

TRAPPER AND VOYAGEUR FRANCOIS MERCIER DEAD.

Romantic Life Story Connecting These Peaceful Days
With the Indian Fighting Past.

One of the most remarkable links between the Dominion of to-day and the old unsettled time of Indian fighting, and exploration of lands long since settled passed away Tuesday at Montreal in the person of Mr. Francois Mercier, who was stricken by heart disease at the age of 68 years.

Few men living can look back to so adventurous or useful a career as could Mr. Mercier. When the Western part of the northern half of this continent was almost a terra incognita, given over to buffaloes, and marauding redskins, he was accumulating a fortune in the fur trade. When Alaska was merely a mark on the map, the sole piece of American territory under the Russian flag, Mr. Mercier was exploring its wilds. Later he won signal honor from Pope Leo XIII. for his efforts to Christianize the Alaskan aborigines.

In French-Canadian circles here for years past, Mr. Mercier has been a striking figure, and nothing pleased him better than to tell the younger generations of his earlier adventures. His death will be mourned by many affectionate friends.

Born at St. Paul l'Ermite in 1838, the young Francois Mercier developed a sturdy body and an adventurous spirit which soon sent him afield from his native village.

When only eighteen he made his way to the then extreme Western town of St. Paul, Minn., where he found employment, in the fur trade with the Northwest Company—the Northwest then being the present middle west states.

Through the vast expanse of prairie extending from the Mississippi to the Rockies, he plied his trade with great success, albeit with considerable danger.

The Sioux and other tribes of Indians were still powerful and unsubjugated, and as often as not on the warpath, when the lot of the fur trader was as hard as it was depicted in the Leather-stocking Tales, Mr. Mercier was many times attacked by the Indians, but always managed to preserve his scalp by retreat to the numerous government forts. With such success did Mr. Mercier follow the fur trade that in a very few years he became independently wealthy.

In the early '60s, Mr. Mercier's adventurous spirit led him to make a trip through the then unknown Russian territory of Alaska, and he always claimed that he was the first white man to explore that country.

As a result of this trip when the United States Government for the purchase of Alaska, Mr. Mercier was engaged to assist in the negotiations at St. Petersburg, and was later a

member of the first commission to delimit the boundaries separating Alaska from Canada.

While in St. Petersburg on this first massacre, Mr. Mercier went to Paris, and gave several addresses before the Paris Geographical Society on Alaska and Western America. This resulted in one of the most dangerous feats of his career. The Paris society had long held the theory that the aboriginal Americans settled the continent from Siberia, crossing the Behring Sea in canoes. To test the possibility of this theory they engaged Mr. Mercier to attempt the passage in a canoe. This he did, crossing in a trail bark from America to Asia, for which service he received the gold medal of the society.

At the same time Mr. Mercier became interested in the evangelizing of the tribes that inhabited Alaska, and finally succeeded in persuading Bishops Tlul and Seigers to start Roman Catholic missions there. On a later visit to Europe Mr. Mercier was received in audience by Pope Leo XIII. and decorated in honor of these services. He was also honored by the United States Government for his services in Alaska.

Mr. Mercier long continued his connection with the Paris Geographical Society for years as their sole member in Canada. He wrote several interesting pamphlets and brochures on the geography, geology and natural history of Alaska. He was also most interested in fossils and made a splendid collection of Alaskan fossils which is now owned by the Government at Ottawa.

For many years past Mr. Mercier has lived a retired life in Montreal, having an ample fortune, with increasing years he returned to his own people, and devoted his life to literature and charitable work. In this he spent much money, especially in aiding the education of promising young Canadians with more talents than money.

The deceased gentleman was a member of the famous Mercier family a second cousin of the late Honore Mercier and of Mr. Joseph Royal, at one time Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories.

He is survived by three brothers, Felix, Eugene and Moise, and two sisters, both of whom have taken the veil, one being Mother Superior of the Congregation of Notre Dame de la Prairie. Other relatives are Dr. O. Mercier, Alphonse and J. M. Mercier and Mr. Honore Mercier, advocate.

The funeral will occur on Sunday afternoon next from the family residence 606 St. Denis street, to the church of St. Louis de France, thence to Cote des Neiges Cemetery.

BETTER GROUPING IN THE CABINET.

Rearrangement of Departments Would Serve Public Interests.

The Marine Portfolio—A Minister of Mines Would Find Plenty to Do.

Ottawa, Jan. 6.—At this time, when rumors of Cabinet changes and of rearrangement of departmental work are in the air, the following suggestions may be in the public interest. It is taken for granted that Hon. L. P. Brodeur will be translated to the Department of Marine and Fisheries. The portfolio is one which ought to go to an eastern man seeing that it is intimately identified with the St. Lawrence navigation and the important fisheries of the Atlantic as well as those of the Pacific, to say nothing of the great inland lakes.

The transfer of Mr. Brodeur to Marine and Fisheries will leave the Inland Revenue Department without a head. Is it necessary, however, to continue this branch of the public service as a separate department? Your correspondent does not think so. Customs and excise are to some extent related to each other and the two might well be consolidated under Mr. Paterson. This could be done without any great difficulty.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S DEMAND.

From British Columbia comes the demand for a representative in the Cabinet to share in the administrative work of the Government. Hon. Wm. Templeman is already Minister without portfolio; With Inland Revenue added to Customs how is he to be given a department? By the creation of a new department. The Minister of the Interior is unduly burdened with work and ought to be relieved of the pressure upon him. Incorporated with the Department of the Interior is the mines branch. This might be elevated into a department with Mr. Templeman at its head. Seeing that British Columbia is essentially a mining Province, the appropriateness of this step could not be gainsaid. The Geological Survey might also go into the Department of Mines, and no doubt Mr. Oliver would welcome the transfer.

MUCH WORK TO BE DONE.

A Department of Mines could render the country invaluable service.

Already as a minor branch it has undertaken work of the highest importance in connection with the application of electricity to the smelting of iron ores and the manufacture of steel and the development of the immense zinc deposits of British Columbia. Furthermore, the deposits of mica and asbestos which abound in Quebec have been mapped out and their location, extent and development reported upon in a thoroughly practical way. To make known the valuable character of the mineral resources of Canada so as to induce the investment of capital and the establishment of new industries is a subject well worthy of greater consideration from the Government.

Turning to the duties devolving upon some of the departments, it should be pointed out that at least three are doing work of a somewhat similar character. Public works is, of course, the great construction branch of the public service, but there are also works of construction carried out by the Marine Department and the canal branch of the Railway Department. Here, surely, is a chance for amalgamation, not of departments, but of branches, which are doing a similar class of work.

Some of the suggestions here outlined should commend themselves to the Government and be carried into effect. The matter of Cabinet appointments will not be taken up until the end of the present month. The filling of the present vacancy will then be dealt with, and Sir Wilfrid, if he is so disposed, can carry out a reconstruction which without disturbing would greatly improve the existing order of things.

EARLY ELECTIONS IN MANITOBA.

Premier Roblin Thinks That Earlier the Appeal is Made the Better.

Winnipeg, Jan. 6.—It is confidently expected that the Provincial elections will be brought on within the next four months, in fact immediately after

THE HERALDS FASHION PLATE.



THE LONG-COATED SUIT.

The princess effect which is dominating the styles of the present is carried out attractively in the long-coat suits. The French seam, half way between the armhole and neckline, adds greatly to the graceful curves, and tends much toward diminishing the size of the waistline. In this case this seam runs from the shoulder line to the hem of the garment, being in the form of an inverted pleat, stitched down to a couple of inches below the waistline, and pressed

flatly from thence to the hem. There is no centre back seam, only the side inverted pleat, treated as in the front. The fronts are cut U shape to the bust line, with a little chemise of dovegray cloth, braided in black. The leg of mutton sleeve has a high cuff of black velvet, the shawl collar of the same, while the buttons are of the cloth, with black bone rims. The skirt is plain circular, cut walking length, in the hem of which is inserted a strip of featherweight hair-cloth which aids in holding out from the feet the extreme width.

ter the session of Legislature, which opens next Thursday. The Roblin-Rogers faction intend to rush through necessary business.

The reason for the appeal to the people is said to be that the government will not take the risk of waiting until their term has expired because they fear that the popularity of the Grand Trunk Pacific which will then be under construction from one end of Canada to the other and the shortcomings of their own policy would be the means of their own undoing.

A well known healer who stands high in favor with the Rogers faction offered to bet any amount that the local elections will be held within four months. Rumor is also in circulation to the effect that the local cabinet will not include Hon. C. H. Campbell, as attorney general, the portfolio going to Mr. A. Andrews. For some time past Mr. Campbell has made himself very unpopular with the other members of the cabinet, hence the change.

BROKEN SLEEP—TIED NEXT MORNING.

Sleep not only rests, but builds up the body. Cut down the hours of sleep, and you cut down health in the same proportion. Rebuilding then ceases, nerves go to smash, you grow tired, weak and wretched.

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REVENUE SIX MILLIONS.

Receipts of Ontario May Equal Those of 1904.

The revenue of the Ontario government for 1905 was over \$6,000,000. The complete returns from all departments have not yet been compiled and it may be found that the total will equal the receipts of 1904, which were \$6,128,358.

There has been an increase of revenue in nearly every department, in addition to the \$100,000 receipts from the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway, a source of revenue which the former Administration did not have.

During the year 1904, the sum of \$1,664,000 was received as bonuses on timber sales; last year the amount received on that account was only \$520,000. But the ordinary revenue from Crown lands last year was \$548,000 more than in the previous year.

It is expected that Hon. Mt. Matheson, the provincial treasurer, will be able to show a surplus after meeting all expenses of the year.

UNNECESSARY.

Ethel—Our engagement is broken off. All is at an end between us. I shall not marry you next week as I intended.

George—Is this final?
Ethel—It is.
George—Have you a telephone in

Our January Clearing Sale IS NOW IN FULL SWING.

GRAND BARGAINS offered. Hundreds of keen buyers are taking advantage of our great bargains offered special for this month.

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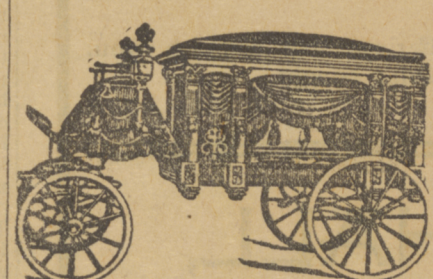
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