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The Boer Ultimatum. This is an era of surprises. It is the unexpected that is seen to happen. Last week it was anticipated that Britain would express herself in such a manner as would either secure from the Transvaal the acceptance of her terms or result in a further effort to secure a peaceful settlement of the controversy between them. This is all changed. An ultimatum has been sent, but by the Boers and not by Great Britain. It is practically a declaration of war. There can be no peaceful settlement now. War, cruel, bloody war, must do its fearful work, men's lives must be sacrificed in order to decide the issues which are at stake. The Boer demand is simply astonishing. It can only be accounted for by the fact of some occult power at work upon the Boer, with a promise of help in case of non-compliance with the demands which have been so offensively made. A country with any self-respect, could not entertain them for one moment. These demands are in brief: (1) that Great Britain shall withdraw from the borders of the Transvaal, all her troops within forty-eight hours. (2) That all her troops that have arrived in South Africa since June last, shall be recalled forthwith. (3) That no British troops now on the way to South Africa, shall be suffered to land anywhere, even in Cape Colony. What led the Transvaal to take this attitude toward Great Britain can only be conjectured. It looks now what some have affirmed all along, as if the question between Britain and the Transvaal is, who shall rule in South Africa? Shall it be the British or the Dutch? We say it ought to be the British. The day has come for a decision.

Delagoa Bay. This is the principal sea port of the Portuguese possessions in South Africa. It is situated on the coast due east from the Transvaal. It is therefore the nearest sea port to the seat of war. Recent despatches say that at the coming special session of Parliament a formal announcement will be made by the Government that this Bay and the surrounding territory in Portuguese East Africa, has been ceded to Great Britain by Portugal. The purchased price for the same is given as \$40,000,000. The Boers will not be likely to send all their troops into Natal and elsewhere, as they will have something to do nearer home. While we regret, with all Christian people, the occasion for this war, yet if it must come, we hope the conflict will be short and decisive.

The Alaskan Boundary. When the United States intimated to Great Britain in pretty strong terms that the boundary line between Venezuela and the British possessions should be settled by arbitration it did not occur to that country that the time was near when it might be called upon to pursue the same course in connection with its own boundary line in Alaska. But what was right in respect to Venezuela was not to be thought of in Canada's case. The United States is in possession of land which is claimed by Canada as a part of her territory. This may or may not be true. A correct interpretation of treaties will settle this point. It is a legitimate question for an impartial court to decide. The Venezuelan boundary dispute was settled by a compromise, suggested by an American representative, and accepted by the court. Neither party got all that was claimed—perhaps not all that was due. The United States seems to be afraid that if the Alaskan boundary question should be submitted to a court of arbitra-

tion, the same course might be pursued, and it might be called upon to hand over to its neighbor what has been held and occupied for some years. But if the land is not its own by right of purchase, why should it not be given up, and gracefully too. But to this honorable course objections are made, and it is even hinted that the time has not come for such a course to be taken. The difference has not yet reached that acute stage which necessitates the adoption of prompt measures for the preservation of peace. As the Montreal Witness has truly said, "It would be hard for a country to place itself in a more humiliating position than this, and to any country that had any diplomatic honor to lose, the shame of it would be intolerable. The inconsistencies of the American position on the fisheries question and on the Behring Sea question in our own day were, however, quite as glaring, and these were in true succession to earlier diplomacy."

Swaziland Deserted. The administration of this country has been under the Government of the South African Republic since the convention of 1894 between Great Britain and the Transvaal. It is said that the country is entirely deserted by both English and Boers. The police have been withdrawn and the prisons thrown open. The shops are at the mercy of the Kaffirs and anarchy and confusion abound. The whole country is at the mercy of marauders. Indeed this Transvaal war will afford ample opportunity for the display of the most savage traits of uncivilized human nature. The natives of the country who have been kept in subjection by superior intelligence and force will seek to gratify their worst passions.

Fast Mail Service. There is to be constructed in Cape Breton a short railway which, when completed, will, it is said, make possible a saving of 48 hours in the time required for bringing the mails from Europe to different parts of this continent. The line is to be built by the Cape Breton Railway Extension Company, which was incorporated last March under a special act of the Nova Scotia Legislature. It is proposed to make Louisburg, on the east coast of Cape Breton, the starting point. This port is 2,240 nautical miles from Liverpool, has an excellent harbor, never ice-bound, with a pier having sufficient depth along side for admitting the largest vessels at low water. It is proposed to build a railway from Louisburg to Port Hawkesbury, on the Strait of Canso, a distance of 86 miles. From Port Mulgrave, on the opposite side of the Strait from Port Hawkesbury, existing railways would carry the mails to all parts of Canada and the United States. If this undertaking is carried out, better ferry facilities will be provided at the Strait—or we may see a bridge constructed at no distant day. There is no doubt that Cape Breton is entering upon an era of great prosperity, and the Sydneys will become great centres of population. The tide is certainly setting in that direction. There are Klondikes in the east. It is not necessary to go west for them. In the olden time wise men came from the east, in this time some wise men go to the east.

The Fall of an Historic Column. The great hall of El-Karnack, which is the most notable of the monuments of ancient Thebes, is 170 by 329 feet in area. The stone roof, now partially in ruins, was originally supported by 134 columns, the loftiest of which was nearly 70 feet

high, and about 12 feet in diameter. It was built by Satec I, and sculptured partly in his reign. Work upon it was continued by his son and successor, Rameses II. The hall commemorates the magnificence and power of these two Pharaohs. The sculptures of the interior of the walls represent these monarchs making offerings to the gods. Work has just come to hand of the fall of nine columns of this great Hall, which is one of the most magnificent and celebrated relics of the architecture of ancient Egypt. It is more interesting than the Pyramids and the Sphinx, though less known to the tourist. It was and is the most enormous structure in the world. Its ruins today cover many acres. The nucleus of the temple alone is over twelve hundred feet in length. Its construction was begun before Abraham's time, and was 2000 years, in building. Truly the fashion of this world passeth away. There is only one thing that lives and abides—the Word of the Lord.

Every Day Heroes. The time was when an arctic expedition was a real hardship, when men were earnestly bent on doing something for the glory of their country and for the cause of science and the welfare of humanity, but that day seems to have well nigh passed away. Compared with what the men of Franklin's and McClintock's day suffered, Peary and others have been enjoying a summer's holiday. An intelligent seaman who was on one of the so-called relief expeditions said that he never had a better time in his life. Compared with what many of our hardy fishermen along our Atlantic shores or on the Banks of Newfoundland endure, theirs is a picnic. There is more actual bravery and disregard for death displayed by the fishermen who ply their daily, calling along the coast of Labrador, and off our own rock-ribbed shores, than Peary and others like him have shown in all their lives. We eat the fish that these men catch and seldom think of the perils they encounter in being able to gratify and minister to our appetites. They are brave men and hardy and too much cannot be done to make their calling in life as comfortable as possible. When the sea shall give up its dead then it will be seen that some of the greatest heroes the world has ever known were these hardy sons of the deep, clad in oil jackets, with bronzed faces and horny hands.

The Rubber Tree. These trees once grew wild in Mexico. It is said that about one hundred years ago the Spanish Government sent a man to Mexico to study its vegetable productions. After many experiments he discovered the great value of its juice. This the natives soon learned, and became as reckless in the management of these forests as we have been with our magnificent timber limits in this country. A few years ago some enterprising capitalists bought land and planted rubber trees. These trees propagate themselves. They sow their own seed. In the cultivated forests of rubber trees the trees are planted to grow in regular order and the young shoots are cut down or transplanted. The method of gathering the sap is very like that which is pursued in gathering maple sap in our own country. Before the rubber sap is ready for market it must be boiled, to get rid of the water, and pressed into cakes. Then the cakes are packed into bags and shipped to the factories, where the various goods into which rubber enters are manufactured. When your tire is punctured or when you put on a pair of rubbers or don your waterproof do you ever stop to think whence came these articles of travel and wear?