

ing system on both sides is sure to continue. On the road to the Klondyke, the alternative of the bonding system is to throw the great bulk of the business into an exclusive Canadian route. American eyes are sharp enough to see this, and American intelligence may be relied on to remove obstacles which have in the past been in the way of the traffic between the Pacific Ocean and the Klondyke. It is not surprising, perhaps, that the present moment should be chosen by free talkers, in congress, to threaten, once more, the abrogation of the bonding system. This somewhat random talk can scarcely be taken as serious.

Perhaps General Johnson of the United States army is correct in saying that, if the commission now examining into the cause of the explosion of the warship "Maine," in the harbor of Havana, should report that the catastrophe is due to the malice of some fiend, operating with some agent under the vessel, public feeling in the Republic would compel war with Spain at once. But though such a result would be likely to occur, it is not at all certain that in striking Spain the real culprit would be hit. An attempt was made the other day to assassinate the King of Greece; it would be manifestly unjust to hold a whole people guilty of the dastardly act. An assassin killed President Lincoln, uttering words which assumed to express the feeling of the South; but the South was not privy to, and did not condone the act. If half a dozen persons, having no connection with the Spanish Government, and in no way representing Spanish feelings or designs, could be proved to have blown up the "Maine," would that be a reason for going to war with the nation to which the culprits belonged? It is just possible that this question may have to be answered; and the present outlook is that it would be answered in the affirmative. Passion does not reason, least of all national passion, justly aroused. At present the outlook is uncertain, but is not reassuring.

Victoria withdraws her grant from the Colonial Institute, on the ground that she finds no adequate advantage in the connection. By this she forfeits her right of displaying her products in the Institute building. It is certain that the United States are profiting by such exhibitions, which they are preparing to extend both in Mexico and South America.

Newfoundland, through its Government, is moving in the Legislature to transfer the Government railways, telegraphs, coal areas, dock and "a large section of land" to a private person. In all such cases, great caution is necessary, for the public resources, once alienated, can seldom or never be recovered. The supposed advantage of the transfer is that it will lead to a great "development of the timber and mineral wealth" of the island. It seems a pity that Newfoundland should feel herself under the necessity of getting rid at once of many of her most valuable possessions—coal areas, railways, telegraphs, timber lands. Financial stress may excuse much, but such wholesale surrender of public resources can hardly be regarded otherwise than as deplorable. As we are as yet without the details of the transaction, it is impossible exactly to appreciate the situation.

Mr. Sifton, in describing the Stikine-Teslin railway as the complement of the proposed Edmonton road, recognizes the claims of the latter, which are being pressed on the Government from several quarters. The Edmonton route is, beyond doubt, the one which a vast majority of Canadians would prefer; but, in point of time, it is clear that it can come only after a road from or near the Pacific Ocean has been built. In the meantime something could

be done for the Edmonton route. The trail which exists, and which was used by more than only one party of mining adventurers last year, including women, can be improved into something like what goes by the name of a wagon road. It would be a makeshift, no doubt, but would be useful; it would have the advantage of going over the rich Peace River country, a sight of which would invite settlers, whose occupation would, in the end, prove of more value to the country than the exertions of the gold seekers.

YUKON CUSTOMS REGULATIONS.

The newly issued customs regulations of Canada, which govern the Yukon country, permit the free entry of suitable "wearing apparel, articles of personal adornment, toilet articles, and similar personal effects," when accompanied by their owners and in actual use by them. Goods intended for sale are not included in the free list, unless they have been purchased in, or are the produce of, Canada, and then they must be accompanied by a certificate of a Canadian customs officer showing that they have been "shipped duty free from a port in British Columbia;" but to entitle such goods to this certificate, the shipment must have been made in a vessel entitled to engage in the coasting trade of Canada. These certificates may be issued by Canadian customs officers at Dyea, Skagway or Wrangel, who have personally seen the goods transferred from the vessel and inspected her manifest to satisfy themselves that the goods have not been cleared from British Columbia in bond. All foreign goods entering the Yukon country are subject to the same rates of duties as they would pay at any other Canadian port. Americans who have gone to British Columbia to obtain outfits for the Yukon are protesting against the restrictions which their own Government have been opposing to their passage to the Yukon, restrictions which they say will, if not removed, ultimately ruin the trade of Puget Sound.

WHERE WE BUY OUR COTTONS.

There has always been keen competition in the Canadian market between American and British cotton goods producers. The trade returns for the year, as compiled by the United States Government, show that in 1897 there was a considerable falling off in the exports of cotton goods from that country to Canada and Newfoundland. While the exports of domestic cottons (colored and uncolored) to all countries from the United States amounted in 1897 to 285,684,151 yards, as compared with 281,211,521 yards the previous year, the shipments to British North America were only 14,878,247 yards, as against 35,519,380 yards in 1896. The customs' classification notes that of "other manufactures of cottons" the exports in 1897 were valued at \$1,537,471, as against \$1,360,567 in the previous twelve months.

The explanation of this declining trade that first suggests itself is the discrimination of 12½ per cent. to which American goods are subjected, as compared with competing fabrics from the United Kingdom, under our Act of last year. Although the difference in customs duties gives an advantage to British manufacturers, there is little in the trade returns to show that it has had the effect of increasing the exports of the latter to Canada. In 1897, the cotton piece goods imported into the Dominion from the United Kingdom were valued at £457,196 as against £455,678. The trade apparently lost by the United States, has evidently not fallen into the hands of the British. Our imports of printed goods from the United States have always formed a large part of our aggregate purchases of cotton