

**Midsummer
Dementia.**

This is peculiarly the season of the year when we ought to sympathize with any stray newspaper, or any wandering "boy legislator" of the United States House of Representatives suffering from midsummer dementia. Quite recently, the New York "Sun" gravely announced to its readers that the acquisition of Canada was well within "range of vision." We can condone the weakness of the "Sun," because its lucubrations upon the subject of the annexation of this Dominion are proverbially funny and exhilarating. But we hardly know what to do with a wandering American Congressman who was lately interviewed at the Windsor Hotel in Montreal. He seems to know everything worth knowing, although he is reported to be "only 28 years of age." Yet much as we may value his freely expressed opinions upon men and matters in the land of Old Glory, he evidently suffers from that partial alienation of mind and obliquity of vision so noticeable in the New York "Sun." It is evident that this "boy legislator" knows very little of the country he is visiting, when as the solution of a difficult problem he says:—

"Hand the Philippines over to England and give Canada to the United States in exchange."

The interviewer of this loquacious visitor must have been highly amused with his territory-swapping scheme.

**Canadian
Shipping.**

The report of the Department of Marine and Fisheries for 1898, just published, shows the total number of vessels on the register books of the Dominion at the close of last year, including every description of sailing vessels, steamers and barges, was 6,643, measuring 693,782 tons register, being a decrease of 41 vessels (37,972 tons register) as compared with 1897. Placing the average value at \$30 per ton, the value of the registered tonnage of Canada at the end of 1898 would be \$20,813,460.

The number of new vessels built in the Dominion during the twelve months was 278, measuring 24,522 tons register tonnage. Estimating the value of the new shipping at \$45 per ton gives a total value of \$1,103,490 for new vessels.

A summary showing the number of vessels and tonnage on the registry books of each province gives:

	Total Sailing Ships and Steamers.	Total net tonnage of Same.
Nova Scotia	2,167	262,176
New Brunswick	903	89,257
Quebec	1,378	144,447
Ontario	1,452	134,180
P. E. Island	178	15,979
British Columbia	444	40,304
Manitoba	121	7,439
Grand Total	6,643	693,782

Of this total number of vessels on the Canadian registry books, 1,909 were steamers, having a total gross tonnage of 267,237 tons.

**Insuring Gold
in Transit.**

Late English papers contain a decision of interest to insurance companies. The Hyderabad Company, owners of gold mines in Central India, sent three bars of gold to London, and insured same at Lloyds, the policy covering the entire distance and all risks. The gold was packed in a box and sealed, and under escort conveyed about forty miles to a station of the Great India Peninsula Railway. The station master refusing to accept the gold, except at owners' risk, the company's superintendent took it to his head office at Secunderabad and kept it in a safe for a month, pending correspondence with the railway company. However, the box ultimately reached London, when one of the bars worth \$2,670 was missing, a piece of iron being found in its place. The company brought action to recover the amount, the defendants contending that the removal of the gold to Secunderabad was an unjustifiable deviation from the voyage, and that they were not liable for what may have occurred there.

The judge held that the action of the company's superintendent was a necessary deviation, as it had since been proved that the station master was wrong in declining to accept the gold. What the superintendent did was done in the interest of both his company and the insurers, and was within the scope of the policy. The judge added that, although there was unreasonable delay at Secunderabad, the policy was never suspended, and in giving judgment for the Hyderabad Company, with costs, he said that the parties to the suit must settle between them what deduction should be made on account of the delay at Secunderabad, where it was supposed the robbery took place.

**Post Office
Orders.**

English insurance journals of recent date contain the particulars of a case likely to prove of much interest to others than those engaged therein. An insurance agent, one Thomas, sued a firm of grocers for \$375, the amount of a postal order lost by him, the same being duly crossed and made payable to Thomas. The Post Office authorities, when informed by Thomas of his loss, traced the order to a bank, where it had been deposited by the grocers who subsequently stated they received it from one of their customers in part payment of an account. It transpired during the trial that store-keepers all over England are in the habit of cashing postal orders without any question, and when the order in dispute was produced in court the judge remarked that it had not been signed. Then came the interesting statement from the British postal authorities that a signature was not necessary when the order was passed through a bank, the receipt of the bank being quite satisfactory to them.

The judge, it seems to us, very properly characterized the practice as most dangerous, and expressed a hope that the Post Office chiefs would cease to