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Now that so much attention is devoted to the policy of securing the largest possible share of the British market for the surplus products of Canada, it is not surprising that the question of fast ocean steamship service should also be the theme of discussion. In England the desires of many Canadians on this head have been almost anticipated by an enterprising and wealthy company, of which Lord Hartington is president, and under the direction of which some extremely fast ocean liners are now in the course of construction at Barrow-in-Furness. The manager of the Naval Construction and Armaments Company, Mr. Bryce Douglas, was on this continent some time ago as one of the delegates of the Iron and Steel Institute. He is a gentleman of known energy and resource, and is said to enjoy the confidence of shipping circles. Something like a revolution in oceanic transit is looked for from the operation of the new line which is to run between Liverpool and Halifax. It is expected that twenty knots an hour will be the average rate of speed and that fully twenty-four hours will be saved in the passage. The main question to be settled, as far as Canada is concerned, is that of cost. The subsidy asked for is \$750,000—an outlay which only assured advantages of the highest order would justify. It is admitted by all that any movement that tends to lessen the distance between Canada and the Mother Country is, at the present juncture, worthy of encouragement. But there are other points also that merit consideration, such as the cheapening of the rates for freight not only for the ocean passage but in the interior of the Dominion. On the reduction of the cost of transportation from our centres of production to the English market the prosecution of this trade with the metropolis on a profitable basis very largely depends. The abolition of canal tolls, port charges and dues upon vessels hitherto exacted, has been recommended as essential to the making of the St. Lawrence route equal to its rivals. This is a point to which the Government will doubtless give the practical consideration which the actual circumstances demand, and, that reform secured, fast ocean steamships, with freight rates correspondingly moderate, will be a real boon to Canadian exporters.

We had occasion lately to mention cranberries as among the small fruits that Canadians could profitably grow on land that would be of little use for the raising of ordinary crops. We see that cranberries are among the exhibits to be sent from Canada to the Jamaica exhibition. Evidence, moreover, of the extent to which this toothsome and wholesome berry may be profitably cultivated in swampy tracts that would otherwise, perhaps, be unreclaimed and useless, is afforded by an account recently published in *Garden and Forest* of a "cranberry bog" of a hundred acres in superficies. It is but one of a number of like tracts that have been turned to account in the same advantageous manner. "These bogs," says the narrator, "are all as clean as the tidiest garden. The long and level stretches, like a carpet strewn with

white and crimson beads, are a most pleasing and novel sight. Here in early September a thousand pickers camp about the swamps, some in temporary board cabins, but most of them in tents. The manager furnishes the provisions, which the campers cook for themselves, and he rents them the tents. A hundred and twenty pickers constitute a company, which is placed in charge of an overseer, and each company has a book-keeper." From ten to fifty measures (six-quart pails) are gathered by the individual pickers every day. But experts have gathered as high as seventy-five measures, which, at the rate paid (10 cents a measure), yield \$7.50 for the day's earnings. A special contrivance, known as the Humbert picker, which is a box like a mouse trap, with the front lid rising by a spiral spring, is the favourite with Massachusetts growers. Picking time is an industrial pic-nic, and one that pays all concerned. Sorting, screening and barrelling follow. Sometimes it is sufficient, if the berries are fairly sound, to run them through a fanning mill, but generally screening by hand is also necessary—the screen being a slotted tray about six feet long and three and a half wide at one end, tapering to about ten inches at the other, with a side or border five or six inches high. The places in the bottom between the slots are about a quarter of an inch wide. The screen is set upon saw-horses, and three women stand upon one side, removing the poor berries, leaves and sticks and working the good ones towards the small end, where they fall into the receptacle. The berries must be thoroughly dry before they are barrelled. As already stated, this fruit is in much demand in the English market, and as Canada abounds in tracts suitable for its cultivation, there is no reason why the industry should not be engaged in on a large scale.

There are few, if any, parts of the world, so far as it has as yet been examined by geologists, which produce such a variety of coal as British Columbia. The supply ranges, according to Dr. G. M. Dawson, from anthracites, which compare favourably with those of Pennsylvania and Wales, to lignites, in which the original woody structure is still clearly perceptible. And that these varieties are all embraced within the upper part of the Mesozoic and Tertiary formations is sufficient to disprove the theory once maintained that the Carboniferous series alone was capable of yielding true coals. The coal-fields of insular British Columbia alone are of an extent and richness which give them an important place in the enumeration of our economic resources. Though but little worked as yet, the coal-fields of the Queen Charlotte Islands are pronounced by Dr. Dawson to be of undoubted value as to both extent and quality—one seam having a maximum thickness of over six feet, while in composition the anthracite of the Islands is as good as that of Pennsylvania. The most important coal areas on Vancouver Island are those of Comox and Nanaimo. The late Mr. Richardson, who was on the ground as early as 1871, estimated the coal underlying the surface of the Comox coal-field (about 300 square miles, not counting its north-western extension) at 16,000,000 tons a square mile. The Nanaimo field is estimated at about 200 square miles. Though not quite equal, perhaps, to the Comox coal, the yield of the Nanaimo collieries (of which three, Nanaimo, Wellington and East Wellington, have been for some years in operation) is of a superiority that has been practically illustrated by the demand for it in California and by the higher price which buyers there are glad to pay for it. The first person to open a coal mine in Vancouver Island was Mr. John Muir, M.P.P., who died some seven years ago at the age of 84. He had been engaged in coal-mining in his native Scotland before he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1848 for the purpose of developing its coal wealth in British Columbia. In 1849 he opened a mine at Nanaimo, the first worked in the Province, and thus gave the impulse to a productive industry which is destined to be one of the most fruitful in Western Canada.

Mr. J. C. Sutherland seems to resent the manner

in which we endeavoured to give greater publicity to his proposal to establish a Canadian Association for the Advancement of Science. In a letter to the *Gazette* of this city, based on comments in that journal on our remarks relative to his letter, he evidently misinterprets the spirit of those remarks and also under-rates or misunderstands our alternative suggestion. The principle of the Royal Society is, he says, the development of Canadian literature, English and French. That is certainly one of the objects which the society was founded to promote. The first section is devoted, by its constitution, to the study and encouragement of French literature, history and archæology; the second section is supposed to pursue like aims, only that English literature is substituted for French. But the third and fourth sections are purely scientific—the scope of the former being investigation in mathematics, physics and chemistry, while the fourth concerns itself with research in the group of sciences that come under the heads of geology and biology. A glance at the membership of these two sections shows that it comprises some of our most distinguished scientific thinkers and workers—the heads and professors of several of our universities, members of the Geological Survey, of the Meteorological Service, of the Bureau of Analysts, of the Surveyor-General's office and other scientific departments of the administration. Every one of these gentlemen has contributed more or less to the sum of the world's knowledge. They represent every branch of pure and applied science—mathematics, astronomy, meteorology, physics, mechanics, engineering, electricity, chemistry, microscopy, geology, mineralogy, botany, entomology, zoology, medicine, and their sub-divisions. Some of them are known all over the civilized world, and, as we mentioned before, one of them has been successively president of both the American and the British Association for the Advancement of Science. In a few months the Royal Society will meet in this city, and, as every scientific organization in the Dominion will probably be represented on that occasion by its delegates, there will be an excellent opportunity for taking up such a suggestion as that of Mr. Sutherland by those very "working scientists" in whom that gentleman reposes confidence. No person is debarred from sending papers to be read at the meetings of the sections, and if Mr. Sutherland were to prepare an outline of his proposed organization, setting forth its need and advantages, and entrust it to some of the members, it would be sure to receive due attention.

In making up the Canadian exhibits to be sent to Kingston, Jamaica, the fine arts should not be forgotten. At the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 Canadian paintings attracted much attention and won their due meed of praise. An English critic, writing in the *Magazine of Art*, said that, while walking among the Canadian pictures, one might imagine himself in a good European gallery much more easily than would be possible while examining any other Colonial collection. And another writer had words of eulogy for Canada's "school of clever landscape painters, inspired by the grand mountain and river scenery." Among those who had shed lustre on that school he mentioned the names of Messrs. Forbes, Fraser and L. R. O'Brien. Of the art of this last gentleman, two views of Quebec, lent by the Queen, were considered as specially good examples. Some of his water-colours were also commended. The "Meeting of School Trustees" of Mr. R. Harris was pronounced one of the best works in the gallery. "Regarded as a whole," concluded this critic, "the contributions from Canada are full of promise." Now, since these critiques were written, art in Canada has made very appreciable progress. Several new names have been added to the list of our meritorious artists, and those who were already known for good work have gained additional prestige. The Jamaica Exhibition will bring together visitors from all parts of the world, and England is sure to be largely represented. It would surely be a mistake to allow such an opportunity to pass by unheeded and unused. There will be an ample supply of photographs illustrating what is grand