Russian Officers at Victoria From Within Port Arthur

Tell of the Incidents of the Historic Siege—"Stoessel a Coward," They Say—A Dramatic Episode When Flags Were Burned Before Surrender.

THE first men to arrive in America from inside blood-strewn, wreck littered Port Arthur reached Victoria Sunday, passengers by the steamer Tartar. There were two Russian naval officers—Lieutenants, V. Below and E, Bondy, both of the late Russian cruiser Sevastopol, now a wreck lying 30 fathoms deep in the harbor of Port Arthur; three British seamen, who were amongst the few successful adventurers who ran the blockade. The Capt. Kettles of Port Arthur were Chief Officer J. Triplet, Second Officer J. E. Leck, and A. L. Johnson, engineer, of the British tramp steamer King Arthur, of 1,047 tons register, now a Japanese prize at Sasebo. She was the only steamer of any size to run the blockade, having arrived at the fortress within ten days of its fall, with foodstuffs—mostly barley—and munitions loaded at Bombay. Other Russians from the fallen fortress are on their way across the Pacific. Some are expected to arrive on the incoming Empress of India, due here on Tuesday next. Captain Essen of the Sevastopol and fourteen other officers, who, as did Lieutenants Below and Bondy, gave their parole to their Japanese captors, are passengers on the Pacific Mail liner Siberia, now about due at San Francisco.

Lieutenant Below was interviewed by a Colonist reporter on board the Tartar. Lieutenant Boudy was not; he speaks no language other than his native tongue. His companion had a smattering of English, more of French—and in this tongue he told the reporter of many things. Like other officers, he has a poor opinion of General Stoessel.

"A hero? Bah! a coward."

Tersely, with a shrug of the shoulders almost Parisian, the lieutenant thus expressed his opinion of the commander of the fortress.

The Coward—And the Heroes.

Lieutenant Below told the reporter he was in command of the fortress on Laotishan. This work is on an eminence 461 metres high on Tiger's Tail. It was not assailed by the Japanese other than in bombardments from sea at the beginning of the blockade. It is now uninjured, its guns almost intact, other than for the fact that the breechlocks have been destroyed by the surrendering garrison.

When the warships took refuge in the harbor—Port Arthur's land-locked shelter is more or less like Victoria's inner harbor, though larger—after the battle of April 13, when Makaroff was drowned with so many in the Petropavlovsk, the greater portion of the big guns were taken ashore from the fleet, the 9-inch, 6-inch, 75-millimetre—in fact all the guns except the 37 and 47 millimetres and other ordnance of a secondary nature—was added to the armament of the land defences. The crews of the ships were, to a considerable extent, added to the garrison. To show, of the 700 men of the Sevastopol, but a hundred remained on board.

Kondratenko was in charge of the engineering works; he did so much for Port Arthur.

"Kondratenko"—the Russian lieutenant's eyes sparkled with kindly remembrance. "Ah!" he sighed, "he was a man, avec un couer—yes, a heart of iron."

"The iron-hearted"—so the lieutenant described the dead Kondratenko.

"And Stoessel?" asked the reporter.

"Stoessel—bah! a coward. Fock—a coward! Stoessel sent messages that Port Arthur would be his tomb, that he would fight to the end. Bah! he saw to it that he needed no tomb."

"You think, then, that Stoessel was not the hero of the siege?" said the reporter.

"Hero? C'est amusant. His thoughts were ever for the safety of himself. Kondratenko and Biely were the heroes. Brave old Kondratenko, I salute him. He was the life of the defence—he and Biely, chief of artillery. When they were killed there was no head, no organization; the garrison was a crowd, uneled, ungoverned. Stoessel lived a good deal of his time in a cave, sheltering from the Japanese fire. And there were other officers like him."

"And Madame Stoessel? Japanese papers say she was a heroine," said the reporter.

"They were misled—the world has been misled. Tout les monde—all the world will soon know Stoessel as he is—a coward. The Japanese have called Madame Stoessel a heroine. They are polite, these Japanese. I don't know why they so call her. She spent most of her time in a bomb-proof cave."

"Then you destroy the heroes the world has made?" said the reporter.

A Russian Mollie Pitcher.

"Oh, no—no—no. Mais non. There were heroes. Their tales will be told. The world it shall hear. Madame Zouhoneli was a heroine. Her husband was an artillery officer. He was in charge of a battery of three 11-inch guns mounted on an eminence to protect the water supply of Port Arthur. You see, the water came from some distance; it was important to prevent it being cut. Col. Zouhoneli was killed. His wife went from the hospital where he died to take command of the battery she left, and she fought those guns until she too was killed.

"There were priests, too, who were brave. Women, brave sisters of the Red Cross, suffering silently; dying without a word. Then there was the boy Sueff. He carried despatches twice through the lines of the besiegers. He crawled through the corn, suffering much, and was once captured, escaping when sentenced to be shot.

"And there were spies who went into the enemy's lines by night; many heroes—more than you will know. And Stoessel is not among the heroes. Stoessel—bah! a play-actor, a bravo!"

"Were you at Laotishan when the expedition of the Japanese to seal the harbor entrance took place?"

"Ah! C'est les braves. We fired on them. They were seen plain with the searchlights, but they came on and on—on and on. They are brave, these Japonaise, but fanatics. They do not avoid death, but fight like the savages. When they charged the outer forts our machine guns killed them, and others came; it seemed that we killed them all, but still others came. We buried the body of their Hirose, who led the expedition; the bravery of the attempt was worthy of better result. You know it did not succeed.

"The loss of the Petropavlovsk was a heavy blow. She sank so quickly. Was it not a submarine? We thought it must be. But the Japanese say no. You say, well—Nichevo"—and he shrugged his shoulders after the manner of the Continental.

"Did you recover many of the victims of the Petropavlovsk" asked the interviewer.

Never-Ending Funerals

"Yes. The sight on the shore next day was terrible. The sea washed the bodies in. Patrols went along the beaches, I with them, and we found many bodies. We carried them to the Chinese carts, which bore them to the town, some distance away, and we buried them. For days long funeral parties went to the cemetery with cartloads of dead.

"In August many ships went: we did not know for long afterward how they fared. We hoped they would give a good account of themselves, though it is hard to see how they could. Had Makaroff lived, things would have been different. We would have kept more of our guns and gone out to fight. He liked the open fighting; Witgeft and Wirren liked mines. They had no big guns—the forts had them all—and they went to seek safety, not to fight. The Sevastopol remained; she was the last of the fleet.

"At times, until September, junks managed to reach the harbor. At times there were many. Later the number dwindled. For the last two months and a half none came. Only two steamers ran the blockade—the George, a little English steamer, which came twice, and the King Arthur, which came from Bombay. They brought little news. The tales the Chinese told in the junks were so conflicting that we were at a loss what to believe regarding the besiegers.

"Stoessel told us Kuropatkin was coming to succor us; he told us the Baltic fleet was near at hand. We were blissful then with the folly of fools. We did not know that on June 16th Stackelberg had been defeated at Yafangkou, that Kuropatkin was retiring northward instead of coming to our relief, that he and his army had been hurled from Liaoyang. Ignorant, we continued to hope. The Japanese, though came in growing numbers. They mounted new guns, each battery seeming heavier, the projectiles more piercing. Then the mortars came—those terrible mortars, with the great piercing projectiles. Even the thickly-armored shelters were not safe from them.

"The circle narrowed; forts fell. At the end of July the greatest of the earlier assaults was delivered by the combined army of the besiegers. Chinese spies had told us—there were many spies—that the Japanese had planned to capture the fortress on July 29. They made a terrible fight. The losses were enormous. They lost 30,000 men. The stench of the unburied dead was awful.

"Fort after fort fell; the Japanese burrowed and tunneled beneath them—they are wonderful engineers—charging with fury as their mines destroyed the works. They hurled grenades, shot explosives from baamboos, and as last, when Kondratenko had fallen and 203-Metre Hill, as they called it—we knew it as High Hill—was taken—oh, the slaughter of that fight—two-thirds of the naval brigade were lost there—the end began."

When Hope Had Fled.

"Had you lost hope then that rescuers would come?" asked the reporter.

"Long since. The Japanese 11-inch guns were wrecking the place with their great projectiles. Port Arthur is a town of wrecked houses; great tears show in the few walls that stand. They sank the warships, firing indirectly from behind High Hill. Essen knew the danger when that height fell. Stoessel said it was impregnable, and the warships were still in the basin, at anchor. Essen took the Sevastopol to the shelter of an island. She alone remained—the plucky Sevastopol.

"Our ship—the Sevastopol—received four torpedoes from Japanese torpedo-boats which advanced to attack her when the guns could not reach her. They were brave, those torpedo-boats. With the searchlights of Laotishan I watched them as they dashed toward the Sevastopol. Only a hundred men were on her, and they had only the small guns—the 37 and 47 millimetres and smaller pieces. One of the vessels fired a torpedo, which injured her so that she was unable to move, listing badly. It seemed she would turn over, but no.

"In the night they came again, those torpedo boats. The intrepidity was remarkable. They rushed to the shortest range, regardless of the fire. The vessel was lost; she could not escape. Better, is it not, that she be sunk deep, destroyed, than fall into the enemy's hands? So the men scuttled her; they told me when they reached shore. My gunners in Laotishan sunk one vessel—pierced her, I think."

"Will many of the ships of your navy be saved by the Japanese?" queried the reporter.

"Some. Oh yes, some will be saved. The Sevastopol will not; she is in deep water."

"You further destroyed some of the vessels after the surrender, did you not?" asked the interviewer.

"No, it was before the surrender was concluded; we were within our rights."

"Could you have held out longer?" asked the reporter.

"Not much—a few days, perhaps. We had very little food, very little ammunition—none at all for the larger ordnance, although there was still a good supply for the smaller pieces. But poof! what of that? There was no ammunition for the big ordnance; the small pieces could not reply to those great mortars of the enemy.

"There was scurvy; the sick were very numerous; the wounded were so many, hospitals were full. The ships Kazan and Mongolia, stranded in the harbor, were full of wounded; there were so many that the physicians could not attend to them. Men walked out of the hospitals to comrades, who bound lint about their wounds. Many wrapped bandages themselves about their injuries and returned to fight. The city was too full of wounded for them to be attended to.

A Final Month of Horror.

"The last month was one of horror. The cold killed much of the stench of the warmer weather, but one's nostrils were ever filled with bad odors, the stench of putrifying bodies. Why hope? We may have fought longer, perhaps. To what end? Nichevo."

"Nichevo" is a common word of the Russian. It means "no matter." Perhaps it were better translated, "What's the use?"

This Russian naval officer—more like a Frenchman, with his chin whisker and flowing tie, a tie that savored of the boulevards—considered himself a victim of circumstances, and he was a fatalist. Most Russians are. He wanted to forget those last days. He let his mind wander from the horrors, and changed the subject.

"Let me tell you of a dramatic incident which occurred on January 3rd," he said. "The word of surrender had gone about the garrison. The news had been told; all knew the end had come. We received orders that morning to mass in the afternoon in the new town, before Stoessel's headquarters. The regiments formed in line there, according to their precedence, and we moved into a square.

"In the middle men built a fire, and as they did Stoessel came from the headquarters, a mourning band on his left arm. He ordered the regimental commanders to mass the colors of their troops, and solemnly he said: 'It's all over with Port Arthur; the flags shall share its fate.'

"Priests, all vested, moved out, and offered prayers as they stood before the flags. The officers of the regiments meanwhile stood by their respective colors.

"Col. Khilkof, who had been wounded in the leg some days before, limped forward, leaning on the arms of two of his men, and kissed the colors of his regiment. He tossed the flag into the fire. His shoulder straps were also ripped off and thrown into the flame.

"One by one, other commanders stepped out and destroyed their flags.

"Col. Torichakoff—he was so sad at sacrificing his flag—made a speech, in which he expressed his sorrow because of the disgrace which had fallen upon the flag of his regiment. It bore tokens of victories in the Russo-Turkish war, and his heart was heavy because he must destroy it.

"For three hours the officers destroyed their flags.

"The whistle—ah! you must go; so."

"You knew of the assassination of the Grand Duke Sergius," asked the reporter, moving away.

"Yes; the pilot told us. Poor Russia!"

BILLIARD SHARP HURT.

Schaefer Slips On a Piece of Ice and Breaks a Finger.

New York, Feb. 20.—A Pittsburg despatch to the World says: "Jake Schaefer, the billiard player, slipped on a piece of ice tonight (Sunday) and broke the little finger of his right hand. He also cut a gash in the hand requiring six stitches to close. The Pittsburg physician who attended Shaefer back to Chicago says that the once great expert of the cue will scarcely be able to play again for a year, perhaps never, as the hand is fearfully gashed.

MURDERERS ELECTROCUTED.

Ossinig, N. Y., Feb. 20.—Frank Rimieri, who murdered Jacob Pinto, a Brooklyn junk dealer, and Adolph Koenig who strangled Mrs. Kaufmann to death at her home in New York, were put to death in the electric chair in Sing Sing prison early today. Within 20 minutes of the time Rimieri, who first went to the chair, was pronounced dead. Koenig had paid the penalty of his crime. Two shocks were given in each case.

Students in Open Revolt

St. Petersburg Pupils and Professors Pass Resolutions Demanding Reforms.

Fiery Harangues Followed by Decision to Close the Universities.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 21, (1.40 a.m.)—With the decision of the student body of the University of St. Petersburg to suspend studies for the remainder of the university year almost the whole educational system of Russia has entered upon a period of stagnation. Other universities, gymnasia and even grammar schools already were on strike and the military throughout the empire have been obliged to resort to restrain schoolboys of tender years who are joining the general movement.

The meeting of 3,000 St. Petersburg students besides voting solid to suspend studies, demanding the formation of a constitutional assembly and chacterizing the proposed summoning of the Zemsky Sobor as inadequate for the emergency.

A large faction voted to stop the war. A strong revolutionary feeling was manifested, the red flag was waved and the "Marseillaise" and other revolutionary songs were chanted. A large portrait of the Emperor was torn in strins. The police did not interfere. Strong forces of police and Cossacks had been posted outside the buildings to meet an expected street demonstration but none occurred.

Demand of Proletariat.

Many professors and instructors in the university were present, most of whom were in full sympathy with its objects. Two tutors and a small number of students who wished to obtain their diplomas this year made an ineffectual attempt to stem the general tide.

A leader of the socialist revolutionary party made a speech during which he said: "From the height of throne was heard the appeal for confidence in the people, but the period of hope lasted only a few months. In a little while the government returned to the good old methods of the lash, an autocratic regime is inconsistent with the first principles of justice. The minute the proletariat of intelligence joins hands the knell of autocracy is sounded."

When Prof. Speranzi, one of the speakers, revealed the fact that Governor-General Trepoff had threatened not to permit any student, who left his studies, to re-enter any of the big universities, the statement was received with a veritable howl of rage. but the speaches in the auditorium were mild and temporate compared with those at the overflow meetings in the classrooms, where even the murder of the Grand Duke Sergius was glorified.

Strong Resolutions.

Following is the text of the preamble and resolutions adopted: "Effete Russian absolutism is drawing daily, nay, hourly, to its inevitable doom. Powerless to cope with an awakened people, it devises measures more ridiculous than another and one method more reckless than another to delay its downfall. It entered upon a criminal adventure in the Far East, which has cost the people tens of thousands of lives, and millions of hard earned money. Conscious of its goal the intelligence of the students have long conducted a stubborn fight to obtain the most elementary human rights, often falling fainting before the brutal force of an unbridled government until at last the proletariat entered the historic arena and at the same time as it came to the knowledge of itself dealt Czardom the heaviest blows.

"The recent bloody events have clearly shown what absolutism is capable of in defence of its pitiful, shameful existence. The sincere fraternal harmonious action of the proletariat on those days of January signed the death warrant of absolutism and without doubt insured the speedy political freedom of Russia.

Professors Sympathize.

"We as a section of the educated community, conscious of our goal welcome the solidarity of workmen and put forward the following demands:

"First—Summoning a legislative assembly on the basis of a universal, equal and secret ballot of male and female citizens; freedom of speech, freedom of the press; freedom of organization and of striking.

"Second—Amnesty for all who have been punished for their political or religious convictions.

"Third—The fact of belonging to any particular party shall not deprive of political rights.

"Fourth—As a guarantee against interference of the Russian government in the free execution of their demands, a people's militia must immediately be formed, in their ranks all citizens can fight to realize our aspirations.

"Recognizing the significance of this historical moment when Russia is emerging from a period of fire and revolution when every one has but one end in view, we cannot pursue our studies and therefore suspend them until September 13th.

"By then events will have furnished new material for the solution of the questions now before us."

ALBERT LARUE DEAD.

New York, Feb. 20.—Albert Larue, well known among musicians and musical publishers as an arranger and composer, is dead at his home here from pneumonia. He arranged the score of many of the musical comedy successes produced in recent years.

Executive Council Of Mining Men

Provincial Executive Hold Three Important Sessions of Business.

Arrangements For Big Meeting of American Mining Engineers' Association.

(From Tuesday's Daily.)

The executive of the B. C. Mining Association spent a busy time yesterday holding three separate sittings, in the morning, afternoon and evening. Mr. John Keen, the president occupied the chair, among those present being Messrs E. Jacobs, secretary; K. Machin, C. H. Dickie, Capt. Clive Phillipps-Wolley, J. J. Campbell, Nelson; Fred Kepper, Greenwood; D. W. Moore, Trail; A. McMillan, Rossland; W. West Collis, Colin F. Jackson, Vancouver; F. Mortimer Lamb, Mr. Pierson and G. A. Taylor.

Since the last convention of the association, held here in February, 1904, the executive had held meetings at Victoria and Nelson, a most interesting report concerning its work, being submitted by Mr. Jacobs, the secretary. In this connection a number of changes in the executive were noted, one being occasioned by the lamented death of Hon. Senator Reid, the others following the removal of S. F. Parish, late general manager of the Le Roi Mining Co. from the province. These vacancies were filled by the appointment of Robert R. Headley, superintendent of the Hall Mining and Smelting Co's. smelter, Nelson, and A. H. Kelly, manager of the Reliance Gold Mining and Milling Co., Nelson. Another vacancy was reported owing to the resignation of Mr. Edmund B. Kirby, late general manager of the Centre Star and War Eagle Mining Co. Rossland, Mr. Kirby having temporarily left the province.

Reference was made in the report to the various recommendations made to the government with respect to the mining industry, and the courteous hearing accorded by the government, and also to matters concerning which the Dominion authorities were approached one, of which, the creation of a Dominion department of mines, seemed to promise early formation, it being assured that the $20,000 placed in the estimate, according to press despatches was for this purpose. The establishment of a national mint, was also noted with pleasure. The appointment of a zinc specialist, to make report as to the zinc resources of the province, is to be again moved for by the association As to the opening of Indian reserves for mining purposes, assurance had been received from Ottawa that the matter would receive attention. The executive had endorsed the request made upon the Dominion government that the bounty on lead shall be paid for one year on any lead ore shipped out of Canada after the smelters have been supplied with all they require.

A committee appointed at the morning session to enquire into the reason for the continued shipment of gold into the United States, instead of to local banking institutions reported that these conditions would continue until the completion and operation of the mint at Ottawa.

Messrs. Lamb, Jackson and Brewer were appointed a committee to prepare a circular letter to be sent to each of the local branches of the organization, urging them to collect and prepare data, plans, etc., of their respective districts, and have copies of same available for members of the American Institute of Mining Engineers, when they visit British Columbia also to prepare short itineraries and descriptions of the mines of their districts, for the instruction and guidance of the visiting members.

Messrs Mason, Pierson, Collis and McMillan were appointed a committee to draft a programme of the work of the next convention, subject to future ratification, it was agreed that the date of the convention shall be between the 24th and 30th July next.

Mr. Alfred McMillan was elected a member of the executive committee in place of S. F. Parish representing the Le Roi mine, and Mr. W. M. Brewer was elected to fill one of the other vacancies pro tem.

During the day a petition was sent for presentation to the legislature asking an amendment to the act to prevent mineral and placer miners occupying the same ground, as forecasted in the Colonist yesterday.

The meeting of the executive will be continued today commencing at 10.30 o'clock this morning. It is possible that their business will be concluded this evening.

TERRIBLE DISASTER.

Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 20.—Meagre reports reached here tonight of a terrible disaster in the Virginia mines, which are located about 18 miles from Birmingham. One hundred and five men are entombed in the mine and it is believed that all are dead.

Relief trains carrying physicians and laborers have been sent to the scene of the disaster from both Birmingham and Bessemer.

Reports at 10 o'clock state that every effort is being made to reach the men, but that they cannot possibly succeed before morning. The mines belong to the Alabama Steel and Wire Company and are leased by Reid & Co. Both white and colored miners are employed and only recently union miners went to work. The mines are considered models of their kind. The slopes are well located and there never has been any trouble from gas heretofore. It is stated that the accident was caused by a cave-in, due to the giving way of the timbers.

MARTIAL LAW PROTECTS CZAR.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 20.—Martial law has been declared at Tzarskoe-Selo owing to numerous threatening letters being received at the Palace. The chief of the secret police has taken special precautions to prevent an outrage on the imperial family.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 21.—(3 a. m.)—There is no confirmation of the report that Emperor Nicholas has decided to issue a decree on March 4 convening the Zemsky Sobor. In well informed circles here it is believed that the question of the convoking of this ancient form of land parliament has not yet been decided.

TWELVE MEN INJURED.

St. Clairsville, O., Feb. 20.—Twelve men were badly injured today by the explosion of a stationary boiler at mine No. 1 of the Providence coal company near here. Two of the injured have since died and four others are believed to have been fatally hurt.

MACKAY'S NEW CABLES.

Contract For Another Atlantic Wire Will Go To England.

New York, Feb. 20.—The Tribune says: "Although the bids received by the Commercial Cable Co., for the new Atlantic cable have not been formally accepted, it is probable that the cable contract will be awarded to one or both English companies the Silverton Co., and the Telegraph Construction Co., both of London. In order to hasten the task of making and laying the cable Clarence H. Mackay and his associates may give the contract for the mid-Atlantic section to the other company.

MR. MARCONI'S WEDDING.

Banns for Marriage of Inventor Published In Boulogne.

New York, Feb. 20.—A Boulogne despatch to the Herald says: The banns for the marriage of Mr. William Marconi to Lady Beatrice O'Brien have been published at the city hall. The religious wedding is fixed for March 16 at the Roman Catholic church of St. George's, London. Lady O'Brien brings to Mr. Marconi an annual income representing £4,000. After the wedding the husband and wife will leave for New York where they will remain until the end of April, and will go from there to Rome, where it is reported they will be the guests of the King for a few days.

Irish Members Precipitate Crisis

John Redmond Moves Amendment to Address In the House.

Bitter Attack Joined by Some Unionists and Balfour Is in Trouble.

London, Feb. 20.—In moving as an amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the throne, the declaration that "the present system of government (of Ireland) is opposed to the will of the Irish people," John Redmond led the Irish party in the House of Commons today in an attack that contained for the Conservative ministry more of menace than lay in the fiscal debate precipitated by Mr. Asquith's amendment last week. The Redmond amendment was carefully calculated, in fact, to undermine the government's majority. Interest in the debate was intensified by a report that the Earl of Dudley had resigned the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. This report, which was given wide credence, has put heart in the Nationalists, who made the attack on the Earl of Dudley one of the features of their speeches. The debate drew a crowded gallery and peers especially were noticeable.

Mr. Redmond's speech was an uncompromising demand for home rule. He directly charged individual members of the Irish administration with incompetency. Both Mr. Redmond and Mr. Moore (the Unionist), who followed, made a special point of what they termed "the shameful treatment" of Sir Antony MacDonnell (under secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland) in connecting him with the differences with the cabinet over the devolution scheme.

Mr. Wyndham's Defence.

Mr. Wyndham, chief secretary for Ireland, delivered a straightforward explanation of how these unfortunate misunderstandings arose. In doing so he paid a splendid tribute to Sir Antony MacDonnell. Mr. Wyndham said: "I had often discussed reforms with Sir Antony MacDonnell, who, with his Indian experiences, found analogies between my ideas and ideas he had formed in India. Here came the first source of serious misunderstanding. Ignorant of Indian affairs, I did not know that a semi-elective council existed in India, and therefore it never occurred to me in my conversations with MacDonnell that he had in mind any board partially elected as part of the reforms of which I approved."

Mr. Wyndham said he was absent when the devolution scheme was published, and that when he returned without consulting Macdonnell he wrote to the papers denouncing the elective council's feature. Mr. Wyndham said the cabinet never had doubted MacDonnell's loyalty. Mr. Wyndham admitted that MacDonnell perhaps was justified in taking his approval for granted.

T. W. Russell, Winston Churchill and others bitterly assailed the government's management of Irish affairs, and the Earl of Dudley's administration. The rumor of the resignation of he Earl of Dudley quickly spread through the House of Commons, but late tonight the lord lieutenant's secretary declared the rumor to be unfounded.

A special cabinet meeting has been summoned for tomorrow.

John Redmond's Attack.

London, Feb. 20.—John Redmond, the Irish leader, opened the Nationalist campaign in the House of Commons today by moving an amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the throne, declaring that the "present system of government of Ireland is opposed to the will of the Irish people," etc., etc. It was necessary, Mr. Redmond said, to emphasize the fact that the Nationalists were irrevocably committed to home rule, because there was an attempt to limit the decision of the coming elections and a smother the issue. The present system was ruinously extravagant and inefficient and was distrusted even by the Unionists. "Ireland," he added, "is governed by a bureaucracy more devoid of responsibility than the bureaucracy of Russian, which England is so fond of denouncing." Armed revolt would be justified if a chance of success exists. Mr. Redmond re-announced that his party was unalterably opposed to an alliance with any party which did not make home rule the cardinal plank of its platform.

Irish Unionists Bitter.

Mr. Moore, who spoke in behalf of the Irish Unionists, was as bitter as the Nationalist leader himself in his condemnation of the present government. Sir Antony MacDonnell, he said, had been infamously treated by the cabinet. The Irish Unionists think the whole business has been betrayed by their leaders and they could not vote confidence in the present Irish administration, which they believe has been converted from home rule.

Mr. Wyndham warmly defended Mr. MacDonnell, who, he said, had been invited to accept his post as a colleague rather than as an under secretary. The cabinet had censured Mr. MacDonnell for being concerned in the publication of the devolution proposals, but its action was taken before it knew the Earl of Dudley (lord lieutenant of Ireland) had sanctioned Sir Antony's action.

Cabinet Considers Crisis.

London, Feb. 21.—Until after today's meeting of the cabinet nothing will be definitely known of the outcome of the MacDonnell question. There is a strong impression that the crisis will not end without some modification of the cabinet. Mr. Wyndham's speech is admitted by his own newspaper supporters to have been weak and throughout he appeared uncomfortable, especially when Winston Churchill put to him the awkward question: "If Sir Antony were removed how had the Viceroy escaped reproof?"

Lord Hugh Cecil to some extent saved the situation by following Mr. Wyndham, friendly supporting the government, and declaring home rule to be as dead as the do-do, and treating the whole matter as one of little consequence.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Wyndham intimated that when he invited Sir Antony MacDonnell to him as under secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland, there was a correspondence between them embodying a previous conversation on the proposed manner of dealing with the Irish problems, including (1) maintenance of order; (2) a land bill; (3) education, and (4) coordination in the direction and control of detached board. It is understood that MacDonnell will now publish the correspondence.

Lansdowne May Resign.

It is rumored that Foreign Minister Lansdowne has threatened to resign if Sir Antony is made a scapegoat.

According to the Times, the Earl of Dudley has resigned and the cabinet has been summoned to consider the situation. The Times adds that it is the prevailing belief that MacDonnell's resignation will follow.

REPORT OF COMMISSION.

Austrian and American Admirals Will Draw Up Findings.

Paris, Feb. 20.—Admiral Von Spaun (Austro-Hungary) and Rear Admiral Davis (United States) have been designated to draw up the report of the international commission of inquiry into the North Sea incident. This will be presented in secret session Wednesday for discussion and final approval. The Austrian and American admirals have been chosen as representing elements on the commission which are entirely neutral and not connected directly or by political affiliation with either Russia or Great Britain.

Admirals Von Spaun and Davis held a session yesterday and met twice today. Their main work is to fulfil the requirement of the protocol that the commission report all the circumstances of the incident. While this detailed recital involves the main issue, namely whether torpedo boats were present and whether Admiral Rojestvensky was justified in firing, yet the full board of admirals reserves final determination of the main questions until after the presentation of Admirals Von Spaun and Davis' recital of the circumstances. Therefore, no positive decision has yet been reached upon the main points, but their number and circumstances seem to indicate a definite inclination of the majority of the commission toward partially justifying or excusing Admiral Rojestvensky's action. It is generally believed in well informed circles that Vice Admiral Doubassoff (Russian), Admiral Fournier (French), president of the commission, and Admiral Von Spaun incline to the foregoing view, while Rear Admiral Sir Lewis A. Beaumont (Great Britain) and Admiral Davis are considered favorable to the British view that no torpedo boats were present and that, therefore, there was no justification for the firing. But it is impossible to positively verify this alignment of the admirals. Moreover, the board apparently is seeking to reconcile differences so that the decision may not be a pronounced victory for either side, but reasonably acceptable to both.

Canadian Troops Will Guard Dominion's Gateways

Halifax and Esquimalt Forts Hereafter to Be Manned and Maintained by Canadians at Dominion's Expense—A Great Imperial Trust.

OTTAWA, Feb. 20.—(Special)—The government of the Dominion of Canada will take over the defences of Halifax and Esquimalt on July 1 next. Arrangements have been completed with the imperial government, terminating the negotiations which have been carried on through Earl Grey, and which have been comparatively short. Three years ago at the colonial conference, Canada offered to relieve Great Britain of the expense of these two important points in the Empire scheme of defence. The Canadian offer was a standing one, and it was intimated some time ago that if re-opened, it might be acceptable. This was done and terms were soon agreed upon. Canada undertakes to maintain the present defences in first class shape and to garrison them with all necessary branches of the service—infantry, artillery, engineers, army service corps, signallers and medical corps. While the whole of the British forces will not march out on July 1, it is expected that the bulk of the garrisons will get their marching orders then. The artillery and engineering experts will likely be retained on Canadian pay until others are trained to take their places. The estimated annual cost to Canada of maintaining these two ports is two million dollars per year.

Col. Sam Hughes in the House tonight asked if the current report were true that on July 1 the government would take over the garrisons at Esquimalt and Halifax. He would be sorry, he said, if England surrendered them if Canada was to contribute to imperial defence, and he trusted she would, in place of garrisoning these two points, be found garrisoning Portsmouth, Gibraltar, Malta and other places.

Sir Frederick Borden, replying, said that Canada a short time ago renewed the offer made to the imperial government in 1902 at the time of the colonial conference to relieve the mother country of all expenditures in maintaining garrisons at Halifax and Esquimalt, and that the offer had been accepted by the imperial authorities. The principles upon which the transfer was to be made were those that the Dominion government would control the garrisons and bear all the expenditure connected with their maintenance. Referring to Col. Hughes' suggestion, he said that charity begins at home. Let us in this case incur our own responsibilities within our own boundaries first.

M. R. L. Borden asked if the two ports would be maintained in the same state of efficiency as in the past as far as the fortifications were concerned.

Sir Frederick Borden replied: "Probably so." Proceeding, he said that so far as his information went, there was no indication of intention on the part of the British government to abandon Halifax as a naval base.

For the news contained in the above despatch the public had been prepared only by indefinite and fragmentary reports from time to time during the past few years, so that the announcement of a decision accomplished in reality precedes the general knowledge of the negotiations. In the past the Dominion has paid a portion of the cost of maintenance at Esquimalt, in connection with the dry dock at that point. Recently, according to another despatch from Ottawa, there was a suggestion put forward by the imperial authorities that the Dominion should contribute an annual sum of $1,250,000 toward the protection of defence works at this outpost of the Empire and the maintenance of troops and engineers necessary, the direction of works and forces remaining in imperial hands—although this is an unusual course for the home government to adopt in such regard. This was not acceptable to the federal government, but out of the suggestion came the negotiations of which the present decision is the end. The British authorities have accepted the Canadian offer, and there remains nothing but to carry out the terms of the new arrangement, appropriately set for the approaching celebration of the national birthday.

Compliment To Canada.

There can be no denial of the high compliment which the home government pays to the Dominion and its people in thus entrusting to their care two of the essential links in the great chain of inter-colonial and imperial defence, the western one of which at all events there had been no seeming intention to reduce. Although the public was scarcely prepared for the big news of transfer, it may be said that some of the military men were in no more expectant condition. Col. English, commanding the forces at Work Point and Esquimalt, informed the Colonist last evening that the press telegrams furnished his first and only intimation of the contemplated change, the only possible hint as to which might have been read between the lines of orders cancelling the instructions transferring certain of the army officers to Halifax. The commanding officer at Work Point is not inclined to the opinion that there will be any general evacuation by the imperial troops on July 1, as the construction of the defensive works will necessarily be proceeding during some time to come, and experts with knowledge of the local conditions and necessities will be required. Nor does he regard it as at all improbable that the future guardians of this port will be largely recruited out of time-expired men from the imperial forces now centred here and well satisfied with Victoria conditions.

Col. Holmes, D. O. C., on the other hand, was expecting exactly just such a solution of the problem with respect to the maintenance of Halifax and Esquimalt garrisons, and sees in the change but a natural restoration of the order of things when "C" battery furnished the military strength at this western security point of Canada—although on the larger scale proportionate to the growth in population and importance of the Dominion. He is not inclined to the opinion that there will be any important recruiting from the imperial forces.

The Public and the Change.

With the public of Victoria generally opinion appears to be divided between genuine regret at the severance of very pleasant relations with a portion of the fighting forces of the Motherland, whose presence has made ever near and dear the bond of close relationship, and Canadian pride that the government of the Dominion has taken a portion of the burden from John Bull's shoulders, while the sons of Canada have been held to be worthy to bear the stern responsibilities devolving upon them as a direct result of the alteration of arrangements. It would have been matter for larger and fuller self-congratulation had the announcement from Ottawa been supplemented with an intimation that Canada would at the same time demonstrate her recognition of the necessity for naval strength at Esquimalt to co-operate with and support the land contingent, and would therefore build Canadian ships to maintain them in reasonable conjunction with her associate land defence. There can be no doubt, in the view of many staunch Canadians here resident, that in no way could the Dominion government better express its appreciation of the necessities of the future and its capacity for protecting developing national interests than by determining to construct a series of modern warships at the two continental outposts, say one new ship in each three years, using Canadian workmen and Canadian materials, and manning with Canadians when they should have been completed. Thus, it is argued, would the most comprehensive plan for national self-protection and imperial co-operation, be rationally developed.

AYLESWORTH'S APPOINTMENT.

Premier States That Cabinet Position Without Portfolio Will Be Reward.

Ottawa, (Special), Feb. 20.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier answering Mr. Borden said previous to the election Mr. Aylesworth had been invited to become a member of the cabinet without portfolio. He had agreed, but had not been sworn in as a member of the cabinet as he had not found time during the campaign to come to Ottawa for that purpose. He hoped at an early date that Mr. Aylesworth would take his place in the cabinet. An interesting discussion was started by Mr. Perley who moved a resolution favoring the adoption of preventative measures against the spread of consumption. Several members spoke in sympathy with the question and in the end the motion was adopted with the government's approval. The only harsh note in the debate came from Mr. Black of Hants, who referring to the preventibility of tuberculosis said one good Canadian whose life had been saved was better than a score of Dukhobors.

A number of New Brunswickers are seeking incorporation as the British Canadian Empire League to foster Imperial unity.

J. S. Larke, commercial agent in Australia has been granted permission to come home this summer.

A QUICK RECOVERY.

Munroe and Munroe Set a New Mark For Wall Street.

New York, Feb. 20.—Munroe and Munroe have broken the record on Wall street for quick settlement. They have paid one hundred cents on the dollar to all claimants and have resumed business in the shortest time ever known under like circumstances. They are now offering for public subscription shares of the Canadian Marconi Company for immediate delivery. The above company has for its president Col. Henshaw of Montreal, Canada, and the stock registered by the Knickbocker Trust Co. in New York or the National Trust Co. of Montreal. At the offices of Munroe and Munroe on Wall street today the same activity which had always been displayed there was again manifest showing that the [illegible] not no prestige.

TWO PASSENGERS KILLED.

Several Cars Overturned Through Broken Rail on Rock Island Road.

Chicago, Ills., Feb. 20.—Two passengers were killed and one seriously injured as the result of the wreck of a Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific train at Wiota today as reported to the general offices of the company in this city. The dead: Henry Mebler, Rev. J. R. Johnson, from Harlan Iowa. Seriously injured, L. E. Kent, Morris Ills. The accident was caused by a broken rail. The engine remained upright but several cars were overturned.

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