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The Yalu River

District: The district in northwestern Korea, between Ping Yang and the Yalu River, where the Japanese are believed to be concentrating a strong force seems likely to be the scene of conflict between the Russian and Japanese forces before long. The district northward from Ping Yang is thus described by the *Montreal Witness*. "Beyond Ping Yang there are flat valleys for several days journey, until Aju and Pakchon are reached, beyond which the road is lifted high and glimpses are caught of the Yellow Sea on the left. Further north again is a town called Rasaw, after which there is another of the numerous craggy passes in that country. Yongchon comes next, and after a day or two's leisurely walking a range of peaks is seen, which is China beyond the Yalu. From Yongchon the road gradually ascends to Wiju, the new treaty port, which looks south over the Yalu, and which has been called an Asiatic Antwerp. Here the Yalu is in three divisions, separated by sandy flats. The country north of the Yalu, in Manchuria, is difficult in the extreme and the roads are said to be the worst in the world. Violent sand storms are frequent at certain seasons of the year on the plains and between the Yalu River and Teunghwasung, sixty five miles away there are streams to be crossed that are dangerous in the spring freshets and almost carry the mules and horses of the country away. Teunghwasung is surrounded by the mountains and seems entirely cut off from other thickly populated districts.

The Sanitarium

Work at

Muskoka.

The reports of the work that is being done in the two consumptive homes of the National Sanitarium Association at Muskoka are highly encouraging. Since the work was started, rather more than six years ago, over a thousand patients have been cared for, and the report of the medical superintendent shows that a large percentage of them have been able to take up their life work, and others have had the disease so far arrested that by living a careful and healthful life, their lives have been much prolonged. Evidence of the good work that this institution has done is made very clear in the last report of the secretary of the Provincial Board of Health for Ontario. For several years there had been a steady increase in the mortality, from tuberculosis up until the year 1899. For the three years following this the deaths from consumption dropped from 3,484 to 2,604—a decrease of 700, or nearly twenty-five per cent. It is within these years that the greatest progress has been made by the National Sanitarium Association and the outcome is gratifying to every citizen. It is hardly possible to calculate how much good might be accomplished if there were only funds enough forthcoming to multiply this work many times over. Public interest and sympathy in the work of this association has centred during the past two years very largely around the work that has been accomplished in the second institution—the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives, situated about a mile from the parent institution. Since the hospital was opened to receive patients in April, 1902—a period of less than two years—two hundred and thirty-five patients have been cared for. These have come altogether from the wage earning classes representing fifty-five different trades and callings. Those of every religious denomination have been admitted, including Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, and some eight or ten miscellaneous denominations. Into the Muskoka Free Hospital for consumptives, patients are received from every province in the Dominion. The records of the past two years show that there have been patients in the institution from Newfoundland in the East to British Columbia in the West, and not a single patient it is said, has been refused admission because of his or her inability to pay. As the work is carried on in part by voluntary subscriptions, the national character of the institution and the good work which it is accomplishing commend it strongly to the philanthropic in all parts of the Dominion.

Municipal Own-

The most courageous attempt that has been witnessed in Canada to work out the problems of public

reship of Public Works

ownership is to be found, the *Toronto News* says, in the town of Fort William in Algoma. The services that are now operated by the municipality include water works, electric lighting, telephone and street railway. Of a total net debt of \$356,220, the sum of \$131,529 represents the water, light and telephone plants. "For the five years during which the waterworks have been in existence a profit of \$1,896.96 has been earned over and above the interest and sinking fund required to retire the debentures. That is a good showing. The cost of constructing the system was heavy, owing to the town site being so low and flat. To show a surplus the first five years is encouraging. The electric lighting plant, which has been in operation for six years, has not done so well. There is a deficit of \$1,153.49. The telephone service shows an adverse balance of \$311.56 as the result of one year's operation. When the three services are put together it is found that after paying all expenses, including interest and sinking fund, there is a balance in favor of the municipality of \$31.86. That is not much, but it is on the right side. It is reasonable to expect, also, that with greater experience and increased business, there will be a constantly growing revenue, and a proportionate diminution in the cost of maintenance. The townspeople are to be congratulated upon the results attained so far. They have taken the position of pioneers in the field of public ownership, and every thoughtful man will wish them success in their enterprises."

British Politics

Recent London despatches intimate the probability that the Government will be dissolved shortly after Easter. Prime Minister Balfour who was ill at the time of the opening of the Parliament has so far recovered as to be able to resume his place in the House, but is reported to be looking jaded and harassed, and his return has not restored discipline or enthusiasm among his followers. Mr. E. N. Ford, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, thinks that Mr. Balfour is clearly unfit physically for the burdens of office, is indifferent to the fortunes of the Government and will be as glad to be released from the anxieties of office as Lord Rosebery was in 1895. The task of reconciling the protectionist and free trade elements in his party is too great for Mr. Balfour's subtlety and tact. With a part of his following sympathizing with the protection policy of Mr. Chamberlain, and a part holding tenaciously to the policy of free trade, while he himself sympathizes with the Chamberlain policy and declares against it, the problem with which the Prime Minister is confronted must be quite as difficult as that of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. In view of the demoralized condition of the Government and the general results of the by-elections, there would seem to be good grounds for the confidence of the Liberals who are said to be indifferent now to coalition with the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Ritchie and other Unionists, and would prefer to fight out the issue on straight party lines with a view to forming an Administration with Lord Spencer as Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as the leader of the House of Commons and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Modifications in

G. T. Pacific

Scheme.

The modifications in the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, which have been agreed upon between the Government and the Company have been made public. The first change relates to the bonds of the mountain section of the road. The original agreement was to the effect that for the prairie section the Government would guarantee seventy-five per cent, of the bonds of the Company to the amount of \$13,000 per mile, and of the mountain section the same proportion to the amount of \$30,000 per mile. So far as the prairie section is concerned there is no change in this agreement, but in regard to the mountain section the \$30,000 limit is removed, and the Government agrees to guarantee the bonds to the amount of seventy-five per cent. of the cost of construction, be it less or more. Another change has reference to the remedy in case the company fail to pay the interest on the bonds guaranteed by the Government. In such case, instead of fore

closure and sale, provision is made for the appointment of a manager or receiver, and under the amended contract it would be the duty of the manager in case of default, to manage and operate the western division, to receive all the tolls and revenues, to pay the working expenditure and to distribute the surplus revenue portion of the seventy-five per cent. of the bonds guaranteed by the Government and twenty-five per cent. to the holders of bonds guaranteed by the G. T. R. in the proportion stated. Another and perhaps more important modification of the contract gives the G. T. R. Company power to dispose of the \$25,000,000 common stock which it had agreed to take, the company, however, throughout the term of its lease is to hold a majority of the stock so as to enable the G. T. R. to control the policy of the Grand Trunk Pacific. The amended agreement also extends the time for the completion of the western section of the road three years—that is until 1911. There are changes also in reference to the eastern section of the road. In the original agreement it was provided that for the first seven years after the line should be in operation the company should be exempt from the payment of interest on the bonds guaranteed by the Government. If for the next three years default were made, the interest was to be capitalized and bear interest. The effect of the amendment is to provide that after the tenth year when under the original agreement the obligation to pay interest was made absolute, no proceedings to appoint a manager can be taken until such time as the company shall be in default in an amount equal to five years interest. It is also provided that if the Government undertakes the operation of the eastern division at the end of fifty years, the company stipulates that they shall have, for another period of fifty years, such running powers as may be necessary for a continuity of operation between the western division and other portions of the company's system. Provision is made that if the Government undertake the operation of the eastern division at the end of the company's lease, and the company have constructed branch lines connecting with that division, the Government are to take over the branch lines at a valuation, and in rating such branch lines the amount of any grant or grants which the company may have received from the parliament of Canada may be deducted.

A Note of Alarm

The London *Spectator*, it appears, considers that existing conditions justify its sounding a note of alarm as to the danger of a war with Russia. The *Spectator* points out that in Russia feelings of resentment against Great Britain are steadily growing, the Russians being convinced that the British have been the chief cause of their difficulties by encouraging the Japanese to go to war, and whether there is any justification for this feeling or not the important fact is that it exists and that public opinion in Russia is in such a state that war with Great Britain would be extremely popular. The *Spectator* thinks that there are reasons why the military party in Russia would favor a war with Great Britain. A great European war, we are told, would obliterate all traces of the Japanese war. A popular war would cover up an unpopular one and give the Russians an excuse to make peace with Japan or withdraw from Japan's reach. Another consideration which would incline the Russians to enter upon a war with Great Britain is the belief prevalent, we are told, in Russian military circles that in such a war Russia would have Germany and France as allies, and that these powers would necessarily sustain the brunt of the conflict. The *Spectator* proceeds to warn the English press against giving Russia an occasion to pick a quarrel and particularly deprecates the strongly anti-Russian attitude of *The Times*. Further the Government is urged to be vigilant and to be prepared for all emergencies. "We must look the facts in the face and be prepared to take the consequences of the Japanese alliance. One of the consequences was the active and bitter hostility of Russia and the opportunity afforded to the German Emperor to knock the heads of European powers together and get something of advantage to his own nation." It does not seem very probable that there is any sufficient grounds for *The Spectator's* apprehensions, although it is certainly good counsel that the British press should refrain from promoting Russian ill-will toward Great Britain by assuming an aggressively anti-Russian attitude. The feeling between the French and the English people is now more friendly than for many years past, and it is extremely unlikely that France could be drawn into a Russo-German alliance against Great Britain, and it is not likely that the friendship of either Germany or France for Russia is so ardent as to make them anxious to unite with that power against Great Britain in a war the brunt of which would have to be borne by themselves.