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BUY A HOME.
 The Miner would draw special attention to an article in another column of this issue which shows the extraordinary opportunities that exist in Rossland today to acquire real estate at one's own figure. It would pay any permanent resident of the camp to buy a home now, if he has not one already. The future of Rossland is assured beyond all question. This city is destined to double its population in the near future. There are many men who have been working here steadily for several years who have spent enough money in rent to pay for a well situated lot and a comfortable home. Those who buy now will not only save payment, but make an investment which will double in value in the next 24 months.

MCBRIDE CORNERED.
 According to The Miner's Ottawa dispatches this morning the Dominion government has no intention of disallowing Bill 16, which was passed by the legislature last year in order to clear up all doubts as to the title of the province to blocks 4594 and 4594 in Southern Kootenay. No one expected that the Dominion government would disallow this legislation, but Premier McBride took advantage of the formal statutory period of one year, in the hope that before the year elapsed he would succeed in juggling the people out of their rights to this land and at the same time restore it to the C. P. R. If McBride had been willing to grant the rights of the applicants for coal and petroleum licenses in the Flathead country, he need not have waited longer than to ask Sir Wilfrid Laurier by telegraph if the Dominion government intended to disallow Bill 16. It is not to be expected that Sir Wilfrid would straighten out the provincial government's horrible tangle without solicitation; but now that he sees that McBride is doing the Flathead prospectors a cruel injustice by unnecessary and vicious delays, he has generously stepped into the breach and intimated that the common people shall be fully protected in this instance against McBride and the railway company.

There is considerable significance to this move on the part of the Liberal government at Ottawa. In the first place it shows that Sir Wilfrid Laurier, while not disposed to meddle unwarrantably with provincial affairs, is too much imbued with the spirit of honesty and justice to stand idly by and see not only hundreds of people kept out of their rights, but the development of this portion of the Dominion wantonly retarded. In the next place it places Premier McBride in an extremely awkward predicament controlled by the railway company, he dare not recede from the position he has taken with regard to the full statutory period of one year; on the other hand, he will lose much support if he waits until May to issue licenses that might just as well be issued now.

JAPAN'S REPLY.
 Direct and to the point are Japan's counter-charges against Russia in the utterance of the Japanese government. This official statement is issued in reply to the repeated charges made by Russia that Japan had violated all the ethics and etiquette of war in opening fire upon the Russian fleet in Port Arthur harbor, without having first made a declaration of war.

Japan asserts that her own proposals were "unselfish" and "in the interest of a firm and lasting peace in the east." When these proposals had been rejected and Russia had evidenced her desire for war, despite her assurances to the contrary, Japan withdrew her legation and diplomatic relations ceased between the two nations. The term "independent action," employed in Japan's final statement to Russia, meant, according to Japanese interpretation, the waging of war. If Russia didn't understand it that way, it was her own fault; that was what Japan meant.

THE JAPANESE SPIRIT.
 In war the moral outweighs the material as three to one; so said Napoleon, who was not in danger of laying too much stress on the spiritual side of life. The important thing is not the weapons with which men fight, or their numbers, but the spirit which moves them. The present war presents an extraordinary contrast between the two nationalities which face each other. The Russian character we know fairly well. It displays stubborn and enduring bravery, remarkable and exemplary patience, a stolid self-possession, a rather dog-like fidelity and loyalty. Its weak point is lack of fire and resourcefulness. A certain enterprise, of an intellectual rather than an emotional nature, sometimes shows itself, but in general the Russians have been sluggish in war, and not able to adapt themselves quickly to new conditions. To these characteristics the Japanese offer a profoundly interesting comparison. Their fierce yet calculated impetuosity already has been shown to the world. They have not only asserted themselves, but which have not yet asserted themselves, but which may be illustrated from the war of 1894-95.

Dauntless courage and self-devotion are the virtues of good soldiers of all races and all periods. The Japanese least of all would desire to represent the exceptionally fortunate torpedo officers, who not only got into Port Arthur, but actually got out unscathed, as brave above other men. British torpedo officers and divers, those that were not killed, deliberately look upon bold raids into harbors as forlorn hopes, from which no man really expects to return. The best they hope for is to get in, destroy a ship or two, and swim ashore and surrender when their boat is destroyed. To drown beside a wrecked battleship of the enemy would be a high success. To adopt in cold blood a business-like position which holds out such grim prizes is in itself a species of heroism. The Japanese officers share in this common self-devotion. They share fully, as is proved by their dogged work at Wei-Hai-Wei in February, 1896. Some men were scalded to death, some were frozen to death, in unsuccessful attacks; yet they tried again. Admiral Ito gave the order with a heavy heart. Commander Mochizuki, the chief of the "flotilla," to quote a popular history of the war, "told his men that there was hardly any chance of escaping, and death was almost certain; it was better to remove all unnecessary articles, a hand-lamp being sufficient, no signals except port and starboard being required for such a desperate enterprise." "Our boats and our bodies are the enemy's." He accordingly sent away all the naval records, signal sheets and written orders. But there was not the slightest trepidation; all the men were overjoyed at the dangerous duty on "which they were detached."

The really significant characteristic of the Japanese, however, is not this high courage. It is rather the sympathetic backing which it receives from the entire people. Beside the sailor or soldier are comrades who applaud his valor; behind him is a nation which follows him with passionate interest. The narrative to which reference has been made is filled with portraits by Japanese artists of men who did well in the war, the private who laid down his life to blow in a gate, the torpedo officer who dashed into the dark harbor, the sub-lieutenant who was killed in a hazardous place of scouting, the cavalry soldier, who mortally wounded himself, but his wounded captain on his own horse and took him out of danger. We may guess that Japanese artists are now at work on the features of Takanouchi, the commander of the Hayashi, and Ishikawa, commander of the Asagiri, and that soon every couple in the empire will know their faces and will rever them. We read today of Red Cross funds being raised by the Japanese. In 1894 the poor stricken themselves to contribute their mite for the good of the soldiers at the front.

This sympathy rose to heroic on occasion. At the first fight in Korea a bugler died gallantly, blowing the calls after he was mortally wounded. It was suggested that presents be given to the family of this lad, who became one of the popular heroes of the war. The bereaved father answered: "It is the lot of all men to die. My son had to die some time."

"Instead of falling asleep in a corner of this miserable hovel, unarmoured, save by a few relatives, he has fallen on the field of honor and received 'the encomiums of a multitude' of his superiors. Hence his mother and 'cannot look upon this as a mournful occasion.' We rejoice that our son has been loyal to Japan, even to the point of shedding his blood in defence of her honor."

Chamberlain's scheme will mean dearth of bread. The amount of wheat which Mr. Chamberlain proposes to levy on wheat is five cents per bushel, which would be levied on all wheat entering the United Kingdom from the colonies. Within the last month, however, as a result of the Russo-Japanese war, wheat has jumped up about fourteen cents a bushel. War has already gone far beyond Mr. Chamberlain in the imposition of a tax upon the bread of the English people. Although yesterday it momentarily dropped back four cents a bushel, wheat has been found to be a bushel higher than what it was prior to the outbreak of hostilities in the Orient.

The Little Englanders who protested that the English people would be starved and ruined by a tariff of five cents a bushel on wheat are now forced to dwell in a land which has been suddenly impoverished by a war tax of fourteen cents a bushel.

CAN SMOKING BE DEFENDED?
 And now the cigarette habit among women, with many ardent defenders, claims the attention of those good women whose time and energies have been largely devoted to the correction of evils peculiar to the sex that vote, the moral integrity of the universe being assailed from an entirely unlooked for quarter.

Bridge whist and the coupon system, and the belief that tobacco is a good thing for frazzled nerves, are jointly and severally responsible for the rapidly increasing consumption of cigarettes by women.

A FEDERAL MINISTER OF MINES.
 It is time that the mineral industry of Canada received greater consideration at the hands of the Ottawa government. It is neither fair to the overworked minister of the interior nor to the country that the department of the interior, as constituted at present, should be unnecessarily charged with the cares and duties of that part of our federal affairs.

WAR AND COPPER.
 The anticipation of continued hostilities in the far east, and the probability that several of the leading powers will take immediate steps toward the strengthening of land and sea equipment suggest a lively demand for thousands of tons of copper are consumed annually in the manufacture of brass and copper cartridge cases used on machine guns and small arms while hundreds of tons are required annually merely to supply brass buttons for the uniforms of the armies and navies of the world. Brass is used invariably in fittings, cranks, pistons, cups, etc., extending to consumption over several departments of army and navy equipment.

The sheathing of ships with copper plate has been renewed to the extent of adding a market of thousands of tons annually. Copper is also in demand for brass oil cups, used on every modern engine; for brass and copper tubing, used almost exclusively in marine condensing; for gun metal, bronze, and thousands of other necessary appliances in the building of war ships, the manufacture of munitions of war and the maintenance of armies and fleets.

WHAT FIXES WHEAT PRICES IN GREAT BRITAIN.
 One of the arguments advanced by British free traders against Mr. Chamberlain's Inter-Imperial preferential scheme is that the levying of a tax on wheat coming into the country will mean an increase in the cost of living of the masses. In other words, their cry is that the carrying out of Mr.

neither of them, it is safe to say, will allow for a moment, so far as they are concerned, the wretched display of partisanship and class distinction that has characterized the practice of the board during the last twelve months. The board is to be congratulated upon its retention of the valuable services of Mr. Mackenzie as secretary. The new year of the Rossland board of trade opens auspiciously, and there is every reason to hope that it will enjoy the hearty support of the entire community.

ORE TREATMENT.
 The history of ore treatment, as interesting as it is valuable to those engaged in the winning of metals from their natural repositories, is replete with the trials and troubles and successes that attended the evolution of an art or science, the results possible of attainment giving rise to a faint impression of the attention, study and work of men technically educated and those who have lacked scientific training, yet to whose natural talent, ingenuity and great energy, nevertheless, is due in a wide measure the present development of the several standard methods employed in the metallurgical field.

GREAT POSSIBILITIES.
 With the development of its mineral and timber resources British Columbia is gradually building up an exceptionally profitable market for its agricultural, fruit and stock districts. There is a deep-rooted and erroneous impression among those not fully informed of the agricultural possibilities of this province that British Columbia contains little or no land suitable for husbandry. As a matter of fact the numerous valleys that intersect our "sea of mountains" are of surprising fertility and capable of producing lavish and certain crops of every vegetable product of the temperate zone. From the Pacific coast to the eastern boundaries of the province there is an alternation of wet and dry belts. For instance, there is a heavy precipitation of moisture in the Coast districts, West Kootenay and the Rockies, but in Southern Yale, Southern Cariboo and East Kootenay, through which run thermal lines from twenty-five to 100 miles wide, are produced semi-arid conditions and a climate of marked salubrity. In the wet belts the agricultural areas are found originally with heavy growths of timber and underbrush, but in the dry belts the lands are covered only with widely scattered pine trees and a luxuriant bunch grass.

THOSE ST. PETERSBURG GIRLS.
 The girls of St. Petersburg are agitated by emotions essentially different from those experienced by the boys of Boston who, in 1776, appealed to General Gage to stop destroying their snow-alides. "Have your fathers been teaching you rebellion, and sent you here to exhibit it?" demanded the British general. "Nobody sent us here, and we are not insulting our snow-alides that we cannot use them any more." The general ordered the damage repaired, remarking that it was impossible to beat the notion of liberty out of people who had it planted in them from childhood.

THE BOARD OF TRADE.
 The result of the annual meeting of the Rossland board of trade last night was both significant and satisfactory. It shows that the members of the board, anxious to promote the welfare of the community, have become tired of the innocuous desuetude and political partisanship under which A. H. MacNeill, the last president, had placed it. Under the present-spirit of Messrs. Frazer and Jenkins, the Rossland board of trade will grow to undoubted popularity and commensurate strength. Neither of these two gentlemen represents anything but what is broad and just and good, and

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