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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 1898.

If Secretary Scott's prognostic of the coming vote in the Senate prove correct it will soon be time to consider a substitute for the Mackenzie-Mann contract. Senator Scott drew his conclusion as to the coming vote from the tone of the debate, and especially the applause which speeches in opposition elicited. When the House of Lords throws out a bill, the usual course of the Commons is to wait till the Lords come to a different frame of mind, reaffirming the measure, year after year. But this resource will not be available for the rescue of the Yukon bill. The line of route selected need not be abandoned, if, as is generally admitted, it is best for present purposes. But construction must proceed upon a new policy. It will be necessary to call for tenders and most likely to pay in money. If the Government is to pay the cost of the road, or most of it, why, in the name of common sense, should the ownership be converted into a private benefit, to the sacrifice of the public interest? A railway to the Yukon will, if we may trust present appearances, be one of the best paying roads in America or anywhere else.

A Klondyke deputation, representing British and French Canadian and American miners, sent to complain of grievances, is now in Ottawa. When they left the Yukon, the object was to protest against the mining regulations, some of which have since been improved. When they arrived at Victoria, a new subject of complaint came to their knowledge, in the form of the Yukon Railway contract. Though the mandate of the delegates can scarcely be supposed to cover this new grievance, unless they were vested with plenary powers, it became the main subject of their protest. Starting from the mining region with the object of protesting against the smallness of the mining claims, one hundred feet each, they reach Ottawa to find the hundred feet stretched to two hundred and fifty. The railway contract, the deputation contended, meant the handing over to a private corporation the control of gold mining in the entire district. All the free miners would have to deal with Mackenzie and Mann. They could not secure locations till they had first staked out their claim, while the contractors could cover all the known gold lands with a blanket claim. It

In supporting a bankruptcy bill introduced by a private member, the Ottawa Government evinces the necessity of proceeding tentatively and without incurring direct responsibility for the measure. It is perhaps useless to expect that on one point of difference, held by both to be vital, a common agreement can be reached by the merchants and the banks. In this state of things only a strong Government can, by acting as arbiter, cut the knot of the difficulty. The time for doing so has evidently not arrived. Independent discussion of Mr. Fortin's bill may prepare the way for some decisive action by the Government. Meanwhile the suggestion of Mr. Byron E. Walker that the discharge of the insolvent should rest with a Government officer, as in England, is the only way in which a judicial decision can be got. The whole business of winding up an insolvent estate is one in which creditors are chiefly interested; but creditors cannot all be trusted to be willing to grant a release, when there is no reason why a release should not be granted; there is always the danger that some will hold out for better terms than an equal division; and if such demands are acceded to, it is at the expense of the other creditors. A public officer, as Mr. Walker suggests, is alone suitable to the task of deciding whether a discharge ought to be granted or refused; he has no interest or feeling in the matter and can be trusted to give an impartial decision.

Already is visible the germ of the contention on which Spain and the United States are entering. Each country is making an independent enquiry into the cause of the explosion of the American warship "Maine," in the harbor of Havana, and it is probable that they will put different interpretations on the facts, the commission of the Republic finding that the explosion was due to some external cause, and the Spanish inquest reporting that it was produced by some internal cause. It is not likely that the question, how or by whom the external blow was struck, will be answered. That the Spanish Government or any of its officers was responsible for the wreck, is not likely to be charged. But this will not prevent the question of Spain's responsibility being raised; and this question will be answered in accordance with the real or assumed facts. But if, after all other grounds of probability are exhausted, without finding any sure resting place, and the conclusion be reached that the mine was exploded by an irresponsible fanatic, opinion in the Republic will be divided as to the responsibility of Spain. Some, including Mr. Robert