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## THE "MAINE" INQUIRY.

The self-restraint and careful deliberation with which Congress is proceeding in the "Maine" investigation relief and entire satisfaction. There have been one or two hasty and illtimed outbursts, accompanied by the usual clamoring after "facts" and "correspondence," and the perpetrators have been sharply rebuked both within and without the halls of Congress. The administration, with its intimate knowledge of the condition of affairs in the Army and Navy Departments, and its knowledge of our strength and weaknesses, is in a better position to judge how the honor of the country can best be upheld in the immediate future than the members of Congress, the public at large, or even the sensational press.

light, if the report of the Committee of Investigation been destroyed by some agency external to herself, and responsibility at the doorsof Spain, then we are brought pared for war?

The warnings of our military experts regarding the unpreparedness of our fortifications are fresh in our ears. Have we not recently been told that we have artillery without artillerists, guns without mounts and a prevailing activity in our arsenals and a belated but welcome liberality in Congress, are being rectified-but the rectification takes time.

What the country demands is that in due time and in its proper season the truth shall be reached.

> Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just. And he but naked, though locked up in steel, Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

If such a calamity should arise that we should be compelled to take up arms, it must be only after we have satisfied ourselves and the world at large beyond any question of doubt that the noble vessel was sunk by a deliberate act or with the connivance or through the criminal negligence of the people with whom we fight.

It is both insulting and unjust to suggest that those who are exhibiting self-restraint and deliberate judgment are lacking in sympathy for the poor fellows who have perished or that they do not feel keenly the loss of prestige in the sinking of one of our finest ships. The calmness with which this awful disaster has been received is an indication of the depth of feeling which has been stirred in the American people. Had they felt less, they would have said more. As it is, the government is proceeding in the matter with an absence of panic which is an evidence of strength and is thor oughly in keeping with the best elements of our national character.

## ..... RAILROAD TO THE YUKON.

A contract has been let for the opening of a rail and river route to the Yukon, and if the pledges of the contractors can be fulfilled, one hundred and fifty miles of railroad will be in operation by September 1 of this year. The proposed route is as follows: By ocean steamer to the mouth of the Stikeen River, near Fort Wrangel, Alaska: thence by river boats up the Stikeen River to Telegraph Creek: thence by railroad to the head of Teslin Lake-a distance of 150 miles. From this point a line of steamboats will run up the lake to the point where it discharges itself by the Hootalingua River into the Yukon.

The survey carried out by the Canadian Department of Railways showed that the Stikeen River is navigable for 150 miles from the sea, and it was estimated that a powerful steamer could make the passage to Tele graph Creek in two days. The cost of a steam railroad from this point to Teslin Lake is estimated at \$4,000,-000. The government engineer also sends in an estimate

it can be seen that the contractors are receiving an enormously valuable grant; but it must be borne in mind that the scheme is a purely speculative one, and have been received by the public with feelings of great | that the contractors' risks are heavy. As an instance of this it is already reported that they are finding great difficulty in transporting the four or five thousand men necessary to build the road from Vancouver to the Stibut such demonstrations have been quickly suppressed | keen, the accommodation of the ocean steamers being all secured by the army of gold hunters making for the Yukon.

## SIDE DOORS OR END DOORS ON RAILROAD CARS.

One esteemed contemporary The Railroad Gazette has called us to account for our statements regarding certain affairs which are matters of fact and matters of belief in the mind of its editor.

In our issue of February 5 we made two statements Looked at in its most unfavorable, not to say tragic, in reference to the London underground railways, the first of which was to the effect that they had decided should disclose the fact that the great battleship had to use electric traction and the second that, on account of the numerous side doors with which their cars could that agency be traced so as to leave the terrible are provided, the discharge of passengers is quicker and the stops at stations briefer than on our own eleface to face with the stern facts, how far are we pre-vated roads, where each car provides only two means of exit for the passengers.

The Railroad Gazette in quoting the above says," We know that it contains some misinformation and we fear that it is all misinformation." The information which it "knows" to be untrue is that relating to the length emplacements without guns? These things, thanks to of stops at station; the information which it "fears" may be untrue is that relating to electric traction. The "fear" as to our inaccuracy is explained by the fact that our contemporary "has not" itself "learned that Every reason, moral and practical, demands that any decision to change the motive power has been there shall be no haste, and that the investigation reached;" and its positive knowledge of the inaccurshall be patient, detailed and absolutely impartial. | acy of our statement as to stops is due to the fact that the editor has personally timed the length of stops on both systems and found them to be longer on the underground roads.

> The Johnsonian self-complacency which underlies this editorial criticism prepares the reader for the unblushing statement, a few lines further down, that in The Railroad Gazette of 1894 "he will find four editorial articles" on the subject, "which will probably give him more accurate comparisons of conditions as to speed," etc., "than he will find collected anywhere else in the English language"! Verily, the writer has the courage of his convictions; and if he is somewhat lacking in that saving grace of modesty which is supposed broadly to distinguish the technical and professional press from its daily contemporaries, it is consistent with the fact that in the matter of self-advertisement he is thoroughly in touch with a notorious phase of modern journalism which is just now attracting much unwilling attention.

> But. to return to the points at issue, we can assure our readers that our information regarding the change to electricity on the underground roads is derived from a source which we have good reason to believe is more reliable than any to which The Railroad Gazette has, or is likely to have, access. As to the relative length of stops on the two roads, our critic states that he has found by personal timing that the length of stops on the underground roads was 30 seconds and on the elevated roads 12 to 15 seconds. It was once our misfortune, during a visit to London, to have to travel for some weeks in the smoky atmosphere of one of these underground roads. Being curious to test the advantages of side doors in the matter of quick loading and unloading of passengers, we made it a point to time the stops on several different occasions. We have not the notes at hand and cannot give the exact figures; but the average time was somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 seconds. During the last few days we have timed the stops on the Sixth Avenue road in this city, between Franklin and Forty-second Streets, and found that they varied in duration from 10 seconds to 33 seconds, according to the hour of the day and the importance of the station, the highest average being 21 seconds and the lowest 13 seconds.

We have taken up this subject again at some length. because we are convinced that for city and suburban for an electric road 165 miles in length, which he states traffic, in which it is of the greatest importance to could be built for \$2,850,000. Teslin Lake, which is 61 shorten the stopping time at stations, the car with several side doors is superior to the car with only a door miles long, was found to be open for navigation on at each end. The objections to this system are more May 18, and froze over again on October 27. The construction of 150 miles of railroad involving sentimental than real. It would be possible to use the side doors (one to each pair of seats) on American cars, without in the least destroying the distinctive characteristics of the latter, such, for instance, as the great length, the central aisle, and the generally commodious proportions. By the use of steel underframing and truss rods with a deeper pitch, the loss of strength due to cutting through the sides of the cars could be fully compensated. With cars so constructed, having a door to each pair of seats, or better, one to each seat, the time of loading and unloading during the rush hours would be cut down fully 50 per cent. We say this after a perusal of the "four editorials" to which the attention of the general public has been directed and we find that they fully substantiate our position. Mr. Vreeland, president of the Metropolitan Street Railway by the miners. If the Yukon fulfills its present promise Company of this city, who, surely, should know some-

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heavy excavation in such a remote country and within such a limited period seems to be a formidable undertaking, especially when the rigorous nature of the climate is considered. Nevertheless, it is a fact that there were several syndicates who were anxious to secure the valuable monopoly. The successful parties are Messrs. Mann and Mackenzie, two of the wealthiest and most experienced contractors in Canada, and it is likely that they will prove equal to the task. The government is to make a land grant, consisting of 25,000 acres of Yukon land for every mile of railroad built, or 3,750,000 acres in all. The land is to be taken in sections of eight een square miles, alternate sections being reserved as public domain. In making its selections, the company must not infringe upon the rights already acquired