very great.

The Panama Canal. The Treaty between the United States and the Government of Colombia, was transmitted to the Senate and referred by that body to the Committee on Foreign Relations. By the terms of the treaty the United States agree to make a cash payment of \$10,000,000 in gold to the Colombian Government, and after the expiration of nine years to pay a rental of \$250,000 per year. The lease of the strip of land to be used for the canal and for canal purposes is practically made perpetual, the provision on this point being that the first lease shall be for 100 years, and renewal thereafter in terms of 100 years at the pleasure of the United States. The strip is to be about six miles in width, and over this territory the United States is to have the privilege of free transportation of vessels and materials to be used in the construction of the canal. It is also given the right to improve, use, and protect harbors at both the Atlantic and Pacific ends of the canal. The grant is made exclusively to the United States, and no taxes or rentals are to be charged in addition to the \$10,000,000 cash and \$250,000 annually. Now that the treaty is consummated it is hoped that the United States will lose no time in the construction of the canal. Its benefit to the commerce of the world will be inestimable.

Japan and China. The long outstanding feud between Counts Ito and Okuma, two of the most promising statesmen in Japan, has ended. The outstretched hand of the one has been grasped by the other. Henceforth they are to work together for the advancement of their country. They declare their determination to break up the old class system, and establish an entirely different condition of things. They propose to inaugurate a new political era in Japan—an era of government on party lines. But when the composition of the Upper House is considered, it will be seen how difficult is the task which these eminent statesmen have set out to accomplish. "This House consists of 328 members, of whom 53 sit in it by virtue of their own right, 14 because they are Princes of the Blood, 11 because they are Princes, and 28 because they are Marquises. Of the rest 119 are elected by Counts, Viscounts and Barons; 111 are Imperial

nominees, that is men who have earned distinction for eminent services and attainments, and 45 are taxpayers in their respective prefectures." This House as will be seen, is very strong and is universally respected, is less corrupt, and in reality more representative of the people. The result of the agitation will be looked for with much interest. Recent despatches from Yokohama report that the revolution in Chinese Kansu is spreading. Unless Tung Fuh Slang is soon suppressed the prediction is made that the Powers will be brought face to face with a revolt more serious than that of two years ago. The missionaries are fleeing the country. Tung is himself enlisting troops and the suspicions are that he is receiving encouragement from the Government.

The Provincial Premiers and their demands. The resolutions, passed by the Provincial premiers and which have been presented to the Federal government make very large demands upon the Dominion treasury. The increased subsidies which are asked would mean an addition of about \$2,000,000 to the national expenditure. That larger subsidies are necessary for the better administration of provincial affairs is apparent to most public men. There seems to be some reason for this demand, when it is remembered that the receipts of the federal treasury from customs and excise duties are nearly four times as much as they were at Confederation. While this is the case it is claimed that there has been no corresponding increase in the money paid to the Provinces of the Dominion. Should the government accede to the request of the Provincial premiers—the additional amounts it would have to pay each province would be something like the following—Nova Scotia, \$77,075; New Brunswick, \$37,885; P. E. Island, \$66,000; Quebec, \$59,966; Ontario, \$78,484; Manitoba, \$2,952; British Columbia, \$176,987. These additional grants are urged upon the ground that the increasing population of the provinces has added very materially to the cost of the administration of justice, legislation, education, agriculture and public works—in other words the revenue is not equal to the demands which are made upon it, for the public service. The request is also made that the Dominion shall bear the expense of administering the criminal law of Canada and to give to each province for that purpose an amount not exceeding twenty cents per head. The claim for these enlarged grants is opportune, as the country is prosperous and the revenues are increasing year by year. The fact that the Provincial premiers present a solid front in their approach to the Federal government gives added weight to their claims for an adequate re-adjustment of the subsidy question, even if some changes in the North America Act should be found necessary to meet their new conditions.

The Alaskan Boundary. When the British commissioners on the Joint High Commission of 1898 offered to arbitrate the Canadian claims regarding the Alaskan boundary, the United States declined unless it was understood at the outset that Dyea and Skagway should retain their American alliance whatever the award might be. In the arbitration as now planned there is no such condition imposed by the United States. The question as to where the boundary line between British Columbia and Alaska is to be located is referred to a commission of six jurists, three appointed by the United States and three by the British Government, and the decision of these six men, or a majority of them is to be final. Whether Canada is to have one or more representatives on this Board

is not yet known. The crux of the whole case lies in the interpretation of that portion of the treaty of St. Petersburg in 1825, that defines how the boundary is to be drawn. This boundary question has been a constant source of irritation between Canada and the United States ever since its purchase in 1867, by the latter from Russia. If now a satisfactory settlement can be reached, giving to each country that which properly belongs to each, those on this side of the line can have no reasonable cause for complaint. Canada wants no more than her own. She wants that and her neighbors ought to be as anxious that she gets it as they are to get what is legitimately theirs. It is just a little difficult to see how this can be accomplished under the composition of the tribunal. We must hope for a conversion.

Railway Enterprise in Australia. The long drought in Australia is at last broken, and the colony is breathing more freely than for some time past. The financial depression has been very severe. In spite of this fact however that great country has been planning a large development in the railway system. The South Australian government has projected a road, which by running from South to North, and with the railways already built, will connect the Indian with the Pacific Ocean. The length of this line will be 1,200 miles. It will be built and equipped in such a way as to accommodate trains running at a speed of twenty miles an hour including stoppages. The estimated cost is \$30,000,000 and tenders are to be invited from Australia, the United States, Great Britain, France and Germany. The most liberal terms are offered by the government. In return for their outlay, the contracting company will be granted territory along the road amounting to 75,000 acres per mile, or in all 90,000,000 acres, a territory larger than the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. This land will be exempted from taxes for ten years. The company will have the right to all gold and other minerals which may be found in this territory. The country through which the road is projected is at present very sparsely settled. The building of this road however, will be of great advantage in opening up the country to new settlers, and a great stimulus to trade. Australia has a promising future. Its resources are as yet undeveloped, and enterprise will find a rich field for endeavor.

The Unemployed of London. Great preparations are making in London for a demonstration that will establish a record in the history of British working men's agitations. 50,000 men are to assemble in Trafalgar Square for that purpose. It is said that there are at the present time in Great Britain and Ireland 750,000 men out of work. They are not tramps nor bummers—but self-respecting men who are willing to work and able to work—but cannot get it to do. Thousands of these men are begging in the cities and throughout the country. They never begged before, and it is only the deep necessity of themselves and their families which compels recourse to such humiliating experiences. The demonstration at Trafalgar Square is for the purpose of defining the conditions of labor, and to request that those in authority will suggest and provide some means of relief. The London County Council and the twenty-eight district councils of the great metropolis are deeply stirred over this problem of the unemployed. They have called a meeting for an early date in February, with the intention of uniting all the administrative bodies in the three kingdoms in an effort to mitigate the prevailing distress. It is said that so general a movement of this character has never before been inaugurated in the whole course of the British administration. This shows conclusively how widespread is the distress which prevails. The suffering must be extreme.