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The Reindeer in America. In connection with the exploration and the development of the gold fields of Alaska and Northern Canada, one of the important problems to be solved is the means of securing speedy communication and transportation. The fact that the great river of the country, the Yukon, enters the ocean so far to the north makes the difficulties in this connection far greater than they otherwise would be. The lakes and streams are, however, of great advantage as a means of communication with the interior during the period of navigation of the short sub-arctic summer. No doubt but that, if the results of mining operations in the Yukon country shall prove such as to justify it, great lines of railway will be built, thus making the interior accessible to the outside world, independently of the water system. But, as in every country, there will still be need of other means of communication by which the places which must lie more or less remote from the railway lines may be reached. The horse, that faithful and invaluable servant of man in the lower latitudes, cannot go with him into the far north, and it is sad to read how many of these noble animals are being sacrificed in helping their masters as far as possible on their way to the Klondike. There are two other animals, however, which are able to serve man in latitudes where the horse cannot live. These are the dog and the reindeer. The former is already rendering important service to the explorers of the Yukon country, and it is not improbable that the latter may in time be found still more serviceable. These animals which, as is well known, have long formed an important part of the wealth of the Laplanders of northern Europe, have been introduced into Alaska by the United States Department of the Interior. A considerable importation of domesticated reindeer was recently made by the United States Government with the view to employing them in a relief expedition to the Klondike. This expedition having been abandoned, the imported animals have been sent to Alaska. But the reindeer is also a native of Canada. Mr. Tyrrell, in his recently published book—"Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada," relates that at one point in their journey northward toward Hudson Bay, his party came upon immense herds of animals which he calls reindeer and which he seems to regard as essentially the same as the domesticated deer of the Laplanders. The Lapland reindeer is a comparatively small animal. The load which it is able to draw with ease is about 250 pounds, but with that load on a good trail it is able to travel with great speed and to cover a distance of 100 miles or more in a day. It is thought possible indeed that by means of relays, 200 miles a day would not be impossible. The reindeer also possesses the advantage over all other animals of being able to obtain its food in the country both summer and winter. It would seem certain then that, if the great northern country shall prove as rich in gold as it is supposed to be and therefore become inhabited by a considerable mining population, the reindeer will come to play a very important part in facilitating travel, in conveying the mails and transporting goods between railway stations and points more or less remote from the main routes of travel.

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The Nickel Industry. Included in the immense mineral wealth of Canada are rich and extensive deposits of nickel. These are found at Sudbury, Ontario, and they appear to be the only important deposits of the mineral yet discovered on this continent. For although deposits of nickel have been found at several places in the United States and in Canada, it is believed that in these cases the conditions under which the mineral occurs are not such as to make its mining commercially profitable. In fact it is said that the only other very important deposits of nickel as yet discovered in the world are in the New Caledonian islands, belonging to France and situated off the east coast of Australia. The important uses to which it has been found possible to put nickel as an alloy with steel, and especially in connection with the manufacture of armor plate for warships, is creating an extensive and growing demand for the metal and consequently increasing the importance of the Sudbury deposits and the mining operations which are carried on in connection with them. The mining in the Sudbury district is carried on principally by the Canadian Copper Company, which is an American corporation, chartered by the Ohio Legislature, and with its stock owned almost entirely in the United States. The mining and smelting operations of the company are necessarily carried on on Canadian soil, but the process of refining, which involves a much larger expenditure of money and skilled labor, is done on the other side of the boundary, so that while the Company spends an average of $28,000 per month in Ontario, it spends nearly four times as much in the United States. Naturally there is a feeling in Canada, and among the people of Ontario in particular, that the country should reap the full benefit of its exceptional good fortune in the possession of these extensive deposits of so valuable a mineral, and there is accordingly agitation for an export duty on nickel ore and nickel matte—the product of the smelting process—sufficient to encourage the establishment of works for the refining of nickel in Ontario. In justification of such a duty, it is pointed out that the United States imposes an import duty upon refined nickel, which appears to be with the purpose of preventing the refining of the metal in Canada and thus ensuring the refining of the Canadian product in the United States.

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Transatlantic News. The European news received during the week has not been of a sensational character. France, it is true, has made demands for concessions in China, which, if taken at their face value, would seem to constitute a serious menace to British interests in that part of the world. But the lack of excitement in government circles in London and in the stock market is taken to indicate in this connection some kind of an understanding between the British and French Governments, which has not been made public. Lord Salisbury's ill-health compelling him for the present at least to give over into other hands the direction of foreign affairs calls forth much sympathy and some concern for the public welfare. Probably the British Premier is less vulnerable to adverse criticism than most men, but it must be some satisfaction for his lordship to perceive that, in spite of the severe censures which his foreign policy has at times called forth, the nation feels a very great confidence in his ability to pilot the ship of state in difficult international complications, and that, in trying times like the present, it is a matter of very general regret that his hand cannot be on the helm. In connection with the Soudan expedition there is news of an engagement which occurred near Atbara, in which a force of Dervishes was repulsed by Anglo-Egyptian cavalry. It is announced that the fighting on the north-western frontier of India is ended, the tribesmen having given the seventy hostages demanded. It is certainly matter for congratulation that this prolonged and expensive war is at an end. It is to be hoped that the Indian Government will be able so to deal with these tribesmen of the hills as to secure not merely their submission but their friendship. They are intelligent and brave warriors and capable of rendering very valuable support to British arms in Asia.

On the Verge of War. Relations between the United States and Spain are strained very nearly to the breaking point apparently. It is possible that war may still be avoided, but probabilities seem to be pretty strongly in the other direction. The United States Commission of inquiry into the destruction of the Maine has concluded its work, and though at present writing the report has not been officially presented to Congress, it is understood that the Court finds that the explosion which destroyed the Maine was from the outside, but does not fix the responsibility for the disaster. The testimony, it is said, does not determine the exact character of the explosive, though the belief is expressed that it was what is known as a floating submarine mine. The Court finds that there were two explosions, the one from the outside having tho effect of setting off one or more of the Maine's magazines. If this view of the matter be accepted, it would seem difficult to acquit the Spanish authorities of blame, for if they were not directly concerned in the destruction of the Maine, they must at least have failed to give the ship's officers reasonable warning of the danger of its position. The Spanish authorities also have had a naval court making inquiries into the cause of the disaster, and despatches from Madrid assert that the Spanish Commission finds that the cause of the Maine's destruction was internal. A copy of this finding is to be forwarded to Washington this week. The question respecting the Maine disaster has therefore led to a very grave situation, which might easily result in war. If this were all, however, there might still be hope of preserving peace through a mutual agreement to submit the questions involved to arbitration. But there appears to be little doubt that, independently of this matter, the United States government has decided to intervene at once to put an end to the war in Cuba, and this will raise the question whether Spain will submit to dictation or fight. The Spanish government doubtless must recognize the futility of a war with so great a power on the United States, but it may seem less galling to Spanish pride to fight unsuccessfully than to submit to the dictation of a foreign power. It is quite probable that the unintelligent patriotism of the Spanish people, which refuses to believe that the nation is not great and famous as of old, may force the government into war against its better judgment.

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Mr. Gladstone. Recent despatches indicate that Mr. Gladstone's painful disease is gradually wearing out his strength. A London despatch of March 26th says:

"Next to the probabilities of war, the public is most keenly interested in the condition of Mr. Gladstone, though not permitted to know how ill he is. Perhaps it should be said that he is not so much ill as that his powers are failing, and that he is apparently sinking under the weight of years and vital exhaustion. The best informed people admit that amendment of his ailment is impossible, and that his physicians only hope to alleviate the pain he is suffering. The 'Lancet,' says on the subject of the surgical advice called in: 'This can scarcely be interpreted otherwise than that there is serious cause for the symptoms from which he has suffered for nine months. At his great age the gravity of any surgical ailment is apparent, and the exhaustion, in consequence, is prolonged. The severe neuralgia is in itself un unfavorable feature. His vitality, however, is wonderful, and his general health is good.' An examination of the patient with the use of the Roentgen rays disclosed inflamed cartilage; but there was no sign of cancer. Although enquiries for press paragraphs are strictly kept from Mr. Gladstone, it is said that he has bid farewell to several old friends, and knows his end is approaching. Referring to his illness Mr. Gladstone said to a friend: 'A final lesson—a final trial.' The old statesman has been sensibly happier at Hawarden than at the Riviera or Bournemouth."