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**Possibilities of Peat.** Peat is the deposit of dead swamp moss and other bog plants charged with carbon, often with bitumen. The swamp moss, one of the most enduring plants known, will hold two hundred times its own weight of water and its earth holds 80 to 90 per cent. Dry the sods in the air and they burn so well that a ton and four-fifths equals a ton of coal for heating purposes. That is to say it has about half the heating power of good coal and more than twice the heat of wood. The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, in its boiler tests rules one pound of dry wood equal to four-tenths of a pound of coal for making steam. That is two and one-half tons of pine wood, a little over two and one-eighth cords, give the same heat as one ton of hard coal. Common air-dried peat gives the same heat with one and four-fifth tons. It is said that it costs too much to manufacture peat for fuel. To this it is affirmed that it is made in Europe, ground and pressed at sixty cents a ton, and on this side of the water it is made by one firm at least, which is turning out thousands of tons weekly, at a cost of \$1.75 a ton including royalties. This is for the finished peat which equals coal for heating and exceeds it in other good qualities. It is nearly smokeless, it has no sulphurous gas, it does not burn out grates and boilers, and is as clean to handle as so much flooring-tile. It is said also to be antiseptic in its qualities, preventing consumption and relieving it like the Pine forests, and Peat charcoal is a disinfectant as well. The Hollander housewife is willing to pay more for it than for coal simply because it takes less room and is so clean to handle. There ought to be a future for our shore-line running from St. John to St. Stephen as peat bogs abound all along the way.

**The Montreal Strike.** The Montreal strike of longshoremen has become a national calamity and has almost paralyzed the trade of Canada's largest port and of the St. Lawrence. On May 4, 3,400 longshoremen decided to continue the strike, although now the only point at issue is recognition of the Union, or that only Union men shall be employed. This, the steamship companies positively refuse to do, but have acceded to all the other terms of the strikers. The Montreal harbor is congested with shipping. Twenty-four cargo-laden vessels are hung up in port and the wharves are filled with freight. The Grand Trunk Ry. and I. C. R. are refusing all freight for Montreal, whether domestic or for export, while the C. P. R. will only accept freight at shipper's risk. Eight hundred teamsters and four hundred employees of sash and door works have gone out upon what is termed a "sympathetic strike." Because of the threatening attitude of the strikers, and the fact that one of the strikers set fire to the cargo of one of the vessels in port, the militia were called out early in the strike to protect the 1,100 non-union men at work, and have been on duty ever since. The steamship men declare their intention of importing skilled dock laborers from England. As a result of the strike, the Montreal Board of Trade have prepared a bill to be submitted to Parliament, whereby trade unions before they can order a strike must be incorporated. It is claimed, that at present, the Unions have no standing at Court; and while a corporation may receive great damage from a strike, it is with out a remedy at law. This of course, will be vigorously fought by the Unions. It is a singular fact that these Canadian strikes are ordered by Americans, the leaders of the International Union, the very body which has been instrumental in procuring the American Alien Labor Law, to shut out Canadian labor from the United States. A bill is at

present before the Canadian Parliament to prevent these American agitators from entering into Canada and stirring up discord. British Columbia has especially suffered from these men, and her growth greatly retarded thereby.

**Nigeria.** With the fall of Sokoto another great country passes under British rule. This also brings to an end the great and baneful Fulah Mohammedan power, which has lasted for about a century. Kano, the centre of the trade and commerce of the great Fulah empire, and called, "the Manchester of tropical Africa," fell in February, and Sokoto the capital on March 15. Sir Frederick Lugard and Colonel Morland have together established British authority over the 500,000 square miles of Nigeria, and its population estimated at 20,000,000. This has been done with a few thousands of native troops officered by Englishmen. The whole force maintained in Nigeria only amounts to 3,200, and the force that captured the famous commercial capital of Kano, whose products have been known throughout Africa for nearly a thousand years, consisted of only 839 men. The Anglo-French Boundary Commission are now in Sokoto determining the line which is to separate French and English territory. In this district, slaves formed the main currency of the land, and were used as payment in all transactions too large to be met by the bulky bags of cowries. The annual tribute to the Sultan of Sokoto was paid by the rulers of Kano and all the other smaller chiefs in slaves. It is estimated, that if the whole population of the world were brought together, one out of every 300 would be a Hausa-speaking slave. By British occupation of the territory a large proportion of the population will be released from tyrannical oppression and slavery.

**King Edward's Tour.** King Edward has just returned to England from a most successful visit to Rome and Paris. At Rome, the English King was received with great enthusiasm and hospitality. While there, the King made an informal visit to the Pope, an act of respect to the aged Pontiff, which will be much appreciated by a large number of the King's subjects. Britain and Italy although not formal allies, have always worked together, their policies being much the same. The King's visit will tend to greatly strengthen this friendship. But the King's visit to France has the most interest for us, where Canada has such a large proportion of her population of French origin and sympathies. Elaborate preparations were made in France to welcome England's King. The people were most cordial and even enthusiastic. That the visit will do much to bring about friendly relations between Britain and France, no one will doubt. The relations between the two countries, for the greater part of the time since the reign of Henry II, have been quite unfriendly and even warlike. Many of the English monarchs called themselves sovereigns of France, and fought long and earnestly to uphold the title. From 1813, although not in actual war, there has never been much cordiality between the two peoples. Their respective colonial policies had something to do with this, and England's sympathy with Germany in the Franco-Prussian war still more. Then came the Fashoda incident and French sympathy with the Boers in the late South African war, which has only tended to widen the breach. During the last year, however, there has been a change in English feeling towards France, due chiefly, perhaps, to the estrangement and even hatred, which has recently arisen between Germany and England. The visit to France may also tend

to the successful settlement of the long drawn out French Shore question, in which Newfoundland is especially interested.

**An Enormous Canal.** It is said, that Russia is considering a proposal to connect by canal the Baltic and Black Seas. The canal would start from Riga and end of Cherson, near the Crimea—a length of 1,607 kilometres. The average depth would be 26 feet. By keeping to this line some of the most important towns of Central Russia, such as Riga, Dunaberg, Kief, Chaterinoslau and Cherson would be served directly, whilst those on the tributaries of the Dneiper and Duna would come within easy reach by the deepening of these tributaries. The canal would enable Russian men of war and large steamers to pass through the heart of Russia, thus strengthening enormously the naval position of the Black Sea. As to the cost of this great undertaking, it is said that an American syndicate has declared itself ready to undertake the work and finish it in five years for £32,500,000. The construction of such a net work of canals would make Russia the country best served with inland waterways in Europe. They would bring its most distant districts near to the sea, and cause an important development of the world's trade.

**The Pacific Cable.** It was announced in the Canadian Senate the other day, that the deficit in the working of the Pacific cable, or all red line, was £92,000, which would be made up by the partners, Canada's share being about \$130,000. Among the reasons given for this deficit are, the lack of business management on the part of the directors, the competition of the Eastern Telegraph Co., and the breach of faith on the part of the Australian Commonwealth. In 1900, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, entered into a partnership for the construction and operation of the Pacific Cable. The partnership relation bound each Government not only to promote the success of the enterprise, but also to do nothing to injure it. When the partnership was formed Australia had no cable connection with the outside world except by the Eastern Telegraph Company. That company had only the right to land its cables on Australian shores, all the land lines being owned by the various Australian Governments. The company was thus dependent upon the good will of the Government for business. It was thought, that the Australian Government would divert all its business to the new Pacific Cable, thus making the venture an assured success. But in December, 1900, two weeks after the partnership was formed, New South Wales broke faith, and entered into an agreement with the Eastern Telegraph Company, allowing them to build telegraph lines and do business throughout the State, in competition with the Pacific Cable, thus causing severe loss to the latter project. Later the Government of the Commonwealth entered into a similar agreement for a period of ten years, covering the whole Commonwealth. This was done against the vigorous protest of the other partners. On the other hand, there are complaints, that the Pacific Cable is in the hands of an aristocratic official board, instead of under progressive business management. The Eastern Telegraph Co. are energetic and pushing. They offer the greatest facilities for sending messages, opening offices in the busiest parts of the cities, addressing and coding messages free of charge, while of the Pacific Cable a fee is charged for this, and they have no representative in the Commonwealth. The Pacific Cable was intended to be an important link of Empire and to be developed until all parts of the Empire should be brought into the closest touch, for the development of inter-Imperial trade and the guarding of inter-Imperial interests.