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Editorial Notes.

THE ALASKAN BOUNDARY.

It is none too soon that the Dominion Government have decided to send out a properly organized expedition to determine the proper boundary between British Columbia and Alaska. It is now many years since the British Columbian authorities drew attention to the necessity for such a proceeding, and more than one offer from private sources has been made to undertake the duty. The Dominion Government acted wisely in not acceding to the requests of such persons, whose zeal exceeded their ability to be of material service to Canada. In appointing Dr. George M. Dawson and Mr. William Ogilvie the best interests of the Dominion have been regarded, for no other two men could supply their places. The main element of exploration is through accuracy, and this exactness is obtainable only by thorough scientific observation and practical adjustment. The great part played by astronomy in earth measurement is shown by the history of geographical development since the days of Hipparchus and the Almagest to the present fine measurements of base-lines by such methods as Colby and Bessel elaborated, with such instruments as the altilimith theodolite, micrometer microscope, zenith telescope, etc. No one in Canada is better fitted for practical geodetic observation than Mr. Ogilvie, and much interest will be taken in his reports by those savants who are given to the study of geography and its sister sciences. Regarding the geological features of the Yukon country, as the district is rather improperly called, valuable data regarding the mineral resources and distribution of flora and fauna along the line pursued may confidently be expected from the observing eye and extensive experience of Dr. Dawson, under whose charge the expedition will be placed. Altogether, the work is one of the most important of its kind undertaken for many years, and as valuable interests are at stake, owing to

the absence of any but a conventional boundary, it is a matter of congratulation that the delicate and difficult mission has been placed in such entirely able hands. No doubt the United States government will retaliate by sending out a survey to the same region with a view to gobbling up as large an area of gold-yielding earth as possible; but it will require all the ingenuity possessed by our American cousins to "do up" the gentlemen in charge of our Canadian party on scientific points.

MR. BLAKE AS A BRITISH POLITICIAN.

AN esteemed contemporary gives voice to the sentiments of one of its staff regarding the Opposition leader in language more flattering than reasonable. If Mr. Blake had but five years' experience in the British House of Commons, it is asserted, he would be one of the most prominent men in the world. Furthermore, it is said to still be within the range of Mr. Blake's possibilities to become the greatest lawyer, and afterwards the greatest politician, in the empire. Now, it is not to be disputed that Mr. Blake is a pre-eminent lawyer in Canada, nor that he might win a good professional standing in England; but a wholesale imputation of incapacity is unintentionally thrown upon a score or so of British lawyers, quite as able as our great Grit leader in any of his gifts. As a politician, in a European sense, it is probable that Mr. Blake would not be a success; at least nothing he has yet done will warrant any optimistic view of his latent diplomatic ability. His inability to provide his party with a separate and distinct policy does not seem to indicate the kind of politician Englishmen have been accustomed to see at the head of either party in the British Parliament. Mr. Blake has little of that great personal ambition of political patriotism such as animated Disraeli, nor has he a great genius for dealing in a masterly fashion with every subject, such as Gladstone possesses. He does not possess the grand inspiration of oratory which Bright has, though he has a greater flow of smaller arguments; nor has he the happy faculty of making warm friends and keeping them, even among his own political associates. Altogether, the idea of Mr. Blake ever becoming the greatest politician in the British Empire is untenable, even as an historical dream.

ALTER EGO.

WHAT is termed the *disease of duality* is happily rare; but the present high pressure rate of life is not likely to diminish its occurrence. That a man should suddenly become insane is not uncommon; but the fact that a man is liable to actually lose his identity, and live a life thoroughly different from that to which he has been educated, is to say