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Probing Now for the Causes of the Quebec Disaster

Eye Witnesses Tell Different Stories—No Bodies Recovered—Coroner's Inquest Halted Until Bodies of Victims Have Been Recovered

QUEBEC, Sept. 15.—Explanations of the collapse of the central span of the Quebec cantilever bridge, while it was being hoisted into its position from the river yesterday, were being sought to-day by the St. Lawrence Bridge Company and the Quebec Bridge Commission. Accounts of survivors of the disaster and spectators on the bridge itself and river craft are at hopeless variance, some eye-witnesses holding the span itself buckled first and others that the hoisting supports did not work uniformly at one corner, causing the span to sheer round, which was too much strain on the other supports and perhaps on the beams of the span.

The St. Lawrence Bridge Co., this morning had not issued any official explanation of exactly what occurred, but was seeking information in the shape of photos taken while the piece was going down.

There was eye witnesses who said the span broke up into fragments, though opposed to these stories are those of spectators who contend the mass plunged into the river intact. Disappointed as were the engineers who drew up the plans for getting the span into position, at the untimely end of their efforts, they hold that the connecting of the two arms of the bridge will not be much delayed. The actual method of completing the bridge will depend upon the cause of the accident when it is discovered.

The cost of constructing a new span should not be more than the lost link, costing \$1,000,000, while this could be done in three months. No attempt at completing the bridge can be attempted this year and its opening due next Spring, must be indefinitely postponed.

The bridge span, when it tumbled into the St. Lawrence, did not block the ship channel and after an inspection of the spot yesterday, by Quebec harbor officials, it was decided navigation could be resumed today by ocean going vessels. The river is 294 feet deep at the bridge site.

The loss of life remained this morning at last night's estimate of eleven, this being the number of men unaccounted for. The explanation is made that yesterday after getting out of the water a number of bridge workers went home without reporting to the company's officials thus giving rise to the belief that the loss of life would be high.

No Bodies Recovered.

This morning Coroner Jolicoeur had not been able to make arrangements for an inquest, as no bodies have yet been found. Grappling for them was going on, but it was feared they had either been entangled in the debris or washed down stream by the swift current. Government ships coming into harbor, with flags at half mast, yesterday, gave the impression that they brought bodies.

As to the official inquiry into the causes of the accident the Government officials and those of the St. Lawrence Bridge Company are, conferring to set its date.

How he was carried to the river with the falling span, struck the water, was lost in the boiling waters amid the tangled mass of the structure, and yet escaped without serious injury, is the tale told today by Alfred French, (18) of New Liverpool, Quebec.

"I was at work on the centre span," he says, "and first felt the flooring of the structure kind of slant grinding of metal striking metal and the first thing I knew, men were shouting that they were going down. Their shouts were soon drowned, however, by the awful noise of the crumbling of steel. The span was shaken like a leaf, jerking up and down and then I had the sensation of going down in a fast descending elevator.

Beneath the Surface.

"The suction, as far as I can remember, took me down under the surface and I held my breath, expecting every minute to feel my body crushed between the iron and steel beams of the structure.

"But I guess my time was not up yet, and I found myself swimming desperately in water that were settling down and soon was picked up by a motor launch."

Young French escaped with minor scratches and bruises. Harry LeBebvre, who was on the centre span with French was knocked clear of the structure into the water, striking before the mass caused a suction in the river. He was hit, however, by a falling piece of steel, which bruised a leg, but did not hinder him from swimming to safety on one of the patrol boats where he was attended to.

A stirring account of the bridge collapse of yesterday was given to-day by Wilfred Baron, of Levis, Que., who escaped by a hairs breadth from the disaster.

"I was on the rear end of the cantilever, on the South shore, with Cyrille Bernier who is reported dead. We were helping with the raising of the centre span and everything was going on so smoothly that all fear we may have had, had gone by the time the span had been raised seven feet.

THE PRICE.

(By Muriel Stuart, in the Westminster Gazette)

When I sit down to read at night I hear a thousand voices call—The painted cups, the mirror bright,

The crazy patterns on the wall,

The curtains whispering that they were

Plucked from the bosom of the sea,

The coal that knew the Flood, the chair

Remembering when it was a tree.

They told of those who beat and broke,

Blasted and burned their lives away,

And with them other voices spoke, And spoke more dreadfully than they.

Terrible sounds of woe and strife—

Made thunder in this quiet room—

Women who gave the mill their life,

And men who shuddered at the loom.

The noise the snarling hammer made

In maddened ears, the foundry's roar,

The hands that stitched the rich brocade,

That beat the brass, that hewed the door.

How can I read while round me swarm

Creatures that strive and wept and died

To make this room rich, safe, and warm,

To keep the weather-blasts outside?

How can I rest while in the gloom

From mine and garret, den and pit,

They pass who built in blood this room,

And with their tears have furnished it!

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EDISON DECLARES FOR WILSON

Inventor Though Life Long Republican Issues Statement in Which he Gives His Reasons for Voting and Working for Woodrow Wilson—No President With in His Memory he Says—has Faced so Many Problems

SARATOGA, N.Y., Sept. 13.—Thomas A. Edison, inventor, life long Republican, and a strong supporter of Theodore Roosevelt's candidacy for the Republican nomination, made an announcement to-day of his intention to vote and work for Woodrow Wilson. He dictated the following statement: "Not since 1860 has any campaign made such a direct call on simple-pure Americanism. The times are too serious to talk or think in terms of Republicanism or Democracy. Real Americans must drop parties and get down to big fundamental principles.

Tremendous Problems.

"More than any other president in my memory Wilson has been faced by a succession of tremendous problems, any one of which decided the wrong way would have had disastrous consequences. Wilson's decisions so far have not got us into any serious trouble nor are they likely to.

"He has given us peace with honor. This talk about the United States being despised is nonsense. Neutrality is a mighty trying policy, but back of it are international law, the rights of humanity and the future of civilization.

"With references to Mexico I think that the President has acted wisely, justly and courageously. It was right that the United States should not have recognized such a murderous personality as Huerta. I do not believe that we should have intervened nor do I believe that we should intervene now. Mexico is a troublesome neighbor, but war and conquest is not going to make her a better one. Both against England and against human slavery the United States worked out its salvation through revolution, and it was a pretty slow, trying process.

Answered Public Opinion

"It has been said that Wilson at first was against preparedness. Perhaps he was, but when convinced that intelligent public opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of it he changed. That is the proper thing for our Presidents to do. A President desirous of public opinion would be a dangerous man in our system of government.

"His attitude on the tariff shows an equal openness of mind. A tariff commission will take the whole problem out of politics. It is my hope that experts will be named, and that the body will be continuing and vested almost with the dignity of the Supreme Court.

"They say he has blundered. Perhaps he has, but I notice that he usually blunders forward. You can't get 100 per cent efficiency in a Democracy. I don't know that we ought to want it. We would be machines and we would have to sacrifice too much of freedom.

"As I said at the start, it has been just one big thing after another with Wilson. I have never known so many dangerous questions brought up for decision to any one President.

Earned Faith and Trust

"Mr. Wilson has now had about four years of experience and he has earned faith and trust. I do not think it a logical or sensible thing to change to an inexperienced and untired man just for the sake of change, or without much better reasons being given for the change than I have yet noticed.

"Roosevelt was my choice. He has had experience and is one of the best of Americans. But the machine-controlled Republican party would not have him. Therefore, I am for Woodrow Wilson."

U. S. and Japanese Flags Entwined at Tokio

TOKIO, Sept. 17.—The municipality of Tokio tonight gave a brilliant reception and dinner in honor of Elbert H. Gary, of New York and Mrs. Gary. Giji Okuda, mayor of Tokio, presided at the dinner, which was attended by five hundred notables, including members of the cabinet. During the dinner Mr. Okuda proposed a toast to President Wilson and George W. Guthrie, the American ambassador, proposed the health of the Emperor. After the dinner there was an elaborate display of fireworks, one of the principal set pieces being the entwined flags of Japan and the United States.

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