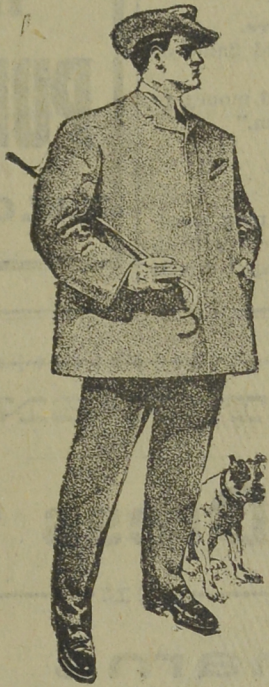


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220 Queen Street.

ROOSEVELT MEDIATOR.

Alleged from an Authoritative Source

THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN AGREED UPON

As the Instrument Through Which Russia and Japan Will Settle Their Difficulties,

AND DISCONTINUE THE PRESENT SANGUINARY WAR.

Another Grand Duke Marked for Assassination---Trapoff's Terror.

JAPANESE ARMY MAKING AN ADVANCE.

St. Petersburg, March 31.—(Special.)—News from the front today indicates that Field Marshal Oyama has begun a genuine advance of the main army with wings far extended. Reconnaissances are also being made against the Russian centre, with the object of developing the Russian position.

St. Petersburg, March 31.—The newspapers are very silent today about the peace reports and this leads to the inference that they have been warned to keep silent by the government.

New York, March 31.—The repeated announcements regarding the proximity of peace are confirmed by a despatch from the Herald correspondent at St. Petersburg on information from what is called an unimpeachable source, showing that Russia and Japan have selected President Roosevelt as mediator, that negotiations are already in progress and that a suspension of hostilities may shortly be expected.

After detailing the terms, negative conditions of peace are laid down by Russia as set forth recently in despatches of the Associated Press. The correspondent adds that the selection of President Roosevelt as mediator, which was due to the Japanese, is regarded as evidence of excellent discrimination.

The Japanese thereby secure a firm friend, who at the same time will make for himself permanent honor by bringing the negotiations to a successful close, and who therefore would not be likely to have accepted the difficult post of mediator if the Japanese intended to present exorbitant demands.

St. Petersburg, March 31.—The authorities continue to find evidence of revolutionary activity in Russia. Other tragedies may occur at any time, such as the assassination of the Grand Duke Alexis.

In spite of the precautions taken by the police, it is feared that terrorists are still at large in Russia. Three persons have been condemned. Gen. Trapoff received a message a fortnight ago, that he would surely be killed in his bed. The General is taking great precautions, having his bedroom constantly guarded.

It is officially announced that Gen. Karkavitch has been appointed as Gen. Linevitch's chief of staff.

Portland, Ore., March 31.—Verchin, civil governor of Port Arthur before the surrender took place to the Japanese, passed through Portland en route from Orient to Russia today.

Mr. Verchin bitterly regrets the surrender to General Stoessel, which he believes could have been postponed two months at least.

When asked the importance which attached to these two months, the former governor replied: "The surrender, releasing as it did 100,000 Japanese with an immense amount of artillery, was undoubtedly responsible for the sanguinary defeat of the Russians at Mukden."

The former governor has a poor opinion of the abilities of Gen. Stoessel, and rates him inferior as a commander to several generals beneath him in rank.

Two commanders whom Verchin gives credit for resisting the Japanese during the long siege are Smirnov and Kondratenko.

DEBATE GROWING HOTTER.

Bergeron, One of the Tory Leaders, Declares the Government

ARE NOT GIVING NEW PROVINCES SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

Belcourt Stirs Up Foster, Sproule and Borden.

Ottawa, March 31.—Mr. Demers of St. John's and Ivesville, resumed the debate on the autonomy bill in the House of Commons yesterday. He said that the speech of Mr. Lancaster, who preceded him, was like that of his leader, Mr. Borden, and Mr. Foster—the utterance of a group who were anti-Catholic, and anti-tolerant and anti-French-Canadian. The minority in Quebec were not only fairly treated, but well satisfied.

In the act of 1871, Sir John Macdonald inserted the clause which did not restrict the powers of the provinces in regard to education, but it determined these powers. The opposition played upon words, indeed, it was amusing to see the opposition of today posing as champions of provincial rights, and at the same time making an attack upon individual liberty.

The Conservatives say "Hands off" the Northwest, and at the same time put a gag on the liberties of the Roman Catholics of the west.

MR. BERGERON.

Mr. Bergeron (Conservative), followed. He had no fault to find with the land provisions of the bill which gave the land to the Dominion. He said that the French Canadians had conquered several counties in Ontario without the aid of the British North America Act. In the educational clause as first drafted, he saw the handiwork of the minister of justice. The Northwest were entitled to separate schools by the federal law of 1875. He was in support of that. The ordinances, however, robbed the Catholics of their separate schools.

Mr. Bergeron said that a school in which no mention was made of God, was a Protestant school. He said he would support the amendment of the leader of the opposition if the last ten words were stricken out.

Mr. Bergeron said that at least this virtue. It is proposed to leave the schools question to the provincial governments, and they might grant separate schools. The new clause of sixteen of the government specified that there never should be separate schools in those provinces.

Mr. Bergeron maintained that the amendment of the educational provision, which the government proposed did not give separate schools, but gave schools called separate schools where a half hour's religious instruction was allowed to be given for a half hour after all lessons had been given.

Mr. Bergeron reviewed Hon. Mr. Fielding's speech to show how much had been taken away from Roman Catholics in Nova Scotia and how little it was proposed to give them in the Northwest Territories.

MR. BELCOURT.

Mr. Belcourt said that the government on granting autonomy to the Territories had one of the three things to do. It had to continue the separate school provision in the territorial act of 1875, or to abolish it or to modify it. He asked if the leader of the opposition had been on the treasury benches what would he have done in like case? Would he have abolished the separate school

provisions? Mr. Belcourt denied that he would have dared to. However, the leader of the opposition had many followers who advocated that very thing.

The speaker was challenged to name one and gave the name of the member for East Grey, Dr. Sproule. Dr. Sproule denied he had ever said so.

Mr. Belcourt asked if Dr. Sproule did not desire it, whether he had said it or not.

Dr. Sproule—That is my own business. Walter Scott asked if Dr. Sproule had not written letters to people in the northwest before the autonomy bills had come up, telling them legislation would furnish them the opportunity for getting rid of the separate school provisions.

Dr. Sproule—The statement is untrue.

Mr. Scott—I accept the statement, but I may tell the house that I have been misinformed by people who should know what they are talking about.

Mr. Belcourt said that the Conservative government had once favored separate schools. Why had it abandoned its position? One member of the late government had explained why he had. George B. Foster had said he had changed because he found that his former position did not pay.

This drew a derisive from Mr. Foster, and Mr. Belcourt read from his speech Wednesday Mr. Foster's statement that he had voted for the remedial bill because the government decided that separate schools were constitutional. However, there was something higher than the constitution, and that was the sovereign will of the people.

Mr. Belcourt asked if this was not equivalent to a statement by Mr. Foster that he would not do it again because it did not pay.

Mr. Foster charged Mr. Belcourt with distorting his words, and demanded a withdrawal.

Mr. Belcourt declined to withdraw, but charged further that Mr. Foster had not made a fair and honest statement.

Mr. Belcourt then paid his respects to the leader of the opposition, and said it was currently reported that Mr. Borden would not have adopted the course he did had he been left an absolutely free hand, and had not been subject to pressure from without.

Mr. Borden denied the truth of this. He had not been subject to pressure from any quarter whatever. He had reviewed the constitutional features of the question, and had made up his mind upon them without consultation with anyone. He had no pressure as to his course from his associates, his Carleton County constituents or his followers. In fact his followers did not know the course he was going to take until the day before he made his speech, when he had announced it to them in caucus.

Mr. Belcourt said he was delighted to hear that Mr. Borden had made up his mind unaided. However, he had doubtless made it up with a shrewd idea of taking the tone that would please his followers.

THE STOCK MARKET.

The Prices Ruling To-day at Montreal.

Montreal, March 31.—(Special.)—The prices on the stock market today were as follows:
Dominion Coal, 84, 86, 86.
Dominion Iron and Steel, 23, 22½, 23.
Dominion Iron and Steel, pfd., 69½, 69, 69½.
Nova Scotia steel, 65, 65½, 66.
C. P. R., 147½, 148½, 148½.
Twin City, 114½, 114½, 115.
Montreal Power, 81½, 92½, 91½.
Rich. and Ont., Navigation, 72½, 75½, 75½.

RETURNED HOME.

Fifteen militia men, principally from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, who have been taking a short course at the military school, left for their homes this morning.

HEAVY CHATHAM FIRE.

One Man Perhaps Fatally Injured--Remains of a Woman Consumed.

Chatham, Ont., March 31.—(Special.)—Fire this morning destroyed two business blocks, and did damage estimated at \$64,000.

The fire was discovered by S. Jankee, who was overcome by the smoke while raising an alarm to other occupants of the block. He is in a dangerous condition. The corpse of the late Mrs. Melady, awaiting interment, was found badly charred after the fire.

ST. JOHN MAN TENDERING

Moncton, March 30.—(Special.)—John S. Couglan of St. John, is the only tenderer for the Moncton Opera House this year. His tender is \$410.

On account of the condition of the hall, the former lessee, A. E. Holstead, declined to tender.

WEATHER PROBS.

Toronto, March 31.—(Special.)—Moderate to fresh westerly winds, mostly fair and mild. Saturday, fine and still milder.

NOT ARRIVED YET.

Halifax, March 31.—(Special.)—The new turbine steamer, the Victorian, of the Allan line, had not been sighted up to 3 o'clock this afternoon.