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## WHAT THE ALASKAN AWARD MEANS

CANADA may well be pleased at the manner in which her case was prepared and presented. For the preparation, Hon. Mr. Sifton, as Secretary of the tribunal; Mr. F. C. Wade, K.C., and Mr. W. King, our Astronomer Royal, deserve great credit. The data fills two well-printed volumes (case and counter-case), with two appendix volumes and two elaborate portfolios of maps.

The mention of the three names associated with the work of preparation calls to mind that the University of Toronto may be pardoned for taking some special interest in the tribunal, for all the Canadian jurists on the case, with the exception of Sir Louis Jette, are alumni of this University: Hon. Edward Blake, the late Chief Justice Armour, Mr. Aylesworth, Mr. Christopher Robinson, Hon. Clifford Sifton, Mr. Wade and Mr. Duff. Mr. King is also one of our graduates. In speaking here of the University of Toronto we include Trinity, of which Mr. Robinson is an alumnus.

One of the greatest disappointments to Canadians in connection with the arbitration has been, I think, the fact that Lord Alverstone failed to become an advocate for this country, just as the three commissioners for the United States were advocates for their country. The United States' commissioners were certainly not "eminent impartial jurists," but politicians eager to gain a victory before the forthcoming Presidential election. The case gave much room for compromise, and a strong man, such as the president of the tribunal, should have been able to gain a fairly favorable result for this country. Without reflecting in the slightest on the legal strength of the Canadian position, it was, to say the least, an extremely astute move on the part of the United States to encourage Lord Alverstone to close his eyes to the fact that the actual constitution of the tribunal warranted him in being a little more than merely judge. In this they appear to have succeeded eminently.

The United States as a great country is never suspected of being magnanimous. But its bitter opposition to Canada obtaining convenient egress from the interior, especially as such egress was after all to it of no great moment, will serve to bring home to the Canadian mind the fact that there is very little to be gained from negotiations with the United States. The lesson will be serviceable in connection with the overtures coming to this country for reciprocity of tariffs.

How does the award leave the territorial boundaries? On the north it leaves them in practically the position

they have been in since 1898, the year of the Klondike stampede. The only difference is that to the northwest of the Lynn Canal we lose a strip varying from 8 to 20 miles of low-grade gold country, which is chiefly important for being traversed by the Dalton trail into the Yukon. In the south we gain two large islands at the mouth of the Portland Channel, Wales and Pearce. Great bitterness has been roused throughout Canada by emphasizing the idea that the strategic value of ownership over these islands has been lost by the two adjacent islands, Kannaghunut and Sitklan, remaining in the hands of the United States. Now, this idea is in a measure mistaken. Port Simpson is 15 miles distant from the most southerly point of these islands; but the rocky headland, Cape Fox, on the mainland, 6 miles farther away, is reported as being capable of much better fortification and defence, although, of course, not offering some of the natural advantages of an island. Accordingly the ownership by a foreign power of the two small islands mentioned will probably be found of no overpowering consequence. The disturbing feature is rather that apparently after Canadian right to sovereignty over them was recognized, they were transferred to the United States without our commissioners being consulted.

A little light may be thrown on the commercial situation in the disputed territory. We still read in the press statements that would lead us to imagine that Dyea is a town of importance. Similar statements were made by the American counsel before the tribunal. As a matter of fact Dyea is now only a name. It was a mushroom growth, and to-day is absolutely dead. Whole streets of cabins still stand, but they are deserted. The brood has fledged and flown. When I visited the site last May a solitary "squawman" and "klatch" occupied one cabin. He was engaged in the not too honest business of selling off what timber he could tear from the huts about him and take around the point to Skagway, or down 17 or 18 miles to Haines' Mission, where the United States is building a barracks.

Skagway, at the head of the Lynn Canal, as the port of transshipment for the Yukon, the starting point of the narrow-gauge White Pass and Yukon Railway, is really the only town of importance in the disputed territory. It had in 1898 a population of from 8,000 to 10,000, which has fallen at present to between 1,200 and 1,300, 200 of which are United States troops. The only excuse Skagway has for continuing to exist is as a port of transshipment for the Canadian interior. Without this