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**The Alaska Boundary.** Some remarks made a few days ago in the Canadian House of Commons by the Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, leader of the Opposition, and replied to by the Prime Minister, respecting the Alaska Boundary question and the attitude of the United States in reference thereto, have excited no little interest, not only in this country but also in the United States and in England. The subject was introduced by Sir Charles Tupper, who alluded to the gain which was accruing to the United States at the expense of Canada by the diversion of trade to United States channels while the question remained unsettled. Sir Charles characterized the course of the United States in refusing to submit the boundary question to arbitration, except under conditions that would render impossible a verdict adverse to its contentions, as in the highest degree unreasonable and as evincing a consciousness that its case could not stand upon its own merits. He also charged that the anxiety of the British Government to preserve the most friendly relations with the United States had made that Government unwilling to assert itself in reference to the Alaska question so vigorously as the rights of the nation and the interests of Canada demanded. He desired to see a more active policy on the part of Canada and advised that the Government should take power of Parliament to construct a line of railway from Kitimat Harbor on the Pacific Coast to the navigable waters of the Yukon river (thus opening up a route through undisputed Canadian territory) and that the Government should also take power for restricting to British subjects the privilege of securing mining rights in the Yukon country. In pursuance of this line of policy Sir Charles promised the Government the support of himself and his party.

In replying to what Sir Charles Tupper had said the Prime Minister remarked that he was not in a position to speak with so much freedom on the subject as his honorable friend had done, but he sufficiently indicated his general concurrence in the remarks of the leader of the Opposition so far as they were concerned with the attitude of the United States upon the Alaska boundary question. Sir Wilfrid Laurier having accepted and supported the proposals of the British and Canadian Commissioners as affording a fair and honorable basis for arbitration, it must follow as a matter of course that he regards as unreasonable the refusal of the United States Government to arbitrate on those lines. Having pointed out that the treaty of 1825, which assumed to define the boundary between the possessions of Russia in North America and those of Great Britain, is very difficult of interpretation, so that lawyers will differ much as to what is really meant and consequently as to where the boundary line should be drawn, the Premier went on to say that since there seemed no further hope of settling the difficulty by compromise, it could be settled only by arbitration or by war. Dismissing the idea of war as impossible between the two nations, the only hope of honorable settlement was by arbitration. The Commissioners had also failed to agree upon a basis of arbitration and therefore adjourned with the hope that their respective Governments might agree upon such a basis so that the Commission might resume its work about the first of August, but so far no such agreement had been reached and the outlook for a settlement of the difficulty seemed now no nearer than it did months ago. But though the outlook was not encouraging, the Premier declared that he had not lost hope that such a basis of arbitration would be reached, and he therefore advised patience in the present trying situation. As to the proposals of Sir Charles Tupper respecting the course to be pursued, the Premier said that he regarded the proposition now made, that the Government should take power from Parliament with a view to building a line of railway connecting a Canadian port with the Yukon country, as a strong vindication of the

Government's scheme, defeated last year by the Senate, to secure the construction of a line of railway from Teslin Lake to the Yukon River. Had that scheme been carried out, the American line from Skaguay would not have been built and Canada would have been in a position this year to complete an all-Canadian line from Kitimat Harbor to the Yukon, as it was now proposed should be done. Respecting the proposition looking to the abolition of certain privileges which United States miners now enjoy in Canada, Sir Wilfrid doubted the wisdom, at the present juncture, of taking any step that would increase the irritation and provoke retaliatory measures on the part of the United States. He however expressed his appreciation of the spirit in which the leader of the Opposition had offered his remarks and promised that his proposal should have the careful consideration of the Government.

That such a situation as is indicated by the preceding paragraphs should have come to be in connection with the Alaska boundary question is most regrettable. Perhaps some of the things said by this country's two most prominent political leaders in the speeches alluded to above would have been better left unsaid at the present juncture. Sir Charles Tupper's speech was of a somewhat fiery—not to say inflammatory—character, and the Premier was rather unfortunate in alluding to war as one of the two possible means now left of settling the boundary question. It is true that Sir Wilfrid at once declared that war was not to be thought of, but the mere mention of war as even the remotest of possibilities has an ugly sound; and quite naturally a sinister interpretation has been placed upon the Premier's words by a certain portion of the United States press. It is well, however, that Canada's position in respect to this boundary question should be well understood both by her own people and by the United States and Great Britain. It is to be desired that all the light possible shall be turned on to this problem, that the sober judgment of the thinking world may be obtained as to whether it is this country or the United States which is making unreasonable demands. There is certainly no jingo party in this country, spoiling for a fight, and Canadians have not sufficient interest, financial or sentimental, in the Yukon country to make them eager to demand in the settlement of the boundary question more than a fair and intelligent interpretation of treaty rights will give them. Less than this neither Great Britain nor Canada can be expected to accept. And this, our public men tell us, is all that they are asking of the United States. There are intimations on the part of our neighbors that "Canada" is putting forth an interpretation of the treaty of 1825 which is preposterous in regard to the claims of territory which it involves, and that this is the ground, or at least one of the grounds, on which the proposal for arbitration is refused. But does Canada put forth any different interpretation of the treaty and any different theory as to the boundary than have generally been held by Great Britain? Are we to suppose that our public men of Canada have invented some brand new theory as to the boundary line which they are attempting to force upon the Imperial Government as well as upon the United States. If that is the case it is very remarkable certainly. The people of Canada we venture to say are much more desirous of having the boundary question settled on an equitable basis and of promoting the friendliest relations with their neighbors than they are of acquiring any territorial rights which do not fairly belong to them. All they wish to ask, we are sure, is that the question in dispute be fairly submitted to a tribunal whose ability and impartiality will give assurance of an equitable decision.

**Results of the Peace Conference.** Mr. William T. Stead who is a warm admirer of the Czar and has taken a deep interest in the Peace Conference expresses an optimistic opinion as to what has been accomplished by the representatives of the Powers at The Hague in the interests of peace. Mr. Stead says:

The Conference achieved a great success, much greater than the delegates anticipated, and the result was achieved largely by the 'amour propre' of capable men

from all parts of the world, determined to accomplish something worth their assembling together. The result surprised all of them, and the magnitude of the gains is imperfectly understood even by the Conference. The establishment of a permanent court of arbitration on the American principle of revision, plus the French declaration of the duty of neutrals to recommend disputing powers to refer to the arbitration court rather than to war, represents vast progress in the evolution of human society. The recognition of the duty to represent to disputants the desirability of resorting to the arbitration court entails no obligation on the Americans inconsistent with their traditional policy. This is made absolutely clear by the declaration signed by the American delegation read in full at the Conference and entered on the records. The relations between the American and other delegates, notably the British, German and Russian, have been extremely friendly. The Englishmen and Americans acted throughout almost like a joint delegation. This was due to no arrangement or direction, but solely because both nations found common ground of defence, common interests, civilization and humanity. The only point on which the British delegates failed to support the Americans was the resolution forbidding the capture of private property at sea. To this the British representatives were not opposed, but the British Cabinet being divided, the delegates had no instructions regarding the matter, and abstained from taking action.

After the arbitration convention is signed it will probably be open to the adhesion of all other powers, not represented at the conference, on condition that no original signatory of the convention objects. This right to black-ball any power wishing to join the convention was insisted upon by Italy, in order to prevent the adhesion of the Pope, and by Great Britain on account of the Transvaal. It is hoped that all the South American states will come in. It is the unanimous opinion of all the delegates that the conference begins a new epoch, and that the good seed now sown will bear a rich harvest hereafter.

**Parliament and Prohibition.** The subject of temperance was before the Dominion House of Commons on Friday last in the shape of a resolution moved by Mr. Flint, member for Yarmouth, and two amendments to that resolution. Mr. Flint dealt at some length with the history of temperance legislation and efforts looking to prohibition in Canada. He declared himself a prohibitionist irrespective of the popular expression of the plebiscite, but he was willing to accept the most in that direction that was possible to obtain. He therefore proposed that each province should be authorized to act by itself in this matter, and was of opinion that in this way the reform which could not be accomplished all over Canada might be attained step by step. In this way the difficulty of the loss of revenue would also be most easily met. The loss of revenue through the adoption of prohibition by one province would not be serious, and this loss would come on the country so gradually that the benefits of prohibition would be concurrent with it. Sir Charles Tupper said the question of \$8,000,000 loss of revenue was not a difficulty, and when Mr. Flint admitted that it was it showed that he was not actuated by sincere principles on this question. Sir Charles accused the premier of trifling with the whole subject, but did not hold out any hope to prohibitionists that he would himself espouse their cause. On the contrary he declared himself in favor of local option rather than provincial prohibition. Mr. McClure, member for Colchester, moved an amendment to Mr. Flint's resolution, looking to immediate prohibition throughout the Dominion. Mr. McClure said that if the government had proposed Mr. Flint's resolution he would have supported it. His objection was not that the government refused to give prohibition, but they refused to do anything. It was plain that the present government was not a prohibition government. Was the opposition any better? Certainly not. It was a fact that both political parties were opposed to prohibition. Mr. Parmelee member for Shefford, moved an amendment to the amendment that the result of the plebiscite vote was such as to show that prohibition sentiment was not sufficiently pronounced to enable a prohibitory liquor law to be successfully carried out and, therefore, prohibition should not be enacted. The subject was discussed at considerable length, but no vote was taken and it seems to be understood that further consideration has been abandoned for the present session.