

Modern Japan

A FEW turning points in the political history of modern Japan," was the subject of an able, interesting, instructive, and eloquent address by Hon. Rodolph Lemieux, postmaster-general and minister of labor, before a large gathering of the members of the Canadian Club following a luncheon at the Russell house on Saturday afternoon, says the Ottawa Free Press of March 30th. He spoke for just over an hour without in any way wearying his audience.

The speech bristled with notable points illustrative of the rapid progress made by the wily nation in the far east. Japan, from being a country practically closed to the outside world when it was governed by castes, and clans, although arts and literature flourished for thousands of years, had now, Mr. Lemieux said, come abreast of some, and ahead of other European nations in the matter of civilization.

The courts of Japan were presided over by expert jurists, and Mr. Lemieux drily remarked, that there was probably more decorum observed than in some courts he could mention, whilst even a senate had been thought to be a good thing. Mr. Lemieux dwelt at some length on the origin and importance of the various treaties, and said the alliance between England and Japan, which also included Canada, was a guarantee of the open door for trade and commerce in the far east.

Dr. White presided and, informally introducing Hon. Mr. Lemieux, referred to the success not only of his mission to Japan, but of his efforts to settle labor problems in Canada.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Hon. W. S. Fielding, Hon. Sydney Fisher and Hon. W. Templeman were among those at the head table.

Will Hear of It

Hon. R. Lemieux, in opening said Japan was a country which had been much heard of, but would be still more so in the near future. No credit was due to him for the success of the recent mission, but rather first of all, to the timely words spoken by the prime minister and second to the British ambassador at Tokyo, Sir Claude Macdonald, who gave him hearty support. He (Mr. Lemieux) was only the instrument, or the link, between the mother country on the one hand, and Japan and Canada on the other.

Mr. Lemieux regretted that he might have to disappoint the audience, as he had already said in parliament almost everything possible on the subject of his mission. His own wish and desire was to see a Canadian Club established in as many towns, cities and hamlets as there were in Canada. The clubs were in his estimation great factors in educating the people, and it was refreshing for a public man to come down from the Hill at times unshackled by political bias and speak to his friends on topics of the day.

"My impressions are too personal to be given in a public meeting," remarked Mr. Lemieux. "Besides, as I have said, my statements as regards my mission to Japan, have already been given to parliament, and you would not like a second edition, but I thought that having visited the country and having met the best of the public men in Japan, I might be able to give you a few of the landmarks of the political history of modern Japan."

"Seldom has the world seen such a wonderful evolution as that of Japan from the old to the new," continued Mr. Lemieux. "Of old Japan I will not speak. We all know that it was a great country, practically closed to the outside world with the exception of China and Korea. The Japanese today will admit that what they are, and what they have obtained they owe to China and Korea."

Mr. Lemieux went on to speak of there being no desire on the part of Japan to annex Korea, and as a matter of fact, the future Emperor of Korea was now being educated under the guidance and care of the Emperor of Japan. There were relations between Korea and Japan so strong that the former was practically made a Japanese province.

"If," said Mr. Lemieux, "you wish to study the history of modern Japan and to understand the sudden rise of that wonderful people, you must bear in mind three dates. The first was in 1853 when Commodore Peary of the United States navy landed, which resulted in the opening of the Japanese ports to foreigners and the conclusion of several treaties of commerce and peace with foreign nations. The second was in 1867 on the occasion of the restoration of the Mikado, or Emperor, which coincided with the framing of the constitution of Japan. The third was in 1894 when Japan rose from an antique state to a country among the civilized nations, to be called upon at no distant date to be one of the great rulers of the world."

The First Treaty

Mr. Lemieux went on to say that the first treaty ever signed by Japan was in 1854, through the instrumentality of a naval officer in the United States navy. Other nations, however, were not slow to follow suit. Great Britain had vast interests in the far east, and had at that time a great diplomat to represent her there, who had been governor-general of Canada, Lord Elgin. Thus it was that Lord Elgin signed the first treaty with the Mikado in 1858.

Between 1867 and 1890 said Mr. Lemieux, there had been a series of changing events in Japan, which had not been seen in any other country in the world. In that short period Japan had completely evolved, and a peaceful revolution had taken place. In 1873 the emperor organized his army by a system of conscription, which was the nucleus of that great national army, which admittedly today was

the greatest in the world. It was then that officers were sent from England, France and Germany for instruction purposes, but the tables were turned today.

As an instance of progressive Japan, Mr. Lemieux mentioned that newspapers were sold in Tokyo and Yokohama with the same avidity as characterized New York as distinct from Ottawa, and Montreal where the sale was more leisurely.

Mr. Lemieux referred to the fact that religious toleration and the teaching of Christianity was permitted in 1872, and that there were now expert jurists in civil, criminal and commercial laws. Today the courts of Japan were as modern and civilized as any in the world, and there was probably more decorum than in some other courts he could mention. A currency system had also been established on a sound basis, a supreme court of judicature inaugurated, and even a senate had been thought to be a good thing for Japan.

He Met It

It was also in the memorable year of 1875 that the first assembly of provincial governors was called as preliminary to the establishment of a system of representative government. It was fortunate that the emperor of Japan had around him men of eminence and genius, among them being Marquis Ito, "the grand old man of Japan," whom it was Mr. Lemieux's great privilege to meet during his short stay. The constitution was framed, and Japan was raised from an Oriental state to that of a formidable unit in the comity of nations. That constitution was the only one in the history of the world voluntarily given by a sovereign to his subjects without a revolution. The best also that was in the Japanese constitution had been borrowed from the Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, and the great underlying principles of our British constitution.

Japan then set to work to revise her treaties in 1894, said Mr. Lemieux, which were one sided, and the first nation in the world that stretched out the hand of fellowship and friendship was Great Britain, our mother country (applause). England signed the treaty in 1894, "and that," remarked Mr. Lemieux, "is our treaty, a treaty between Canada and Japan. Seventeen or eighteen other nations followed suit, for what was good for Great Britain, was good for the rest of the world. The treaty signed between Canada and Japan last year, was but a duplex of that of 1894. We should never lose sight of the interests of our mother country in the Pacific ocean, and we should be loth to accept any suggestions for breaking the ties between the best and strongest allies of the British empire in those distant waters."

Canadian Diplomats

Mr. Lemieux proceeded to speak of the diplomacy in Japanese matters of Lord Elgin and Lord Lansdowne, both ex-governors of Canada, for, he said with a merry twinkle, the diplomats of England must come to school in Canada. In 1902 Lord Lansdowne, for the first time in the history of modern England, broke away from the splendid isolation of Great Britain, and concluded a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with Japan. What was the meaning of that treaty? It was for the first time, a complete recognition of Japan as a great world power. It was the natural outcome of community of interests in the far east. It included the two greatest naval powers of the Orient, and the Occident, and it was a combination too of the two greatest military powers of the day. It was a guarantee of peace in the Orient, and of just tolerance with China and Korea on the part of Russia.

By departing from her usual policy, continued Mr. Lemieux, Great Britain clearly indicated to the world, and to Canada, that the situation in the far east was a most delicate one. The alliance also proved that Japan was a great power since she had become the political partner of that immense empire which stretches in all directions and encircles the globe. The alliance also emphasized the great responsibilities on Japan, not only along naval, military, political and commercial lines, but also in social, moral and religious affairs, and in that alliance the United States was a silent partner. That alliance did in fact mean an alliance with Great Britain, an alliance with Japan, the United States and Canada, in all matters connected with the Pacific ocean.

The alliance too, added Mr. Lemieux, whilst it imposed certain responsibilities on Japan, guaranteed for the future the open door not only in trade and commerce, but also the free preaching of the gospel throughout the Orient. Japan today enjoyed rights unknown in Russia. She had social freedom, political privileges, representative institutions, local self-government freedom of assembly and the press, and religious liberty. Japan indeed was far advanced of Russia all round, and in many respects abreast of some other European countries in civilization, and as Japan holds the key of the far east, she was the natural ally of every true British subject in the world. (Loud applause.)

The chairman tendered to Hon. Mr. Lemieux the best thanks of the Canadian Club for his interesting and instructive address.

"I was a celebrated pianist and a great success with the public," confided the sad-eyed man to his companion, "but I had a misfortune which threw me out of favor with my audiences and cut off my revenue as a performer!" "What was your misfortune?" asked his friend.

"My hair fell out,"—Bohemian

CANADA'S GREAT RESOURCES

"Canada's Fertile North Lands," was the subject of Mr. R. E. Young's address before the Canadian Club last night, says the Toronto Mail and Empire of recent date. The territory to which he referred included that section of country lying north of Edmonton and extending as far as Fort Simpson, a district that has as yet been practically untouched by the settler. To illustrate his lecture, Mr. Young had a map showing the territory that has already been surveyed and settled, and that which, in his mind, is yet to be one of the most resourceful sections of the whole Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Young, who is a Dominion land surveyor and superintendent of railways and swamp lands, has spent a number of years in the western country and has at his disposal abundance of information. He was very enthusiastic in his address on the possibilities of Western Canada. On the map which he produced was a large colored area, including twenty million acres of land which had been settled through the inducement of the free homestead policy. This large area of land having already been surveyed and partly settled, the speaker thought it was time for Canadians to know something of the district beyond.

While speaking of possibilities, Mr. Young presented some facts in connection with that unsettled portion of Canada that were almost incredible to the audience. Before mentioning them, however, he noted that in the neighborhood of Saskatoon on 375 acres of land the net profit for the year to the owner was \$14.33 to the acre, which fact should kill the erroneous impression that latitude governed climate in that country. He instanced the growth of potatoes, onions and other vegetables at Fort Good Hope, which lies just 14 miles outside the Arctic Circle. At Fort Simpson, 575 miles north of Edmonton, the wheat grown had yielded 62 pounds to the bushel. To show that it was reasonable to suppose that section a grain producing country, he referred to the Province of Tobolsk, in Siberia, which in one year produced 62,800,000 bushels of wheat, a district lying in the same latitude. "The low altitude and the long days," he said, "were fixed conditions which made possible the growth of wheat in that northern climate."

Outside of being an agricultural section, Mr. Young noted the other resources which were not only numerous, but abundant. Petroleum had been discovered 175 miles north of Edmonton on the Athabasca river, and for 75 miles along the river were large deposits of bitumen, while on the same river was to be found the largest natural gas well in the world. Near Fort Smith is a veritable mountain of salt, while throughout the whole district has been discovered large areas of coal deposits. The water power was also another wonderful asset to the country. A few facts in regard to the production of fish were given which almost sounded like fish stories, but which were given as authentic reports. In one catch 140,000 white fish were captured at Fort Providence, while 6½ tons of salmon were caught in a bar off the Arctic ocean in two days. There are, said the speaker, sixty-three thousand square miles of water west of Nelson river containing food fish. After presenting all these facts Mr. Young thought it was time Canadians became interested in their country.

On Foreign Policy

THE following letter appears in a recent issue of the London Times:

Sir—Judging by many of the speeches delivered on Monday's motion in the House of Commons, it would seem that the ordinary Radical believes that a skilful and conciliatory foreign policy can enable a nation or empire with vast interests at stake to dispense with the armaments necessary for the effective protection of those interests. The misconception of the whole function and value of foreign policy contained in that belief is so dangerous that it deserves a more direct refutation than it received last night from Ministers or even from the spokesmen of the Opposition.

The essence of the mistake lies in the idea that success or failure in foreign policy depends simply and solely on the ability or incompetence, the tact or the aggressiveness, of the individuals responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs. These are, no doubt, important factors, but there are others even more important and fundamental which our Radical friends neglect. These are, first, the general economic and historical conditions which at any particular time determine the international situation, and, secondly, the strength of the material arguments which foreign policy can bring to bear on that situation. And of those arguments the foremost and the final one is the military strength which diplomacy has at its back. Veiled threats of war, tacit guarantees of neutrality, undisclosed promises of military co-operation—these constitute the simple and primitive foundation on which the complicated and polite structure of diplomacy is built up. And upon the effectiveness of the foundation depends the value of the whole superstructure.

That our international relations are far more satisfactory today than they were ten or a dozen years ago will be readily admitted on all sides. But will any one maintain that this is simply because Lord Lansdowne and Sir Edward Grey have shown themselves more capable and more conciliatory than Lord Rosebery or the late Lord Salisbury? Has not the whole situation changed in their favor? The question is, how did the change come about, and what was the factor by which it was chiefly determined?

The closing years of the last century were a period of exceptional danger and difficulty for the British empire, due not to any aggressiveness of our own statesmen, but mainly to the economic and territorial expansion of other Powers. Between 1895 and 1899 international crises were almost continuous. West Africa, Siam, the Kaiser's telegram, Venezuela, Port Arthur, Fashoda, Samoa—a mere recital of names is sufficient to remind us how disturbed those years were. Our naval supremacy—and this is the key to all the trouble—was contested by the Franco-Russian alliance; our position in Egypt and in South Africa was men-

aced by the armed force of the Khalifa and of the Boer Republics. We faced the naval competition fairly and squarely. For every sovereign put down by the allies we put down our guinea. And we had our reward. The first fruits were the recognition by the United States that, but for the British Navy, Europe could, and would, have intervened against them in the conflict with Spain, a recognition which, for the time being completely altered the American attitude towards us. The decisive test came at the time of Fashoda—that peaceful Trafalgar, as some one once called it—when France and Russia declined to face the issue of their naval policy and tacitly acknowledged that they abandoned the competition. The conquest of the Boer Republics, itself only made possible by our undisputed naval supremacy, cleared another danger from our path. Thenceforward the task of the Foreign Office was easier. Our naval supremacy made our alliance well worth seeking for Japan; and it enabled us to localize a conflict which might well have spread over the whole world.

Had the Governments which were in power from 1889 onwards failed to face the naval competition which then threatened us, we should almost certainly have been plunged, in 1898, if not before, in a devastating war with France and Russia, which would have added hundreds of millions to our debt and left an enduring legacy of bitterness. Incidentally we should probably also have lost South Africa. We saw to it that we were too strong for France and Russia to fight with any reasonable prospect of success. The alternative that remained was to make friends with us—an easy alternative when they realized that we had no desire to misuse our strength for aggressive purposes, and were more than ready to come to reasonable compromises on all questions still at issue. Lord Lansdowne and Sir Edward Grey deserve the highest praise for the services they have rendered to their country and to the cause of international peace. But without the steadfast determination of the country in maintaining the two-Power standard their efforts would have been fruitless.

Foreign policy is simply the normal everyday application of our armaments to the international situation, as war is the abnormal and exceptional application of those armaments. It can often, though not always, obviate the necessity of putting those armaments to the costly test of war. But it can never be a substitute for them. To use a simile from banking, diplomacy is the paper money which saves the inconvenient use of gold in large transactions; the armaments are the gold reserve on whose existence the value of the paper depends. Diplomacy without armed strength behind it is like inconvertible paper—always at a discount, and entirely valueless in a crisis.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

STUDENT.

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