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Canada's Nickel Monopoly.

It may not be generally known that the nickel deposits of Sudbury are much greater than those of any other country. They are much greater than those of New Caledonia, the only real rival of Ontario, in the world. Thus it will be seen that Canada may be said to have a practical monopoly of this increasingly important metal. This is one thing we have that others have not, for which we may be thankful. Canada has already attained the fifth place among the nations of the world in the production of gold and the sixth in the production of silver. The Canadian coal beds are of imperial importance, and our iron ores will in the near future be eagerly sought after. Inquiries are now made as to the Canadian deposits of copper, corundum, zinc and many other minerals. There is no doubt that Canada will be, in a few years, one of the greatest mining countries in the world. The minerals are here. They are here in abundance. They await the explorer and the investor. These are on the way. What is taking place at Sydney, Cape Breton, will find its counterpart in many other parts of our fair land. Canada is bound to grow and develop. It may be slowly, but surely all the same. We are citizens of no mean country.

There is an enormous demand for cotton in Western China. Any cotton goods sent over there are well received, and raw cotton, cotton yarn, and the manufactured article are going up the river (the Yangtse Kiang) in immense quantities. Since there are Canadian factories that can produce cotton there is no reason in the world why Canada should not compete for a portion of this enormous trade. It is certain that shipments can be landed in China from Canada quicker than from Britain or Europe. The Germans have been gaining a great deal in China of late years. They have worked hard to get trade, and they have gotten it. They have worked harder than their British competitors and more consistently. They have attended to the fashions in their manufactures and have devoted more attention to the manufacture of small articles, which the English have overlooked. The Americans and the Japanese are also on the alert for trade and are getting it, especially is this true of the Japs. They may be seen everywhere, extremely busy and inquiring into everything that can be turned to a commercial benefit. The demand is increasing, and as the country is opened up to outsiders it will continue to increase. The nation that is up-to-date with methods and goods will reap the reward. The English are waking up to the fact of the keenest competition in trade with China and are preparing to meet it.

The Straits of Belle Isle have been called "The graveyard of the St. Lawrence." It has been the charnel house of many a nobleship. Another victim, the magnificent and costly Dominion Line Steamer Scotsman, has fallen a prey to its rapacity. If she had been an old steamship that had seen her best days the disaster would not be felt so keenly by the public. But the Scotsman was one of the finest of the Dominion line's fine fleet, lost too at a time when she can ill be spared. The loss is all the more keenly felt because it comes so soon after that of the Labrador. The disaster has its lessons for the owners of all the great steamship lines, which they will do well to learn. It brings out in clear cut lines the dangers of the Belle Isle route, which cannot be overcome by the best and most elaborate

system of marine protection available. If the reputation of the St. Lawrence route is to be maintained the Belle Isle route will have to be abandoned and the Cabot Straits route adopted by the steamship lines which do the carrying trade of the St. Lawrence in the summer. This conviction has been forcing itself upon the minds of ship owners for some time past. The sooner a decision is reached in the matter the better for all concerned. Human life is too valuable to incur such risks as are run for the sake of saving a few hours time in reaching port. The most up-to-date system of marine protection cannot make the Straits of Belle Isle reasonably safe for ocean steamships. The greater distance to be traversed by the Cabot Straits route would be more than offset by the increased safety and the higher rate of speed that could be maintained. English underwriters will refuse to insure cargoes or ships by that route. This would be unfortunate. The lesson is hard. It ought to be learned.

The award of the Anglo-Venezuelan boundary arbitration commission has been given. It appears to be more of the nature of a compromise than a decision in accordance with the facts of the case. It does not seem to have been based upon the correct interpretation of treaties. Upon the whole Great Britain has no just cause of complaint. While she does not get all that she contended for, yet she gets a vast area of land which is rich in minerals and about which Venezuela knew but little, and apparently cared less, until its richness and presumed resources were discovered and developed by British enterprise and capital. Then she coveted the treasure and made her claim. Venezuela gets control of the Orinoco river and a strip of territory on the other side of that great river and thus secures the strategic command of its entrance. The surrender of Point Barua by the British gives this to her. But the river cannot be closed by Venezuela. It will be open to the commerce of the world, and is to be kept open. As a result of the arbitration the relations between Great Britain and the United States will likely be more cordial. Everything that has a tendency towards such a state of things should be sought by both countries.

This has not been the popular idea as regards China. This empire is known to be the most populous country in Asia, if not in the world. Leaving out Siberia it covers two-thirds of that vast continent. The prosperity of that vast empire is due to its independence of autocracy. Though in name a despotism, the Emperor is little more than a figure-head; all official appointments are nominally in his hands and his decrees are regarded almost as divine, the "Son of Heaven," like the Pope of Rome, being looked upon as God's vice-regent on earth; but he has not, like the Czar of Russia, an army of docile Tchinovniks to see his decrees carried out, and to worry and oppress the people. A Chinaman, unless in the rare instances when he is entrapped into a law suit or caught as a criminal, may spend his whole life without ever crossing an official. In the cities he has neither license tax nor house tax, nor municipal rates to trouble him. No tax collector calls at his door. He is free to trade and travel where he will; passports are unknown. He settles his disputes by the arbitration of his own voluntarily supported guilds. A nominal land tax, a custom entry tax of five per cent. *ad valorem*, and a transit tax, or liken of 2½

per cent., together with the produce of the government salt monopoly, are estimated to burden the Chinaman with an annual contribution amounting to less than half a dollar per head. Residents of St. John and Halifax will sigh as they read the above, even after they have gotten the 5 per cent. discount for cash taken off their heavy tax bills. China must be a very desirable country in which to live, from this point of view at least.

The Venezuelan Revolution. While the commission was in session at Paris endeavoring to reach a conclusion as to the matters in dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela, a revolution has broken out in the latter country. It is headed by Gen. Castro, who started his insurrection in the Republic of Columbia. He has distributed a proclamation of war all over the country, and has made a demand upon President Audrade to abdicate. What the result of this internal conflict is likely to be it is impossible to predict at this distance. The reports that leak through the censored mails and telegraph offices from Venezuela are so contradictory that it is very difficult to tell just what the exact condition is in that unfortunate country. It is known that several battles have been fought and that the revolutionary leader is marching on Caracas, the capital of the Republic. From latest reports it appears that an armistice has been agreed to between the rival leaders, which may result in an agreement that will end the present strife.

The Transvaal Bluff. That the Transvaal has gone about as far as it can go without declaring for war is evident. There is a point at which patience even in diplomatic negotiations will cease to be a virtue. It may not be reached as yet. But there is no concealing the fact that it is at least within measurable distance and that it now rests with the Transvaal itself to say whether there shall be peace or war. This is not saying that all the blame is on the side of the Transvaal. It is saying that the conduct of the Transvaal authorities has been shift and impractical. The British demand has been practically fixed and unchanged from the outset, viz., That the Outlanders shall be enfranchised fully and as a matter of right after not more than five years' residence; that there shall be a readjustment of representation in the Legislature; that the question of suzerainty shall stand as it has been since 1884, and that all other matters shall be left to future friendly negotiations between the governments or to the natural working out which time will bring. It is well to bear these points in mind when reading the despatches which appear in our papers taken from hostile sources in too many instances. The above is the British demand—has been, and is now. The Transvaal at first refused this demand, offering instead partial citizenship after nine years. Then it changed it to seven years. Then it changed it to five years, but added the indispensable condition that Great Britain should absolutely renounce all suzerainty claim. Then it withdrew that offer and accused Great Britain of trickery and bad faith—charges which have not been substantiated and which have been promptly denied by the British Government. In the meantime the Transvaal pressed with feverish haste every possible preparation for war. And now that Great Britain, after repeated warnings that she would have in time to do so, has cancelled all former offers and proposes to start anew, the Transvaal President declares that he is being forced into war. But by whom? That is the case as it stands today. Great Britain is not to blame for the present condition of things, and we do not propose to join the Anglophobes in their denunciation of Britain with our present light.