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## THE ALASKAN BOUNDARY AWARD.

The principal topic of discussion in Canada since our last issue has been the Alaskan boundary discussion. It is likely to remain a principal topic of discussion for a considerable time to come.

The situation may be briefly recapitulated. Alaska formerly belonged to Russia, from which country it was in the time of W. H. Seward, then U.S. Secretary of State, purchased by the United States. It is said to have been purchased by Seward, while the United States was smarting under a sense of British unfriendliness during the Civil War, with the view that it might some day be a thorn in the side of Britain. Better relations between the British Empire and the United States have grown up; and since Britain's friendliness to the great English-speaking Republic during the recent Spanish-American war, these relations have even developed into cordiality. But the Alaskan boundary had long been a matter of controversy; Britain desired its settlement; Canada desired its settlement; the United States also desired its settlement, though less anxiously, perhaps, as being already in possession of most of what it desired. Earnestly wishing all differences adjusted, Great Britain promoted a sort of arbitration, or adjudication, it makes little difference what it is called, with three persons on each side. When the United States named its three representatives, Canada objected to them on the ground that they were not unprejudiced men, having strongly, openly and frequently prejudged the case against Canada, on the principle of "my own country, right or wrong." One of Canada's grievances is that before Canada's protest had been taken into consideration, the treaty was ratified by the British authorities. To make a long story short, Lord Alverstone, one of the three representatives on the Canadian side, has concurred for the most part in the United

States contentions, with the result that a considerable portion of important Alaskan frontier and sea-front held by Canadians to belong to Canada, has now been adjudged, by four out of the six jurors, to belong to the United States. The two Canadians on the board of adjudicators, Mr. Aylesworth, K.C., and Sir Louis Jette, declined to sign the award, refusing to make the finding unanimous, and leaving the result to be accomplished by majority vote. The result has been received with dissatisfaction in Canada, the careful Montreal Witness, for example, asserting that "in the evolution of Canadian nationality this award may have deeper significance than anything that has ever occurred in the relations of the Dominion to the empire and the republic." The Toronto News begins an editorial article as follows: "The lesson for Canada in the Alaskan award cannot be misunderstood. We have nothing to gain from British diplomacy, and less from American friendship."

It is only right to remember Great Britain "counts the friendship of the United States as her chief security in case she should become involved in war in Europe and one of the great ends of her diplomacy is to maintain good relations with Washington," especially as she knows other European powers, notably Russia, earnestly desire to have Britain and the United States estranged.

As for the United States, that great country, with many characteristics worthy of admiration and commendation, manifests perhaps the least self-discipline of any of the great nations of the world. So persuaded were the President and his advisers that no political party in the United States could afford to surrender any territory over which the flag of the United States had ever floated, that they sanctioned the only sort of tribunal they could trust, namely, a tribunal—three against three—so formed that it would lead to a verdict for the United States, or if not, to certain disagreement.

As for Canada, this Dominion cannot be checked. There is no reason why this rising giant of the North should not make as much progress in the Twentieth Century as the United States did in the Nineteenth. The rebuff in the Alaskan boundary matter is but a boulder in the way of our progress. We shall make a roadway around it and march steadily onward to the goal of our important destiny.

Meantime, as the Dominion Premier has wisely advised, it is important we should be calm in regard to this matter, keep our mental balance, and not think because we have lost something we have lost everything. Who knows Providence may not bring much ultimate good out of the Alaskan boundary settlement, distasteful to Canada for the moment as it is? An eccentric but sagacious banker has this carved on his mantel-piece:

"I am an old man now; I've had lots of trouble, and most of it never happened."

It is while you are patiently toiling at the little tasks of life that the meaning and shape of the great whole of life dawns upon you. It is while you are resisting little temptations that you are growing stronger—Phillips Brooks.

## BRITISH POLITICS.

It is quite clear from what is going on in Great Britain that Mr. Chamberlain's trade policy is not the only issue which will divide the electorate when the general elections come on. The new education law in England and the temperance question will also be important factors in the campaign. One of the latest episodes of the campaign—and by no means an insignificant one—is the defection of Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, brother of Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, from the Unionist party. At a great temperance meeting in Glasgow early in October, he denounced what he called Premier Balfour's "surrender to the brewers" and his promised retrograde legislation on the liquor question next session—that of providing compensation to publicans for non-renewal of licenses and limiting the discretionary power of the licensing magistrates. He also declared himself opposed to any fiscal policy which involved taxation of food, and spoke strongly in favor of public control of the public elementary schools. What he said on these latter points is worth quoting:

"I am to-day what I have always been all through my life—a Free Trader, and against the taxation of food. That was the view of what used to be called the Unionist party in 1902, when Mr. Ritchie took off the shilling tax from corn on the ground that it was no longer required for revenue purposes, and was in danger of being regarded as a protective tax. I remain in favour of the public control of our public elementary schools, and that was the policy of the Unionist party before 1902. I admit, then, that for me, beyond the pain of parting with old personal friends, I have had to make no sacrifice of principle in order to uphold the temperance cause. I admit that I don't want to be responsible for dear bread and dear meat and dear sugar, for commercial war, and for what will follow from that—scarcity of employments and lower wages. I don't want to be responsible for such inefficiency in the public services as has been disclosed by the report of the Royal Commission on the War. I don't want to be connected with the entanglement in Venezuela or in Bagdad, as the catspaw of Germany. I don't want to see sectarian tests applied to teachers who are to be paid out of the public rates."

There is no "hedging" in declarations of this kind. The ex-Colonial Secretary is making what politicians would call a "magnificent fight;" but on the other hand students of the political situation in the motherland can hardly lose sight of the fact that while, so far as its leaders are concerned, the Liberal party remains solid, the defection from the Unionist party of such men as the Duke of Devonshire, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir George Goschen, Mr. Ritchie, late Chancellor of the exchequer, and others who might be named, must have a weakening and demoralising effect. It is not improbable that the first outcome of Mr. Chamberlain's campaign will be a degree of political chaos and entanglement which will hardly be straightened out by one general election.