

Building of a Canadian Refinery Is Solution Of the Nickel Problem

WHILE a good many people have been worried lately over the agitation which is being carried on regarding the export of Ontario nickel the news that the Government has secured the establishment of two refining plants in the Province will be received with much satisfaction. The nickel question has been discussed so much of late that little requires to be said by way of commending the action of the Government.

It should be borne in mind, however, that fifteen months ago Hon. G. Howard Ferguson, Minister of Lands, Forests, and Mines, saw what was likely to happen, and so without prohibiting the export of nickel and affecting the supply required by the British Government, an arrangement was made whereby all nickel from Ontario would be consigned to the War Office or its nominees. In this way the export was controlled, but in the meantime a commission of experts was appointed to investigate the whole situation. Mr. Ferguson has made it plain to the companies that they must refine nickel here, so the International Nickel Co., the largest concern in the world, has announced its intention to erect a \$4,000,000 refining plant at Port



HON. G. H. FERGUSON.

Colborne, Ontario, the work on which will commence at once. Port Colborne is close to the Pennsylvania coal fields on the one hand and the Great Lakes route from the north on the other, so the company will enjoy the benefit of cheap transportation. The new industry will employ several hundred men and the annual pay roll will amount to a large sum.

The other company about to start business in Ontario is the British-American Nickel Co., which was organized by the late Dr. F. S. Pearson, and is backed largely by Canadian capital. This company has a new process for refining nickel by electricity which has been successful in a small way in Norway and it is thought it can be advantageously applied to the Canadian ore. The whole situation was discussed by Hon. Mr. Ferguson in the following interview:

"For some time the Government has been insisting upon the establishment of a nickel refinery in the Province of Ontario. A part of the work of the Nickel Commission has been to solve what has hitherto been an unsolved problem, and bring about the refining of our own ores within the Province. As a result of this work we were able to announce recently that nickel would be refined in Ontario just as soon as the necessary plant can be erected. The British-American Nickel Company are about to begin the development of power on the Wabigoon River near Sudbury for use at their smelter, and the erection of a refinery will be carried on at the same time.

"We are also now able to make the further announcement," he added, "that the International Nickel Company will hereafter refine our nickel within the Province. The erection of the refinery will be undertaken just as soon as plans can be prepared. The work of construction will be rushed as rapidly as the materials can be procured and men obtained to do the work. The success which has met the efforts of the Commission in this regard will mean not only the development of two very large industrial concerns in the Province, but will mean as well an immense investment of capital, the employment of a very large amount of labor, with the consequent distribution of vast sums in the form of wages to the working men.

"Moreover," Mr. Ferguson concluded, "it will for all time allay the fears of even the most nervous and skeptical persons that the interests of the Empire and her allies will not be fully safeguarded in the matter of armament and munitions."

Von Bissing Derides Story.

The Rotterdam Courant says that General von Bissing, Governor-General of the occupied portion of Belgium, has posted a warning in Brussels against "the fantastic reports circulated about the imminent evacuation of Belgium by the Germans, which are without foundation."

The notice says the authorities will prosecute the persons responsible for these reports, according to the newspaper.

Most of us get what we deserve, but only the successful will admit it.

North Will Soon be as Safe as Any Place in South, Say Fire Refugees

REFUGEES from Northern Ontario arriving in Toronto throw no new light on the calamity, but their stories go to confirm the impressions of helplessness of all human effort in face of so vast an upturning of all natural law in the great new lands. This fire has not been comparable to anything that the city dweller can conceive: though human in origin, no doubt, it is in its essence one of those inscrutable revenges of nature's forces at the growing dominion of man's science, like the killing "black blast" in a colliery, like a gigantic shipwreck, or like the break of a reservoir, before which man can only stand pygmy and appalled, to turn doggedly back first to help the suffering, and then to resettle the land in face of the self-same forces.

This spirit, "to stand and not to yield," is already seen. Even one of the survivors of the fire who reached the city is recorded as saying that "there is less to burn now in the north, where it will soon be as safe as in the south."

"I am going right back to rebuild," was the plucky remark of Mr. J. Lacroix, who had a butcher's shop in Cochrane. And he went on philosophically: "Fire does not now excite me as it used to. I have been burned out four times already—three times in Cochrane."

Another Cochrane man, Mr. D. Gamelin, is a merchant tailor, but the only clothing he possessed as he got to the city was the suit he stood up in. But he, too, is going back and even this week intends looking over the wholesale stocks in Toronto. It is grit such as this which accounts for many of the really heroic actions done almost as a matter of course in this greatest of Ontario fires. Even a fire ranging over an area greater than the length of England could not quite quench the indomitable fire of determination to make North Ontario a home. One of the effects of reverses and hardships on men with the pioneer spirit has been the will not to submit or yield; it was so in the older days, it is being proven true in the last harsh test.

Daniel Nichol, one of the victims from Bracebridge, seemed especially broken by the strain. He seemed haunted by the recollection of his fight with the flames. "Nothing could stop them," he moaned, as he faintly told his story. "They were like balls of fire in the air."

Six children of Dr. J. B. Reid of Kelso were saved and have reached Toronto. Their father perished because he, like so many others, went out to fight what he thought was a mere local fire. The little ones left in charge of the eldest, Iris, only twelve years of age. They were rescued by a train whose driver decided to run for it through the flames and was providentially stopped by a burned-out trestle and had to rush back. The flames were so fierce that the cars' windows cracked in the heat.

George Foller, his wife and child, hid from the flames in a dugout for roots. They came from Hunt, 12 miles west of Cochrane. With them was Mrs. Brant, the wife of a ranger, and in his dash through the fire Mr. Foller was singed about the face and neck. They had, luckily, two buckets of water, and as the fire burst into the dugout and licked up the wooden supports this was used to quench it. In this dugout the little group had to remain for nearly three days.

Another man, Mr. Paine, and his family, from the same district, took refuge in the green potato field and had to dig up the new potatoes to feed upon. One of them was a babe.

After the Fight.

Here is an unpublished glimpse of the Jutland battle, or rather a glimpse of a sequel. For scene, imagine an empty waste of waters in the grey of the summer twilight. Enter from the east a raft, bearing an inordinate number of British blue-jackets paddling themselves at a mile an hour in the direction of England. Enter a raft loaded with Germans, laboriously travelling in the opposite direction. The rafts slowly approach. The British blue-jackets debate what to do. They have hardly a clasp knife amongst them, the Germans outnumber them, and attack is ruled out. They sit up and sing, "Rule Britannia." The Germans at once reply feelingly with the "Hymn of Hate." Each crew gives three cheers, and resumes its journey in the general direction of England or Germany, as the case may be.

Flight of Swallows.

How fast can swallows fly? An officer, doubting whether their reported speed of 200 miles an hour was correct, resolved on a test. He says: "I was up in the air last week one day," he said, "when I observed a swallow flying high in front of me. I resolved to test its speed. I went out full after it, and the swallow also put on full speed. The bird dived; so did I. It went up and I followed. We were at it hammer and tongs for a quarter of an hour, diving, rising, and racing, and I gained on it foot by foot. Finally one of the wires on my wings struck the bird, and it went down." The officer said that of course it seemed cruel to kill a bird in this fashion but he found it splendid practice in the air.

Gloom Just for Variety. Life would be mighty monotonous if it were all sunshine.

GROWTH OF HYDRO.

Remarkable Expansion of System Has Brought Growing Pains.

There must be considerable satisfaction to the people of Ontario who have staked so much in the Hydro-Electric power enterprise to know that the demand for power from the Commission has grown from 10,000 horse power about five years ago to over 100,000 horse power to-day. In fact so great has been the expansion that the Commission was faced last week with a serious power shortage, and a portion of the service had to be cut out for a time to enable the load to be carried. This situation has been foreshadowed for some time by Sir Adam Beck and negotiations were begun with the Canadian Niagara Power Co. with the view of securing a block of power. This company, while operating on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls exports all its power to United States; consequently it was to this company that the Hydro looked for relief. The officers of the Canadian Niagara Power Co., however, had larger ideas of the value of power than Sir Adam Beck and a deadlock resulted which caused a crisis on the Hydro transmission lines. Hon. W. H. Hearst, Prime Minister of Ontario, promptly took the matter up, and he communicated with the Government at Ottawa with the immediate result that the Canadian Niagara Power Co. was notified that unless a supply of power sufficient to meet Hydro requirements was not at once made available the license to export power would be withdrawn. Wiser counsels prevailed

with the company, and it was agreed that 12,500 horse power would at once be available, and this power has since been received, and from time to time as it is required the Hydro could draw upon the company up to 50,000 horse power.

The Government did this with little noise or flare of trumpets. There is no intention of allowing Hydro efficiency to suffer, and in the meantime the work of developing 100,000 horse power at Chippewa Creek—an entire Hydro-public-ownership undertaking—has commenced. Following the enabling legislation passed at last session, \$500,000 was voted to carry on preliminary work this year and the plans, have now been approved by order-in-Council, and although corporate interests in the United States have endeavored to interfere with the project the engineers are busy on their plans and in a few months the actual construction will be under way.

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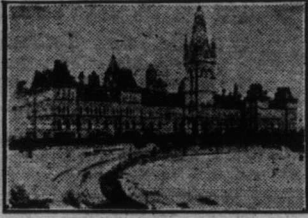
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