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The Unfriendly Senate. The United States Senate has passed a bill, known as the Alaska Right-of-Way Bill, extending the homestead laws and providing for right of way of railroads in Alaska. One section of this bill—Sec. 13—has a very direct and important bearing upon the Commercial interests of Canada. The section alluded to reads as follows:

"That under rules and regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury the privilege of entering goods in warehouses and merchandise in bond, or of placing them in bonded warehouses at the port of Wrangell, District of Alaska, and of withdrawing the same for exportation to any place in British Columbia or the Northwest Territory without payment of duty is hereby granted to the Government of the Dominion of Canada and its citizens or citizens of the United States whenever and so long as it shall appear to the satisfaction of the President of the United States, (who shall ascertain and declare the fact by proclamation) that no exclusive privilege of transporting through British Columbia or the Northwest Territory goods or passengers arriving from or destined for other ports in Alaska is granted to any person or corporation by the Government of the Dominion of Canada, and that the privilege has been duly accorded to responsible persons or corporations operating transportation lines in British Columbia or the Northwest Territory of making direct connection with transportation lines in Alaska, and that the Government of the Dominion of Canada has consented to and is allowing on behalf of the citizens of the United States the entry, free of duty, of all miners' outfits and a supply of provisions and clothing, the whole not exceeding in quantity one thousand pounds for each citizen of the United States proposing to engage in mining in British Columbia, or in the Northwest Territory, and that the Government of the Dominion of Canada has removed all unequal restrictions as to the issue of miners' licenses to all citizens of the United States operating or intending to operate in British Columbia or in the Northwest Territory.

And, further, that fishing vessels of the United States having authority under the laws of the United States to touch and trade at any port or ports, places or places, in the British Dominions of North America shall have the privilege of entering such port or ports, place or places, for the purpose of purchasing bait and all other supplies and outfits in the same manner and under the same regulations as may exist therein applicable to trading vessels of the most favored nations, and of transshipping their catch, to be transported in bond through said Dominion, without payment of duties, in the same manner as other merchandise destined for the United States may be thus transported."

Senator Turner and others argued that it was unfair to incorporate in such a measure as this a demand upon the Dominion Government that it yield important fishery rights which had been held for a hundred years. But an amendment by Mr. Turner to strike out the part of the section relating to the fisheries was lost by a vote of 34 to 16.

This action on the part of the United States Senate, though, considering the traditions of that body, not greatly surprising, is none the less exasperating to Canada and is certainly not of a kind to promote friendly relations between the two countries. If this country had no rights in reference to the navigation of the Stickeen river, upon which Fort Wrangell is situated, the demands of the Senate, in return for the offered transshipping and bonding privileges, would be preposterous. But the navigation of the Stickeen is secured to British vessels by treaty rights, and these rights—if the opinion of the Canadian Minister of Justice be received—include the privilege of transshipment at Fort Wrangell. It is doubtful, of course, whether this Senate bill as it stands will receive the endorsement of the House of Representatives and the President. It now stands indeed as an embarrassment to present plans of our Government for the development of Canadian commerce with the

Yukon Country. But certainly it will have no effect in persuading Canada to surrender to the United States the protected rights of our fishermen upon the Atlantic coast. If Canadian vessels cannot transship their cargoes at Wrangell—at which point it becomes necessary to employ vessels of light draft for the shallow waters of the Upper Stickeen—then, it is said, the smaller steamers can go down the coast 150 miles to Fort Simpson—a port in Canadian territory—to receive their cargoes, and the projected railway from Teslyn Lake to Telegraph Creek, if built, will have to be extended southward to a seaport well within the Canadian border. The worst of it is that the legislation passed by the U. S. Senate, if carried into effect, is likely to provoke retaliatory measures on the part of Canada and so to promote unfriendly feelings between the two countries.

The United States and Spain. The relations of the United States and Spain have apparently not changed materially during the past week. President McKinley has declined to accede to the request of the Spanish Government for the recall of Consul General Lee, and Spain it appears has decided not to insist. There is as yet no report from the Court of Inquiry into the Maine disaster, nor is the public informed when such report is to be expected. It is evident that both governments regard war as a possibility by no means remote. Spain is taking steps to strengthen her navy. The United States is doing likewise, and is otherwise adopting measures to prepare for war. On Tuesday of last week, Congress unanimously, amid patriotic demonstrations, passed a bill appropriating \$50,000,000 to be used at the discretion of the President for national defence. There appears, however, at present writing, to be somewhat less immediate danger of war than a week or two ago. Of neither the Executive nor the Congress of the United States is the temper unduly belligerent, and the voting of so large a sum for national defence is regarded rather as a measure necessary to preserve peace than an indication that the country is to be plunged into a war, since to be unprepared would be under existing conditions, to invite attack. The jingoes of the country, having shouted themselves hoarse without much effect, have apparently stopped to take breath and the calmer voice of the nation is commanding attention. For Spain, in her relations with Cuba, the choice, it would seem, must lie between abandoning the colony entirely and engaging sooner or later in a war with the United States. The former alternative is exceedingly galling to Spanish pride and the latter could only end in the proud old nation being driven from her last position in the western hemisphere, her national power hopelessly crippled and her prestige among the nations quite destroyed. There seems no probability that in such a struggle Spain could count upon any alliance with European nations, though probably from Germany, Austria and France she might have sympathy and more or less of indirect assistance, for the great American republic is not greatly loved by the Continental nations. Spain, however, would have small cause to thank these nations for any such assistance as they would render, since the result of the conflict could only be to subject her the more securely to their power.

War Clouds. At the present time there is but little actual warfare being carried on in the world, but the political sky is black and thundrous, both east and west, with rumors of war. Those who have been persuading themselves that, so far as its civilized portions are concerned, the world is entering a period of perpetual calm, and

that the tempests of war will no more sweep over the earth as of old, must find themselves rudely shaken in their comfortable dreams by the present threatening aspect of affairs. It is true that war which has often seemed imminent in Europe has been for many years now warded off, and it is devoutly to be hoped and prayed for that a merciful Providence may still restrain the wrath of the nations and hold them back from war. But no one who regards the signs of the times can fail to recognize that they are terribly ominous of a conflict which, if once begun, no living man could dare to predict where it would end. With the past ten days the three most powerful nations in the world have made appropriations for the strengthening of their navies aggregating the sum of \$240,000,000. Great Britain has taken a position in regard to China from which it seems impossible to recede without great loss of prestige as well as a surrender of commercial interests that seem vital to the empire's prosperity, and the British Government evidently recognizes that the position taken may involve war with Russia and perhaps also with Germany and France. Considering her vast extent of territory and her widely scattered colonial possessions, the prospect for Great Britain in entering upon a war in which half the world may be against her, and the rest of it for the most part perhaps giving her little help or sympathy, becomes a matter of tremendous moment. Lord Salisbury may well be pardoned if, understanding as perhaps few other men do the contingencies involved, he has hesitated and declined to take a position which must mean war, so long as any other honorable course is open. It is evident however, that the temper of the British public will not permit the Government, if so disposed, to yield before the menace of Russian power in the far East. A conflict is regarded as very possible if not inevitable, and the nation is gathering its strength for what may be a life and death struggle with its enemies. Mr. Goschen, First Lord of the Admiralty, has told Parliament that, with the expenditure on naval works for the year, the naval estimates amount to \$127,000,000. Adding this to the army estimates makes over £48,000,000 (\$240,000,000) to be expended on British defences for the year, exclusive of the amounts to be spent on the Indian army and the armies of self-governing colonies.

Pacific Cable. The discussion of an all-British Pacific cable has been revived by recent action on the part of the United Empire League. A committee of the League, appointed for that purpose and consisting of Rev. Principal Grant, Sir Sanford Flemming, Lieut. Col. Denison, Mr. George Casey, M. P., and Lieut. Col. Hughes, M. P., waited on Premier Laurier on Thursday last, in the interest of the cable scheme. It is proposed that Great Britain, Canada and Australia shall unite in establishing their means of communication between the mother land and her principal colonies. It is urged that with such backing the money required could be obtained at the cheapest possible rates, and that, since all the land lines in Australia are owned by the different Governments of that continent, they would in their own interest see that sufficient business was supplied to the proposed Pacific Cable to insure its successful operation, there being available, it is said, two or three times the business required to make the cable pay. Along with the somewhat sentimental consideration that the cable would be a symbol of imperial unity, the advocates of the scheme also urge its importance in face of the probability that in the near future the Pacific Ocean is to be the scene of most important international events.