

ALASKA AND CANADA.

The Post-Intelligencer thinks that being in possession of Alaska, the United States has as much to grant Canada as Canada can give in return. Our contemporary does quite right to state its own side of the case as best it can, but it greatly overstates the value of Alaska to its government in any negotiations with Canada. In the great body of Alaska, that is the portion lying west of the 141st meridian, Canada has no interest whatever, except such right to the free navigation of the Yukon as has been already secured to British subjects by treaty. It will not be claimed that the rules, to be applied to the exercise of this right, will be in any way different to those which have been always applied to the exercise of a precisely similar right by United States citizens in Canadian waters, in which they have the right of free navigation by the same treaty. The value of this right of free navigation of the Yukon is not very great, but on the principle that "what we have we'll hold," Canadians are not disposed to surrender it. The only concession that could be granted by the United States in this connection, that would be of the least value, would be the right to establish bonded warehouses on St. Michael's or some other point convenient to the mouth of the river, and this will doubtless be admitted under any circumstances. It would be impossible to give effect to the treaty unless this right were accorded, and we have not observed any disposition on the part of the United States government to shirk its duty under the compact in question. Having purchased Alaska while the right of free navigation by British subjects existed, and having confirmed that right by a subsequent treaty with Great Britain, the United States government will hardly propose to cripple this right by refusing to British subjects the right to transship goods at the mouth of the river from ocean going vessels to the smaller craft employed on the Yukon. If such a thing were proposed, the Canadian government could very well say that while the citizens of the United States have the right to navigate the St. John for the purpose of bringing down lumber from its upper water and for that purpose to bring foreign goods into Canadian territory without paying duty, the moment the parties in charge of the goods reach the Grand Falls, over which everything except saw logs must be carried by land, they would be forbidden to go ashore without paying duties or putting their goods in bond. We do not suppose that any such thing would have to be done, but we mention it for the purpose of showing the Post-Intelligencer that United States citizens are already in enjoyment in Canada of privileges precisely similar to those which the United States may be asked to accord under existing treaties to British subjects at the mouth of the Yukon. Our Seattle contemporary has discussed this whole subject as if it were entirely novel. It may be perfectly new to it and to most people on this coast, but it has already been well covered by precedents, which will doubtless be respected by the Washington government.

In regard to Southeastern Alaska, before any one can say what Canada has to ask and what the United States can grant, the boundary must be determined. Dismissing all considerations bearing upon this boundary except one, that is, where the line is to be drawn between the starting point and the 141st meridian, the open question is: Can a summit be found which meets the terms of the treaty of 1825? If it can be, then the boundary follows that summit; if one cannot be found, the boundary will be drawn at ten marine leagues from the coast. This in its turn gives rise to a second question, which may be briefly stated thus: Does the word "ocean" in the treaty of 1825 mean territorial waters? It is contended on behalf of Canada that a summit can be defined, which summit will give Canada the head of Taku Inlet and Lynn Canal. It is contended by the United States that no such summit can be found, and therefore that the line must be drawn at ten marine leagues from the coast. In reply, Canada alleges that if there is no summit the United States cannot claim that its territorial waters are to be recognized as forming part of the ocean, and hence that the outer rim of the Alaskan archipelago must be taken to be the line parallel to which, and at a distance of ten marine leagues, the boundary must be drawn. If this interpretation holds good the whole of the coast, from a point below the mouth of the Stikine river and including Wrangell Island, belong to Canada.

We have used the expression Canadian contention and United States contention in a colloquial sense only, for we do not understand that either government has formally stated its claim; but what we have said above covers the cases as discussed unofficially on both sides. The Canadian contention is more favorable to the United States than the other. If the ordinary principles of international law are applied to the interpretation of the treaty of 1825, it will have to be admitted by the United States that the word ocean must be taken to mean the outer rim of the archipelago, for the reason that the Washington government

claims, and must be held to claim, that Chatham, Sumner and Kikr straits are territorial waters. Take, for example, Baranoff Island, will the United States claim for a moment that this island is separated from the continent by the ocean? Suppose a foreign vessel should refuse to recognize the authority of the United States while in Chatham strait, would the refusal be countenanced? Would not other nations look to the United States to preserve the rights of their subjects in that strait? If this strait is not the ocean, then there is no ocean between the outer rim of Baranoff Island and the mainland, and as there is probably no summit that can be followed across the islands and channels, the boundary would be drawn at a distance of ten marine leagues from such outer rim, which would place all Douglas Island, Juneau and as has been above said, every point on the coast, except the starting point, in the hands of Canada. If on the other hand, it shall be held that there is a summit on the mainland which can be followed, a possible interpretation of the treaty may be that it ought to be followed. It would be a forced interpretation, but it is that to which most Canadian writers have inclined. The United States is at present exercising jurisdiction by enforcement at the summit between the head of Lynn canal and the Yukon waters; but this point is more than a hundred miles from the ocean, unless narrow channels, which in every other part of the world are recognized as territorial waters, are to be regarded as the ocean on the Northwest Coast of America. Even the line laid down on British Columbia maps is much too far inland.

These considerations show that before the representatives of the United States can offer Canada anything in Southwestern Alaska, it is very material to ascertain just what is Alaska for if the ordinary rules of international law apply Canada will have everything that she can possibly want, when the boundary is settled. But Canada is not, under any circumstances, likely to be a suitor for favors from the United States in regard to Alaska. In the matter of the seals, it is Canada that is asked to make concessions. Canadians have the right under the law of nations to kill seals on the high seas, subject, of course, to such laws as the Imperial parliament may make in that behalf. The United States congress may legislate till Doomsday, but cannot diminish this right by so much as a hair's breadth. If it is the interest of the United States that this right shall be surrendered, the only question to be considered is what Canada is to receive in exchange. What concession in regard to Alaska can the United States offer as an equivalent for the surrender by Canada of the right to pelagic sealing? Not very much, we fancy. This is, as we have already said, a business proposition. The United States owns the seal rookeries, and would like to control the whole sealing business. They can only do so with the consent of Great Britain, which, in this case, means the consent of Canada. What have they to offer us in exchange? In regard to routes into the Yukon, our neighbors have all along been deceiving themselves with the notion that they could block us out of our own territory. We shall not take the trouble to point out how utterly baseless this claim is. If they could put a wall ten miles high round Alaska, Canadians could still reach their territory on the Yukon. More than that, the preferable way into the Yukon will be by a route that will not go near territory over which the United States has the shadow of a claim.

For the above reasons we think that our Seattle contemporary is indulging in a foolish hope when it supposes that Canada is likely to be in the position of a suitor for favors from the United States, because that nation happens to own Alaska.

THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA.

It is not a matter of very great surprise that the President of the United States has decided to recommend congress to refrain from interference with the affairs of Cuba, although it will not comport very well with what he has been credited with saying. Last spring one of his prominent supporters said that the course which he would take was one that would meet with the hearty approval of every American citizen. This was understood to mean that he would recommend congress to at least recognize Cuban belligerency. It was not supposed for a moment that he intended to continue the identical policy for which Mr. Cleveland was so roundly abused. We think that the course, upon which he is understood to have determined, is the wisest to follow and more in accord with international usage than any other as yet suggested. He doubtless knows more about Cuban affairs than he did when he was inaugurated, and he has learned that it is one thing to talk irreponsibly in the newspapers and another to have to decide upon a line of national policy. His decision is so little in keeping with the claims of the press that we are driven to the conclusion that the representations that have been made as to the condition of affairs in Cuba, are more exaggerated than American sensations usually are. We are glad that he has decided upon non-interference. War is not wanted. Times are getting better rapidly and it would be a crime against humanity to precipitate a war with

Spain unless the very strongest reasons existed for so doing. Mr. Cleveland thought they did not a year ago, and McKinley thinks they do not now.

FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO.

Not much attention has been paid in this country to Cecil Rhodes' great railway project, but it is one that ranks first among all such enterprises. The American transcontinental roads were stupendous enterprises, but they were through country in the peaceful possession of the governments which granted the franchises. The Siberian railway is a stupendous work; but it is all within the dominions of the Czar. The enterprise with which the name of Cecil Rhodes is connected is through a region inhabited by a vast population. Under many different rulers, a population that is not expected to disappear before the advance of civilization, but to gradually adapt itself to the new conditions that will be forced upon it, and become valuable customers for Europe, and especially for Great Britain. Herein Africa seems destined to have a very different history to that of America. In this continent the native races disappeared before the resistless advance of the white man; in Africa, there seems to be a likelihood that the two will exist side by side, and after a very short time on the most friendly relations. As is the case with nearly all races in a low stage of civilization, most of the African tribes have a tradition of future greatness. The African tradition is that there is to come a time when the black race will take a foremost position in the world. Be this as it may, we have abundant proof that the African is capable of high civilization. Cecil Rhodes, by his great railway enterprise, will do very much to promote this result.

His plan in its entirety is the establishment of what is called an overland route from the Cape of Good Hope to the mouth of the Nile. The distance by the most direct route possible is 4,500 miles; but it is probable that the actual distance will be nearer 5,500 miles. From the Cape to Lake Tanganyika the distance in a straight line is 2,000 miles. This will be covered by railway, and the line is now open to Bulawayo, a distance of 1,400 miles. Thence the route will be for the most part by water by way of Tanganyika, the Albert Nyassa and the Victoria Nyassa into the Nile. The Nile will be utilized as far as Berber, where a railway will continue the transportation facilities as far as the First Cataract. There water transportation will be resumed. This is the general plan, though it is likely to be modified, and probably as business develops it may be found advisable to substitute railways for water travel along portions of the Nile. A telegraph line is being strung on the proposed route, and Mr. Rhodes expects to have it finished at an early day. There appears to be any amount of money behind him. The scheme is calculated to appeal to the imagination, and imagination is a potent factor in attracting investments. He says that by the first of April he will have telegraphic communication between the Cape and Lake Tanganyika.

The whole region just mentioned is British territory. North of it lies the domain of the Congo Free State, and Mr. Rhodes has a right of way across it. North of the Congo Free State comes the region over which the Khalifa, whom people will insist in calling the Mahdi, holds sway. Needless to say, Mr. Rhodes has not yet obtained any concessions from him; but that he will be stopped by this potentate is not likely. Before he built his railway across Metabedale he had to thrash the natives of that country. He will be prepared by the bye to fall upon the Khalifa from the rear while the Anglo-Egyptian forces smash him in the front. Rhodes is the sort of man who gets what he starts after. Some years ago one of the London papers had a cartoon entitled the "New Colossus," which represented Rhodes as bestriding the whole of Africa. Things are beginning to look as if the artist had a touch of prophecy.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MONARCHY.

The attention of the world is now fixed on Austria, where events are transpiring of very grave importance. It is risky to assume the role of prophet in regard to events in Europe, but it is worthy of remark that so keen an observer as M. de Blowitz, Paris correspondent of the London Times, some time ago staked his reputation for political perspicacity upon the prediction that there would be peace in Europe until the diverse elements forming the population of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy engaged in strife. He did not anticipate such an event until the death of Franz Josef, the Emperor; but judging from present appearances, a climax seems to have been reached already. It is worth while, therefore, to familiarize ourselves a little with the history and condition of Austria.

The Duchy of Austria was founded in 1156, or ninety years after William the Norman landed in England. It was erected out of the feudal estate of the Babenbergs, one of the princely houses which flourished in Central Europe as early as A.D. 900. In 1273, Rudolf, Count of Hapsburg, caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor of Germany and signaled his accession to imperial honors by conquering Austria. A few years later he conferred his newly acquired

territory upon his sons, and their descendants have worn the crown until this day. It is 712 years since the first Hapsburg occupied the throne of Austria. Strengthened by the fact that the imperial throne was held by a relative, the dukes of Austria were very aggressive and greatly extended their domains. In 1526 Bohemia was added to the duchy and in the same year a Hapsburg succeeded the throne of Hungary. Hungary first makes its appearance in historical records about the year 896, when the Magyars overran the country which they now occupy. Nothing is now known of these people except that they came from somewhere in the East. The Hungarian kingdom was established about A.D. 1,000. During the next four centuries it advanced rapidly to a commanding position and greatly extended its territories at the expense of the neighboring Slavic peoples. Early in the fifth century the Turks invaded Hungary and prolonged hostilities followed, but the Turks effected a lodgment. At the close of the fifteenth century Bohemia and Hungary were united under one sovereign, but not very many years later the Turks overthrew the combined forces of the two kingdoms and became rulers of the greater part of the territory of the latter. It was at this juncture that the crown passed into the hands of the Hapsburgs. For upwards of 100 years this condition of affairs continued, and there was every danger that Central Europe would pass under the absolute dominion of the Turk, which would have completely changed the history of mankind. Happily for Europe there came to the throne of Poland in 1574 a soldier of commanding talent in the person of John Zolieski. He marched an army of 20,000 splendid fighting men to the relief of Vienna, which was threatened by the Turks, and in the battle which ensued gained a signal victory. Zolieski was undoubtedly the saviour of Central Europe from the Turk, and it is to the lasting disgrace of the continental powers that the nation, of which he was king, was extinguished. Had Poland been maintained as an independent nation the history of Europe would not have been so reddened with blood, and the armed peace, which has burdened the people for the last quarter of a century, would then never have been necessary. Russia would then have extended west of the Dniester and the Eastern question would not have arisen.

Between 1618, when the thirty years war began, until Waterloo, the history of Austria and Hungary is made up of an almost continuous succession of wars. On the whole the record is favorable to Austria, and in 1804 the Emperor of Germany assumed the title of Emperor of Austria, renouncing his former title of two years later. The Germanic confederation continued with Austria at its head. In 1866 occurred the war with Prussia, at the expiration of which Austria retired from the federation, and the existing Austro-Hungarian monarchy was established. The empire thus erected contains 240,942 square miles, and its population is above forty millions. The inhabitants represent many races, being divided about as follows: Slavs, one-half; Germans, one-fourth; Magyars, about one-sixth; Romans, one-fifteenth, and the remainder Jews, Armenians, Bulgarians, Gipsies and others. No country in Europe, and probably none in the world, is composed of such a heterogeneous combination of native races. The Slavs are the great race which peopled the Old World from Kamtschatka to the Adriatic. They are known by different names in different places. Those who live in Southern Austria call themselves by the original name; those who inhabit Bohemia call themselves Czechs. We were told a few days ago of riots between the Slavs and the Czechs, and we thus see that this is not a racial strife, but one between members of the same family.

No argument is necessary to show how difficult must be the task of preserving harmony between the diverse elements which make up the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. There are sectional prejudices to divide them. There are racial differences to embitter them. There are the memory of past struggles to excite them. Indeed there seems to be only one bond between them, and that is the Hapsburg dynasty. We in America cannot appreciate what this signifies; but it may help us to form some conception of it to remember that for nearly a thousand years the various peoples in this part of Europe have looked to the Hapsburg family as their rulers, and that the whole political and social organization turns upon this as upon a pivot.

What is the use of the Inland Sentinel working itself up into hysterics over the alleged attitude of the COLONIST in regard to a road of some kind north from Kamloops? The COLONIST is not opposing such a road. It is simply warning the people of Kamloops against allowing themselves to be led away on a rainbow chase. If a locality wants an expenditure of public money, it ought to ask for something that can be given and not for an impossibility.

The Toronto Globe seems to think that the rivalry between the Canadian Pacific and the Great Northern will afford British Columbia all the railway accommodation needed. What the Globe does not know of the necessities of this province in the transportation line would fill many columns.

A few days ago in San Francisco a man, who had been tried for dangerously wounding another with a knife and sentenced to a short term in prison, got into an altercation in a saloon with another man. After a few words had passed, he whipped out his knife and exclaimed with much profanity that he cared nothing for the law or the courts, proceeded to cut his victim into pieces. A friend of the latter rushed to his defense, but not in time to prevent his murder, and received from the villain's knife an extremely serious wound. Then the knife-wielder went to another saloon, where he boasted that he had just killed two men, and repeated his defiance of the law. A girl who was present ran out and notified the officers and the fellow was arrested. After his arrest he continued to make light of the law, referring to his previous sentence and to the delays which attend the administration of justice in California. His case is perhaps an exceptional one, in that he boasted of his indifference; but he is the natural product of the system which he despised. The incident has a lesson for British Columbia, where recently one or two things have occurred that resemble serious miscarriages of justice. It is right that justice should be tempered with mercy, but mercy is not so much the prerogative of the courts as of the crown. Sentences should in some measure fit the crime, and it ought to be kept in mind that it is the offense against society rather than against the individual with which the law concerns itself. It may be a very proper thing that a man should suffer death as the only punishment for some wrong that he has done against another, and yet that wrong may be of a nature that the law cannot recognize. But grievous as wrongs of this nature are, and everyone knows to what we refer, it is intolerable that anyone should be allowed to wreak his private vengeance upon another. If judges are influenced by sentimental considerations, if juries let their feelings run away with them, if magistrates and others charged with investigation into supposed crimes are lax in the discharge of their duties, the law will speedily be brought into contempt. It is by things like this that such criminals as the San Francisco murderer above referred to are developed.

A SPOKANE party, headed by Dr. J. H. Hudgin, started in October for Teelin lake via the Stickeen. He wrote under date, November 1 from Telegraph Creek: "We have just heard of a big strike on the Hootalinga river. Heard it from a pack train that has just arrived." On November 5 he added a postscript to his letter saying: "We heard again to-day of a big strike on the Hootalinga." This is information of prime importance, and emphasizes what we said a few days ago as to the duty of the federal government to expend some money at once in making a winter road through from the Stickeen to the lake. There seems to be no reason for doubt that the whole region around Teelin lake will next year be the scene of great activity. A portion of this lies in British Columbia. This is a point which intending prospectors will do well to keep in mind. If they omit to take out mining licenses before going North any staking they may do in this Province will be of no effect. It would be a wise act on the part of all persons who may go to the Yukon via the Stickeen to take out licenses before leaving. We need not tell such persons that no one who starts out for a gold field can tell just where he is likely to stop. Men who aim at going to Dawson City or other points on the Yukon waters may get such news on reaching Teelin lake that they may decide to remain and prospect the country in that vicinity. If they do, they will need a license from the government of this Province, unless they propose to confine their operations to the country north of the 60th parallel, which would be a very unwise conclusion for anyone to make in advance. Men who prospect around Teelin lake will wish to go wherever gold is found, and therefore a license is almost essential.

The Toronto Telegram, which represents nothing at all, is being quoted by the opposition press with great glee because it has said that the standard of British Columbian political leaders is lower than that of New Brunswick leaders. There is no greater Pharisee in Canadian journalism than this same Toronto Telegram. It is eternally posing as holier than everyone else. It has checked to throw out a deliberate insult against the public men of two of the provinces. Those who are thus assailed have the satisfaction of knowing that what emanates from the Telegram influences nobody.

Has the Inland Sentinel lost its wits? It asks the Lieutenant-Governor to dismiss Hon. Mr. Pooley from the cabinet because he has accepted a directorate in a London company. Was anything so ludicrous ever suggested? Suppose, for the sake of argument, that it is wrong for a cabinet minister to accept a directorship, what does the Lieutenant-Governor know about anyone's having done so? But it is not wrong; it never was wrong; and there never was a Lieutenant-Governor of a British province who would have the hardihood to do what he has been asked of Lieutenant-Governor McInnes.

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