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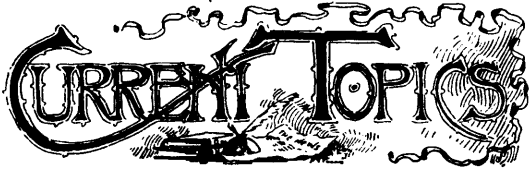
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A project, long contemplated and earnestly recommended by far-seeing men, is now in course of being carried out through the construction of the Vaudreuil and Prescott Railway, which was begun last week. This line will shorten the journey from Montreal to Ottawa to a considerable extent, and will give the advantages of railway communication with the outside world to a most important section of country. It will pass through Como, Hudson, Grande Montée, Rigaud, St. Eugène, Vankleek Hill, Hawkesbury, Plantagenet Springs, L'Orignal, Caledonia Springs, Alfred, Clarence Creek, Sarsfield, Cumberland and Green's Creek—thus traversing the Counties of Prescott, Russell, Vaudreuil, Carleton and Ottawa. A large number of influential gentlemen from those counties, Ottawa City, Montreal and elsewhere, assembled at Rigaud on the 17th inst. to witness the turning of the first sod on the new road. Judge Foster, who has consented to accept the position of managing-director, set forth very clearly the benefits which the line would assure to a thriving and enterprising population. The ceremony which has come to be associated with so large a share of the world's prosperity and progress was entrusted to Mrs. McMillan, wife of the member for Vaudreuil in the House of Commons, and Mrs. J. B. A. Mongenais, wife of the president of the new road.

The appointment of a Minister of Agriculture in England may tend indirectly to promote our phosphate industry. As we have already pointed out, Canadian phosphate of lime has of late been attaining a high rank in England. Formerly, it appears, it fell somewhat into disrepute through lack of care in preparing it for shipment. The usage now is to free the mineral from adhering substances, such as gneiss, pyroxenic rock, iron, etc., and this treatment has been found so advantageous that it well repays the additional trouble. Canadian phosphate now takes rank in the English market as the best in the world. A sample exhibited at the Cincinnati Centennial Exhibition weighed 870 pounds, and was considered the largest ever taken from a mine. Its purity was no less remarkable than its size. In colour it was a rich green. It was said, moreover, to be a fair sample of the whole mine, which is in the 10th concession of Loughboro, Frontenac County. The vein from which it was taken was computed to be from six to sixteen feet in width and seventy feet in length; but the length increased with the depth of the working. For many years phosphate workings were not carried deeper than from thirty to fifty feet; but now there are places where mining

is conducted as much as a hundred feet below the surface, by means of galleries, which follow the spur or branch veins. This is undoubtedly destined to be one of Canada's greatest industries; but no delay should be risked in taking advantage of new outlets for the trade.

In January, 1885, the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, in opening the Provincial Legislature, spoke with emphasis of the unsettled boundary of Alaska and that province. The rights and interests, not only of British Columbia, but of the whole Dominion, were, said His Honor, involved in the question. He considered that Canada was clearly entitled to a valuable strip of country, embracing an area of millions of acres, along the north-west coast; nevertheless, that large tract was claimed by the United States. Both Governments appealed to the Treaty of 1825 between Russia and Great Britain. This is not the first instance in which Canada has suffered from the ambiguous wording of instruments to which the authorities of the Motherland have set their signature.

According to the 3rd article of the Treaty of 1825, the line of demarcation should ascend from the southernmost point of Prince of Wales Island (which was to belong wholly to Russia) to the north, along the Portland Channel to where it strikes the 56th degree of north latitude. "From this last-mentioned point the line of demarcation shall follow the summit of the mountains, situated parallel to the coast as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude (meridian of Greenwich); and finally, from the said point of intersection, the said meridian of 141 degrees, in its prolongation as far as the Frozen Ocean, shall form the limit between the Russian and British possessions on the continent of America to the northwest." In further explanation of this article, it is provided in the following one that "Wherever the summits of the mountains, which extend in a direction parallel to the coast from the 56th degree of north latitude to the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude, shall prove to be at the distance of more than ten marine leagues from the coast, the limit between the British possessions and the line of coast that is to belong to Russia shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom." While, on the one hand, our neighbours are unwilling to abide by a delimitation which, at some points, gives them only a few miles of interior; on the other, the location of the Portland Channel has been disputed. Difficulties have arisen between miners, settlers and traders, claiming to be British or American, as it suits them for the time being to belong to either nationality. It would be well of all uncertainty were ended by a definite understanding between the two countries before more serious complications arise.

Messrs. Dun, Wiman & Company's half-yearly report, recently issued, shows that the total number of failures in Canada during the first six months of the present year was 886, with liabilities of \$7,352,333. By provinces, these failures and liabilities are distributed as follows: Ontario, 443, with liabilities amounting to \$3,359,363; Quebec, 305 and \$3,224,208; Nova Scotia, 52 and \$248,500; New Brunswick, 32 and \$147,528; Manitoba, 25 and \$153,451; British Columbia, 16 and \$115,948; and Prince Edward Island, 4 and \$41,270. These figures, compared with those of

previous years, tell most heavily against this province. Montreal has, however, been fairly well-to-do; several branches of business are thriving and the financial institutions are in good condition. The prospect in the coming months will largely depend on the yield of the crops, as to which, the uncertainty that has prevailed hitherto will now soon be at an end.

There is some prospect of Niagara Falls being turned to account in other ways than as an attraction for tourists. Schemes for using the water power have again and again been contemplated. Now it is to be employed, we are told, to generate electricity on a grand scale. An American company has been negotiating with the Government of Ontario to secure the concession of privileges on the Canadian side. Toronto is to be the eastern limit and chief objective point of the company's operations. The result of the enterprise will be awaited with interest.

One of the latest signs of progress in the Canadian iron industry is the creation of an iron-smelting company at New Glasgow, N.S. Mr. J. P. Watt, a wealthy capitalist of Halifax, is its president. The abundance of coal and iron ore in the district makes the new enterprise virtually sure of succeeding. It is said that blast furnaces will be erected without delay.

The French shore question in Newfoundland has, we regret to learn, reached a stage which portends serious trouble unless the British Government makes some effort to secure a definite solution of it. The relations between the French fishermen and the coast populations are practically relations of hostility. Having again and again appealed for redress in vain, some of the settlers are inclined to take the law into their own hands and to make a bold strike for what they deem their rights. Those who had engaged in the canning business are in the worst plight, as their French rivals, encouraged by the prestige of previous triumphs, have proceeded to extremities and insisted on the factories being closed. Some of the proprietors talk of seeking help from the United States, despairing of any recognition of their claims by the Mother Country. Altogether the situation is extremely anomalous, and for the sake, not only of our fellow-colonists, but of the good will between France and England, which is put in jeopardy by these incessant disputes, it is greatly to be desired that steps were at once taken to effect a satisfactory arrangement. The treaty by which alien fishermen have obtained the virtual command of a considerable portion of a British colony was a grave blunder in the first instance. If for generations no serious results followed, because the coast was all but unoccupied, the case is very different now, and it is the duty of English statesmen to devise some expedient to rectify the error of their predecessors.

On the 1st of October next the convention, recently concluded between the Post Office Department and Japan for the exchange of money orders, will go into operation. The maximum amount of an order is to be \$50. Victoria, B.C., and Tokio, will be the exchange offices in Canada and Japan, respectively.

The present fishing season has so far been marked by no serious trouble. The license system, which was renewed in order to afford an opportunity for negotiations between President Harrison's Government and our own, has served its purpose—a large number of American fishing vessels having