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## THE MONTH.

Throughout Canada a feeling of considerable indignation and resentment has been aroused at the finding of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal, and the opinion is freely expressed that in virtually conceding the American contention Canadian rights and interests have been disregarded and sacrificed in line with an alleged Imperial policy of maintaining, at all hazard or cost, cordial relations with the United States. That valuable territory has been lost to Great Britain is undeniable, and in Canada these losses have been a cause of heart-burning, because, although really the sacrifice was to Great Britain herself and not to Canada, the latter would otherwise have fallen heir to this territorial patrimony; but the fault on those occasions was attributable rather to a lack of appreciation of the prospective value of the territory lost than to anything so contemptible and un-British as toadying or cowardice. Until, therefore, indisputable proof is advanced to the contrary, Canadians owe it to themselves to believe that Lord Alverstone and his colleagues allowed no considerations beyond those immediately involved in the case at issue to govern or influence them in arriving at a decision favourable to the claims of the United States, or that the decision in question was made on any but strictly legal grounds. There can, meanwhile, be no doubt that the original treaty between Great Britain and Rus-

sia was couched, so far as the matter of the delineation of the boundary was concerned, in ambiguous language; probably for the very adequate reason that neither party to the treaty had sufficiently accurate information in respect to the geographical features of the country to describe the course of the boundary line with due precision. At the time the treaty was made Russia was really the only power in actual occupation of the Northwest Coast, and her interest in the territory known now as Alaska was purely of a commercial character. That is to say, it was important only as a fur-bearing country, and while neither Russia nor Great Britain regarded the country as of any value, presently and prospectively, for any other reason, Russia did have a keen eye to the possession of a strip of country that would include the heads of inlets in order to conserve to herself the fur trade, which was in the hands of the Chilcats, through whom Russia controlled the trade of the vast interior. None of the Interior Indians were ever allowed to come to the coast to trade directly with the Russians, and as long as no other nation could get behind the Russians through the heads of inlets so long was that trade secure. As Mr. Gosnell points out in his letter on the subject to the *Colonist*, the Russians not only stipulated for such a strip of territory but believed that the treaty assured it to them. In all the official maps of Russia, America or Alaska published up to nearly the present time this territory was shown as claimed by the Americans. It was this same territory that the Hudson's Bay Company leased from the Russian Fur Company, and had there been any flaw in the Russian title the shrewd traders of that corporation, who had been for so long able to circumvent the British Parliament and Government, would not have been slow to take advantage of it. The Hudson's Bay Company's map issued during that very time, under the supervision of Sir George Simpson, showed the Russian territory in the same way the Americans claimed. Of course, it is impossible to go into the minutiae of the dispute here; but it is very clear that taken altogether there is not much doubt but that the decision in respect to disputed territory north of the 56th parallel is in accordance with the merits of the case. It is unfortunate for Canada, whose Government had hoped to obtain an all-Canadian port of entry into the Yukon; but that cannot be helped, and can only be overcome by either a treaty with the United States guaranteeing certain privileges in perpetuity or by building what is known as an all-Canadian route into the Canadian Yukon. The former, if possible to secure, would be preferable from the fact that a long line of railway, which must still combine a waterway with it could satisfactorily compete with an all-water route to Skagway. The other portion of the decision