

was made more than half a century ago when a bed of charcoal was used as a trap to catch the fusel oil?

At Virden, Illinois, a miners' riot having occurred in consequence of some negro laborers having been brought from the South, the Governor of the State sent to the scene of action some troops with instructions "not to allow imported labor to be unloaded at the place." By imported laborers is here meant American citizens from another State, Alabama, with a dark skin. Hitherto the opposition has been to importing labor across the international frontier; now the objection is to its going from one State to another. It is difficult to believe that Governor Tanner has any legal warrant for his restrictive order. The mine owners may or may not, as he alleges, be guilty of the murder of men who have lost their lives in the fray; and if his action has any justification at all, it must be in refusing to permit the hostile array to be reinforced. It may be justified as a means of restoring peace, though it would not be under a normal condition of things. Surely American citizens, black as well as white, have a right to take their labor from one State to another; a denial of that right would not be in the interest of labor of whatever color, but the reverse. The mine owners throw the blame of the loss of life on the Governor. The courts will in the end fix the responsibility. For a century and more, political economy has been teaching the laborer that the competition of his own children, if they were numerous, would lower his wages, and urging him, for that reason, by late marriage to restrict the number. At last the lesson has been so well learnt that jealousy of labor competition, from any quarter, has risen to the height reached at Virden, Illinois, on the 12th October, 1898. We ought not to wonder at a result which heaven and earth have been moved to bring about.

Nothing serious is likely to come of the clash of interests in the Valley of the Nile between the English and the French. When General Kitchener met Major Marchand at Fashoda the latter was in sore straits for want of supplies; he was besides surrounded by hostile natives by whom he might have been entirely overpowered. The British offer him transportation out of the country by way of Cairo. On the whole the diplomatic situation is not seriously clouded by this collision of interests; but what between the Dreyfus affair and a gigantic strike of workmen in Paris, France is in a volcanic condition, which gives a certain gravity to this last phase of the Egyptian question. On the whole the French press is acting fairly well, though some journals are doing their best to make international trouble out of the Marchand incident. France claims access to the Nile, while Lord Salisbury takes the ground that no disturbing centre of French influence can be permitted in the valley of the great historic river. Some mode of accommodation will assuredly be found; but Lord Salisbury refuses to compromise the rights of Egypt in the Soudan.

THE QUEBEC COMMISSION.

When the international commissioners closed their sessions at Quebec, preparatory to moving to Washington, it was said that no single question had been completely adjusted. But it does not follow that considerable progress had not been made. Rumor says that our commissioners proposed to put several items of manufactures, of which little come from England, into a treaty, but that the American commissioners did not respond with any articles of raw products such as Canada produces. As several of

the American commissioners admitted to interviewers that they had strong hopes that a treaty will be made and that it will go far to clear off old scores, it is probable that they have something up their sleeves, to be produced hereafter.

No one can expect that we should learn with any definiteness the progress the International Commission is making, from the speeches made by the commissioners on a festive occasion like that of the banquet of the Ancients, at Quebec. Scarcely a straw can be found on the placid waters of the eloquence of the occasion from which it is possible to learn more than how the current of the negotiation is moving. Sir Wilfred Laurier at that banquet claimed, in general terms, that "the efforts of the Commission, notwithstanding many difficulties in the way, had already been reasonably successful." The public has no means of judging the real meaning of the statement. What is known is that there has been a contention of interests before the commissioners; and if the commissioners on each side are to try to please all applicants for favors and deprecators of concessions, the obstacles to agreements will rise into mountains. The American agriculturist argues that Canadian competition in his own market would be injurious to him. But he cannot always avoid competition, and if he does not meet it at home he must encounter it abroad, with the result that other classes must suffer from the exclusion; maltsters, and still more, consumers of beer, including the farmer, handlers of produce, whether as merchants, forwarders or shippers. If these things be settled on any rule of reason some compromise ought to be possible; but unfortunately, in the presence of a majority reason is enforced to silence.

The statement is now made, in positive terms, that the sealing question is to be settled by compensation to owners of sealing vessels and a sum of money payable to the country for the surrender of the right of catching seals at sea. The trouble is that there can be no authority for making the statement. Of course the sealers' agent, who is quoted as authority, may have learnt something since he was entrusted with one side of the case. But if there is to be no reciprocity in the transaction such settlement would settle only one question, and that not in the most desirable way. But there is no way of getting at the exact state of even the sealing question. The agent of the sealers at this stage would not be likely to know more than one side of the case: what the actual sealers, so far as they are concerned, would be willing to do. They can bind nobody else, but a treaty can bind us all, and if the question is to be settled by compensation, the compensation for surrendering the privilege will belong to Canada, not to individuals or a province. The individual claims would be confined to the vessels and apparatus they have to sell. Whether the Dominion could properly hand over any part of the compensation to British Columbia, as being the most nearly interested, is an open question which may or may not come up for discussion.

ONTARIO'S MINERAL OUTPUT.

The mineral statistics of the Province of Ontario for the six months ending June 30th of the current year have been made public. The progress made is most satisfactory, and as compared with that of the previous year shows considerable advance. The value of all metal products for the first six months of this year is within 20 per cent. of the value of these products for the whole year of 1897. Although the production of gold has been handicapped by an unfortunate series of circumstances, and the second three months of the present