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EUROPEAN WAR SITUATION.

NONE of the governments of the great powers of Europe seem to want war. Yet there is imminent danger of some of them being drawn into war and if some, it is difficult to see how any of the others are going to escape the same fate. There is absolutely nothing at present in the Balkan situation for Great Britain, France or Germany to fight about. Whether Serbia gets a port on the Adriatic or not does not matter a button to either of them. The issues of peace or war seem to be with Austria. Serbia is manifestly bent upon its policy of acquiring an outlet to the Adriatic, is preparing to fight for it, even against Austria, and is fairly entitled to it. Even if the Russian government were prepared to leave the Serbians to fight the matter out with Austria it is doubtful if the Russian people would allow this to be done. Should both Austria and Russia be involved the actual value of both the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance would be put to the test. The fact that Belgrade is being fortified and that guns and troops are actually being withdrawn from Turkey for the protection of the Servian capital against the only possible enemy, Austria, is ominous.

TRANSCONTINENTAL'S ENTRANCE TO MONTREAL.

IT is announced that an arrangement has been made by which the National Transcontinental Railway will obtain running rights from Bell River to Montreal over the North Railway, Mr. Clergue's line to Port Nottaway on James Bay. The Quebec Government engineers sent to examine into the feasibility of the North Railway route report in most favorable terms on the country through which the line will run. The land between the Transcontinental and James' Bay is flat upon the whole and the North Railway will be built with a maximum grade of 0.25. The Grand Trunk Pacific is 0.40 to the mile, enabling one locomotive to haul four thousand tons of freight.

There is good clay land overlying the Laurentian rocks to a depth of from five to sixty feet, covered by vegetable loam from two to three feet in depth, making the land similar to that of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, which provinces lie in the same latitude in the West. During the month of September, while the daily averages of maximum temperature in Quebec were 60.4 degrees, the same days the Nottaway Valley registered 61 degrees, this region lying several hundred miles north of Quebec city. The average daily minimum temperature rated 46.6 degrees in Quebec, against 46.1 along the valley of the Nottaway.

Two steamships, each to carry 200,000 bushels of grain, will be built to carry grain from Port Nelson to Port Nottaway whence it will come to Montreal by the North Railway.

EX-PRESIDENTS.

THERE is considerable discussion going on in the United States over the proposition of the Carnegie Corporation of New York to pay a pension of \$25,000 a year to ex-presidents of the United States. There are obvious objections to making the chief magistrates of the United States dependent upon the trusts for their retiring allowances and there are objections just as obvious to putting them during their term of office to the temptation of providing for their old age by serving the interests of the trusts. The proper course would seem to be for the nation itself to make adequate provision at the public expense, for such ex-presidents as are not provided with sufficient private means to keep them and their families in comfort. In Great Britain every minister of the crown who has served for five years is entitled to a pension if he chooses to claim it, but very few have ever claimed, not more, we think, than three or four. It is a scandal that men who have devoted their lives to any service, public or private, should be left to poverty in their old age. The right people to provide for them are the employers who have benefited by their labors—in the case of statesmen who have held high office, the nation. This principle is universally recognized by all the great financial, transportation, industrial and other business institutions, although not invariably acted upon. Congress should relieve the Carnegie Corporation of all responsibility in this connection. An ex-president's claim to a pension, if he needs it, is based not upon his few years' service at the White House but upon a life-time of public service culminating in election to the highest office in the state.

It has always been a mystery why no method has been found of utilizing the services of ex-presidents of the United States. One of the advantages enjoyed in the "effete monarchies" is that age and experience and service are not regarded as barriers to public usefulness. Under the American system nearly all the greatest statesmen of Europe and Canada would have been squeezed out of public life long ago. Germany would have had to "drop the pilot" Bismarck and Great Britain would have had to shelve Disraeli, Gladstone and Salisbury at the zenith of their powers. An ex-president of the United States may shoot big game in Africa, practise law before the judges he has created—or run for a third term. So far none of them have gone into vaudeville.