

Cape-to-Cairo Railway

Another Step Toward the Completion of the Great Project.

The extension of Soudan Government Railway's line south of Khartoum, which forms another stage in the Cape to Cairo Railway, is now being rapidly pushed on, the rate of progress being 10 miles a week. The line follows the course of the Blue Nile at a distance of one to three miles west of the river, and does not actually strike the Nile after leaving Khartoum until the 25th mile. The 47th mile has now just been reached, and the work has proceeded remarkably easy. The money at present allotted for its construction on this year's estimates will be sufficient to take the line to the 55th mile, but the budget for next year is not due till October next. The importance of the line for the development of the country is such, however, that it is probable that some arrangement will be made for continuing the work forthwith.

The line is just reaching that part of the country where the rising effect of May, 1908, took place. Its course eventually will be to cross the desert from the Blue Nile to the White Nile,

where a bridge is already under construction to carry it up to El Obeid, in Kordofan. There it will tap the centre of the gum trade, one of the chief sources of wealth to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. At present the gum is brought down by camel to the river and by boat to Omdurman, which has always been the great centre for sorting and selling. From there it has had to be reloaded into boats to cross the river and be loaded on to the railway on the other side for Port Sudan. When it is possible to place the gum on trucks at El Obeid for direct transport by rail to Port Sudan, most of the merchants will move from Omdurman to El Obeid. Omdurman will no doubt lose greatly in wealth and importance, and some even predict that it will dwindle away to an insignificant village. But the great proportion of its wealth depending on the gum trade. This remains to be seen. It will certainly be off the track as far as Kordofan is concerned, but from time to time it has been the converging point for caravans from great distances in the east, and natives of all the tribes of Africa could probably be found in it. It will take long to lose its place as a great centre in this respect, for the pilgrim route to Mecca from an immense distance leads through it, and whatever its importance as a centre of commerce, it will always have its historic importance and interest for tourists.

PREMIER ASQUITH'S DEFENSE OF THE NEW BUDGET

(Continued from Page Twelve.)

exemptions consistent with the principle of the tax can be made good. I can assure you the Government and the majority of the House of Commons are perfectly prepared to entertain them. That is the scope of the tax and its general effect. Let me point out to you that, like the increment duty, with which I have already dealt, it is in its intention, and it will be in its effect, primarily a fiscal instrument, namely a means of raising revenue for the Exchequer. It merely says—and here again I think we come down to an almost elementary principle of social justice—those classes of land shall be taxed now on the basis of real as distinguished from a perfectly fictitious value. Such land is under rented. That is to say, for a number of reasons which are satisfactory to the owner, it is bringing in a lower yield than it would if put into the market and brought in and ought to bring in. Take the case of land which can be sold for immediate development, but which is held up, and legitimately held up, in the hope of getting a higher price in the future. Such land can command a definite economic rent, and is capable of producing an income. That land ought to form part of the taxable income of the country. The landowner does not take the rent but chooses to forego it, and the source of revenue is reduced proportionately. The national income reduced so much. He does this for his own purpose and with the hope of future profit, and it is clearly only fair and just that the State should apply to him rather than to other ratepayers to make up the deficiency. (Cheers.)

The Talk of Pressure on Land-Owners.

It is said one of the effects of this undeveloped land duty will be to put pressure on the land owners to sell their land. Perhaps it will. (Laughter.) Is that a calamity to the community? (Laughter.) Is that a contingency which we ought to regard with horror and aversion, and against which we should take the most possible precautions and safeguards? Remember this: We hear a great deal about the withdrawal of capital from this country. It is quite true that capital can be withdrawn from one area to another, and sometimes that transference is beneficial to the other area. But the capital cannot be removed. (Cheers.) It cannot be removed, I say, and even if this terrible calamity should happen and there should be a transference of ownership, the land is still there, and the community will continue to enjoy it. The truth is, and I may sum up now, that the saying as regards the increment tax—and the same thing is true of reversions—is only a tax on the windfall as when it falls in regard to the tax on undeveloped land, it only taxes a man on an income which he might enjoy, but chooses for the time being, for purposes of his own, to forego. (Hear, hear.) I maintain that taxation which seeks ends by these means is taxation which is not only sound and economic in principle, but which conforms to the eternal and immutable principles of social justice. (Cheers.) I am afraid I have dealt at great length with these technical matters, but I have tried to present clearly what is the scope and purpose of this new form of taxation.

A Question for Opponents.

Let me, before I come to a close, ask once more the question which I make upon this subject until I get a satisfactory answer to it. The question is—You have got to provide the tax on undeveloped land for which it is to be provided for purposes of importance, or urgency, and the necessity of which no party in the state disputes. How otherwise are you going to provide it? (Cheers.) I put that question a week ago, speaking in the Holborn Restaurant after a very menacing demonstration on the previous day, when the bankers of the city of London met. I put that question to the free traders among the protestants, and particularly to Lord Avebury, an eminent man, who has rendered great service to the cause of free trade. What is Lord Avebury's reply? He has produced perhaps the most marvellous exercise in fiscal arithmetic which has yet entered into the mind or word of man either to think out or to put upon paper. He squared Mr. Lloyd George's (cheers)—budget for him, leaving out the land taxes and indirect taxes, and the schemes of what he considered to be Socialism, by a simple process of attributing to this year's income the yield from the income tax and indirect taxes, which cannot possibly be received until the year after. (Laughter.) Thus when the matter comes to be examined, you will find there is a surplus from the conclusion that under Lord Avebury's free trade alternative budget we should be landing on the dist. March next year with a deficit of no less than three million sterling. That is not a very hopeful alternative. Then there is Lord Cromer, another very eminent man, and also a strong free

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MILITARY GOSSIP

The militia council intends to provide in next year's estimates for a considerable number of new rifle ranges. In this district, two new ones will be constructed if suitable sites can be obtained, one at Chatham and one at Windsor.

These new ranges will fill a long-felt want, for the regiments at these two places have either to go without any musketry practice with service ammunition, or else pay out of their own pockets all the expenses of going into camp for a few days each year at some place where there is a range.

Color-Sergeant J. Cheney, clerk of military district No. 1, is spending this week at his parents' home in Windsor, attending the Windsor Old Boys' Reunion.

Mr. William Bapley, of Strathroy, has been appointed caretaker of the new armory at that place, and is now taking a course of instruction at Wolseley Barracks.

The customs of military service require officers to visit the kitchens during cooking hours to see that the soldiers' food is properly prepared. One old colonel, who let it be pretty generally known that his orders must be obeyed without question or explanation, stopped two soldiers who were carrying a soup kettle out of a kitchen.

"Here, you," he growled, "give me a taste of that."

One of the soldiers ran and fetched a ladle and gave the colonel the desired taste. The colonel spat and spluttered.

"Good heavens, man. You don't call that stuff soup, do you?"

"No, sir," replied the soldier, meekly. "It's dish-water we was emptying, sir."

Lieut. E. M. Harris, C.P.A.S.C., spent a few days visiting his father here lately. After his visit Lieut. Harris went to Quebec where he will be stationed in future instead of Halifax.

It is rumored about that a great many transfers among the various commands and district staffs will be made this fall. As already announced, Colonel Peters, D. O. C. M. D. No. 1, goes to Victoria, B. C. in September. He is succeeded here by Colonel Hodgins, D. O. C. M. D. No. 4, Ottawa. Colonel Hodgins' successor in the command of M. D. No. 4, has not yet been named, but it will likely be Lieut. Col. Humphreys, now chief staff officer of the Maritime Provinces Command, Halifax.

A transfer of particular interest to Londoners, which is rumored will take place shortly, is that of Lieut.-Col. J. C. MacDougall, R. C. R., now in command of Wolseley Barracks. This officer has for the past year been on special duty at militia headquarters, Ottawa, and lately in charge of provisional schools of instruction in British Columbia. According to a well-founded rumor, which is confirmed by this fall to Halifax as chief staff officer of the Maritime Provinces Command, the most important of the Canadian commands. In losing Lieut.-Col. MacDougall the local garrison loses one of the most thoroughly efficient and energetic officers in the permanent force.

It is not known who will succeed him in the command of the Barracks. Has anybody heard anything lately about Lieut. Sir Harry McLean, who used to get \$30,000 a year for instructing the Moroccan army? We think the Sultan would have been a better bargain had he employed a few instructors from the tribesmen who are now showing Alfonso a thing or two.

Recent reports state that the Cuban army is in a badly disorganized state. Was it ever otherwise?

The men from the barracks are still in camp at the Cove rifle ranges, where they are undergoing their annual course in musketry training which will be finished about the end of next week. Needless to say the course this year will be the best in the history of the barracks, for common sense has at last prevailed in the carrying out of this most important part of a soldier's training.

The headquarters of the Eastern Ontario command will be transferred this fall from Kingston to Ottawa, and the headquarters of military district No. 4, now at Ottawa, will be moved to Kingston.

Word was received from Guelph this week to the effect that Lieut.-Col. J. Davidson, commanding the First Brigade, C. F. A., had resigned his command. If so, the Canadian Artillery will have lost one of its best brigade commanders.

Keep your eye on Dr. Von Bethmann-Hollweg, the new German Imperial chancellor. It looks as though there is going to be something doing with him, for by one decree he has added nearly two and one-half million riflemen to the defensive forces of his empire, by permitting 2,576 veterans' societies to practice on the military rifle ranges throughout the country, and supplying them with military rifles at an annual charge of 87 cents each, and cartridges at 62 cents per hundred.

This leads me to reflect upon what this country is doing towards encouraging rifle shooting, and I am at once struck with the regulation placing an age limit on members of associations. A man over 48 years of age cannot get a free issue of ammunition, yet the militia act makes all Canadians up to 60 years of age liable for military service. Then, should not all citizens up to 60 years of age be given a chance to learn how to defend themselves? Very often in the rural districts a man has not an opportunity to join a rifle association before 48

years of age. It is then too late to do so, although he is still liable for twelve years more to serve in the militia if required.

This doesn't seem right, especially when the older men are nearly always the men who organize the association and keep it going. Then there is the other age limit which does not allow anyone under eighteen years of age to become a member of a rifle association. In the towns and cities boys in cadet corps can get ammunition when they reach the age of fifteen, but in the country, where there are no cadet corps, the lad under eighteen must be content to watch his elder brother do the shooting. Boys fifteen years of age should be admitted to rifle associations. They are perfectly able to reach the age to handle the service rifle, have more time for practice, and learn more readily than when they are five or ten years older. Not many weeks ago a lad 16 years old made the top score in a match between teams representing the London garrison, sergeants and one of the best rifle associations in the country.

Give everybody ammunition that wants to shoot.

"The axiom that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" was exemplified recently by an error in the daily movements of his majesty's ships issued by the admiralty. A certain ship moved from Halifax, N. S., to Sydney, a few miles away. Now either the printer or the admiralty clerk knew not of Sydney, N. S., and promptly altered it to the better known Sydney, New South Wales, by the simple process of adding a "W" after the "N. S." thus moving the vessel half way round the world in less than a day.

Major-General Sir P. N. Lake, Inspector-General, in his report on the annual training of the militia for 1908, deals with the artillery in part as follows:

"The artillery force of the Dominion as a whole, has maintained its last year's standard and, perhaps, made some further progress towards efficiency. In many cases, commendable zeal and keenness have been shown. In the opinion of many good officers, however, the present periods allotted for training and practice are no more than sufficient to bring artillery units up to a certain stage, beyond which any improvement is due to special qualifications on the part of individual officers and non-commissioned officers. In general, the work of the instructors during training is necessarily limited to details of drill; they get no opportunity for giving systematic instruction in the higher duties of artillery, such as reconnaissance and the taking up of positions for fire. Consequently, and owing to the large annual change in the personnel of units, the final stage reached each year as regards efficiency remains about the same."

There are many good officers in both the field and heavy artillery branches, but it is well known that the handling of modern field and heavy artillery demands much study and practice on the part of the officers who have to use it. And it can hardly be said that the advance in the knowledge of officers has kept pace with the improvement in material. "The effective use of artillery in the field has become of more and more importance of late years. To make the best use of the efficient weapons provided requires ever-increasing skill. "The most feasible remedy, under present conditions, would appear to be to improve the general knowledge of officers and non-commissioned officers at the commencement of the annual training by encouraging better attendance at the artillery schools. At present, the attendance at the heavy artillery school at Quebec of military officers and non-commissioned officers is altogether inadequate. The influence of the central training camp at Petawawa has been more marked than in the artillery. The instruction there imparted is eminently practical, but it can hardly be denied that artillery officers as a whole have not shown themselves as proficient as they ought to be in observation of fire, in making deductions from their observations, and in rapidly adapting their measures to the conditions which presented themselves."

Improvement was noticeable in fuse-setting, gun-laying and the actual carrying out of battery duties. And, except in the Nova Scotia batteries, the horsing and harnessing of the guns and wagons showed an improvement upon last year. The class of horses brought into camp by the Nova Scotia brigade is poor and not suitable for artillery work."

Brigadier-General Otter, who commanded the troops which took part in the Quebec centenary, pays a great tribute to the militia council, published a short time ago. He remarks as follows:

"Where every man did his best, it would be invidious to make comparisons; but a word of praise is due to the soldier-like bearing of the infantry battalions composed of rural companies."

Staff Sergeant Sawyer, foreman of works for M. D. No. 1, went to Windsor yesterday on an inspection tour.

As a result of the examination in equitation held during London camp the following officers have been given equitation certificates:

Major L. W. Shannon, D. S. A. M. D. No. 1; Capt. H. Ingram, Seventh Regiment; Capt. T. N. Elliott, Twenty-sixth Regiment; Capt. J. J. Doyle, Thirty-third, and Lieutenants Ware, Beadmore, Seventh Regiment; Ward, Beadmore, Tenth Regiment; Welford, Twenty-second Regiment; Milligan, Twenty-sixth Regiment; Davis and Cowan, A. M. C.

Lieut.-Col. G. T. Cooke, Twenty-fifth Regiment, has been granted

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leave of absence until February, 1910. During his absence Major W. Guy will command the regiment.

Warrant Officer Hesslan, C. O. C., spent a few days in Toronto this week.

"I'd sooner aviate than hike, Bill," was a popular song at Petawawa until the Silver Dart darted its last dart.

In an editorial article on "Flag Incidents," the Canadian edition of Collier's makes the following remark: "The Americans cannot think more of their flag than we do of ours, although they have one of their very own, and ours belongs to our mothers." It would seem the limit for an ordinary American magazine to be ignorant of the fact that Canada has a flag of her own, but for Collier's to publish a Canadian edition with an editor so absolutely ignorant of Canada, is an example of ignorance equalled only by the same magazine's prize competition to give us a national hymn.

The reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic will be held next month in Salt Lake City, where 100,000 civil war veterans are expected to assemble.

Emperor Nick must have turned just a little bit green when he reviewed that eighteen miles of warships in the Solent this week.

Colonel Geo. T. Denison has decided that the struggle between Germany and Great Britain must be fought out sooner or later. We can now go ahead without hesitation in our preparation for the inevitable.

The Maxim gun silencer is being exhibited in France at present. It is claimed that recent tests at Paris have proved that in addition to the absence of a report and a visible flash when this device is used, the velocity and power of penetration of the bullet are increased and the recoil considerably reduced.

A French naval officer has invented an aerial camera with which he can take photographs at an altitude of from 150 to 400 yards, and at a distance of several miles from the fortress or position to be photographed. The possibilities of such an instrument in warfare are very great.

The year 1909 gives promise of being a record year for revolutions. One in Turkey, one in Persia, one well on the way in Spain, and signs of one in Mexico, is a pretty good start, with five months yet to go, and the Central and South American republics to be heard-from.

There are thirteen drydocks on the Atlantic coast of the United States, and not one of them can accommodate the larger battleships now being built. The one is built at battleships on the Atlantic have to go to Puget Sound on the Pacific to be docked.

In this respect and in the absence of sufficient coaling stations and colliers, the American navy is away behind the times.

Mary Baker G. Eddy, the Christian Scientist, in an article on war, makes the following remarks:

"For many years I have prayed daily that there be no more wars. I have prayed that the people of our fellow-beings, prayed that all the peoples on earth and the islands of the sea have one God, one Mind; love God supremely, and love their neighbors as themselves. National disagreements can be, and should be, arbitrated wisely, fairly, and fully settled. It is unquestionable, however, that at this hour the armament of navies is necessary, for the purpose of preventing war and preserving peace among nations."

It will be remembered that this lady's sanity was questioned some time ago. If she is not sane, I would like to know how you would describe the mental state of the anti-militarists whose wall is heard in all parts of the land.

On March 14, 1906, a board of officers was detailed to revise the King's regulations and orders for the militia. On Nov. 28, 1907, the Minister of Militia reported that this work was still in hand, but hoped that it would be completed by the end of the year.

Now, after more than three years after the assembling of the board the revision is still incomplete. Either the 1904 edition of the regulations must have been an awful mess, or was board, as a slow-moving body, makes the proverbial snail look like a record-breaking acrobat.

C. B. DE FAULSTER, Corporal.

New Zealand has an available coal supply of 1,200,000,000 tons, of which not more than 20,000,000 tons have been touched.



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