

investment for the land owner to give away a factory site if thereby his other lots are increased in value.

One of the greatest curses under which Toronto labors is the system by which large areas of vacant lands are assessed for taxation at ridiculously low values. If an enterprising person purchases one of these lots, and erects thereon a comfortable home, he is immediately punished therefore by having to pay much higher taxes than were paid upon the same lot before the building was erected. The presence of the building, however, increases the value of the neighboring vacant lands; and so the landlord fattens upon the increment of wealth to which he contributes not one cent.

If Toronto desires to become a manufacturing centre this pernicious system must undergo a radical change. Manufacturers are not paupers; they should supplicate peculiar favors not extended to the general public. What they desire, however, is that there should be no favored class in the community. They do not desire to be punished for having invested their capital here; and they do not want to see landlords and land sharks fatten upon them. Let all vacant lands and unoccupied premises pay as much in the way of taxes as factories, workingmen's cottages and more pretentious residences. Then capital will flow in and factories spring up according to the natural and commercial advantages spoken of by the *Mail and Empire*. But until this is done bonuses will not avail to make Toronto any more of a manufacturing centre than it now is.

WAR SHIPS ON THE GREAT LAKES.

Our esteemed British lion tail twister contemporary, the *Cleveland Marine Record*, with a burning desire to advance the interest of the ship building industry on the American side of the Great Lakes, finds that the existing treaty between Great Britain and the United States but a slight obstacle that can be brushed away by the movement of the hand. It remarks that a great injustice is being worked upon a large portion of the population of that country by what it calls the nonsensical embargo due to some almost prehistoric treaty placed upon the building of naval vessels at lake shipyards; or at least the treaty stipulations standing in the way can only be regarded as such. An easy way to get around the treaty stipulation, our contemporary thinks, is to revise the situation by an international commission organized for that purpose, or committed to the consideration of a commission to be organized to settle the Behring Sea seizures question now pending. If the object can be effected in that way, well and good—if not, then in some other way. To show the neighborly, kind and conciliating spirit in which it discusses the question we quote from it as follows:—

War with Great Britain is impossible from any standpoint. Her star is on the wane, and the next clip she may get from a first-class power will undoubtedly place her hors-de-combat, as the French would say. The "mistress of the seas," etc., dare not at her peril court even a diplomatic embroglio with this great nation, then why should we hold to an ancient and defunct misunderstanding in prohibiting our citizens from competing for national contracts involving the workmanship of at least fifty of the most skilled industries extant?

The open course to pursue is to give notice of the abrogation of the terms of a treaty which ought no longer to be enforced, and the justice in doing so rests in the clause that such treaty stipulations may be closed after due notice has been given by either of the principals to the original agreement.

The only equitable course, then, for the United States to pursue is to grant permission to the immense and valuable lake shipbuilding industry to compete for all government contracts which the waterway to the coast is adequate to accommodate, even if it is, as we now must perforce acknowledge, a waterway through British territory.

The waning of Britain's star is not visible at this time; and the idea is laughable that the United States is a first-class power on the water, or at all likely to place her hors-de-combat. The inference is, judging from what the *Marine Review* says, that because the United States is a first-class power, and Britain is not, therefore whether Britain is willing thereto or not, the old treaty arrangement must be abrogated.

But how are American war vessels built on the lakes to find their way to the ocean except through British territory? Is it proposed to take them through British territory against the consent of British authority? It would not be a neighborly act to attempt to do so, and our contemporary evidently sees difficulties in the way when it suggests that there might be a modification of the treaty even if it goes only so far as to permit American war vessels not intended for lake use to pass through Canadian canals and waterways.

Another *Cleveland journal*, the *Marine Review*, recently published a letter from Senator McMillan, of Michigan, in which he discussed this question, and in which he expressed the desire that the existing treaty might be so modified that American lake-built ships might be allowed to pass through Canadian waters to the ocean. "It occurs to me," he says, "that even should such vessels be built in the lake shipyards for use on the ocean, the question of getting them to tide water would still remain. This could be accomplished only through the Canadian canals, and you will remember that during the Canadian rebellion the United States compelled the Dominion Government to land its troops and munitions of war on Canadian territory and transport them around the rapids of the St. Mary's river, thus forbidding the use of American canals for military purposes on the part of the Dominion."

The unfriendly act to which Senator McMillan alludes was where a disorderly element in the Canadian North-West was in rebellion against the established government. War was not being waged against another country, the demonstration being to suppress turbulence and to maintain peace; and the refusal of the United States Government to allow Canadian vessels carrying arms and ammunition to pass through their St. Mary's canal was in the hope that the rebellion would result in the disruption of the Dominion. It was an exhibition of meanness and unfriendliness that Canada should not soon forget.

Our tail-twisting neighbors may give notice of their desire to abrogate the treaty to the end that they may build war vessels on the lakes, but their doing so will not secure to them the free passage of such vessels to the ocean. Canada commands the situation.