

The Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1912.

FRANCE AND THE BALKAN CRISIS.

An instructive summary of the position of the European Powers in the Balkan crisis, from the pen of M. Gabriel Hanotaux, former Foreign Minister of France, and a well known writer upon European affairs, is quoted by the New York Sun in explanation of the efforts France is making to guard against the development of dangerous international misunderstandings. Writing in La Revue Hebdomadaire M. Hanotaux points out that the European Powers divide easily into two groups in the present crisis. There are Austria and Russia, who stand actually face to face. It is their rivalries in the Balkan Peninsula which makes the attack of the little nations upon Turkey a question of grave moment to the big countries.

There are in addition Germany and Great Britain, up to the present moment conspicuously silent upon Balkan questions, but vitally interested and bound to participate in the later developments. Germany is certain to support Austria, first as an ally and second because all her recent diplomacy has been favorable to Turkey. There remains Great Britain. What does she desire? M. Hanotaux confesses to complete ignorance, and ventures to doubt if British statesmen have themselves decided.

France, unlike the other four Powers, has only indirect interests in the Balkan. Her sympathies are naturally with Greece, because French public feeling from the beginning has been with the modern Hellenes in all their various struggles for liberty. Then the very character of the Balkan struggle is such as to make the cause of the opponents of the Turks popular among the French.

Yet sentimental considerations cannot blind the eyes of a practical people to facts. In Turkey and the Balkan States France has large financial investments. These will be gravely affected by any general war long protracted and attended by large destruction of property. In Russia her investments are colossal, and a clash between Austria and Russia, if no other nations were involved, would imperil these.

But there is a far larger question involved from the French point of view. The creation of the Triple Entente in recent years has at last supplied a counterpoise to the Triple Alliance and restored the balance of power in Europe. But in the latest crisis England and Russia, France's two partners, are visibly drifting apart. How, even obscure British policy may be, it is clear that at the moment it preserves a perfect impartiality, it does not incline toward the Turk and against Russian interests and the ambition of the Balkan States. For France, then, the preservation of European peace and of the Triple Entente are locked up together.

Finally, if Russia and Austria actually come to blows German support of Austria would infallibly bring France in on the Russian side. Thus Parisian journals are eagerly clamoring now to know if the Franco-Russian alliance binds France in terms to support Russia in a Balkan war. Yet to this inquiry the most conservative French journals promptly answer that France must follow Russia, else the alliance falls and France reverts to the old days of isolation after Sedan. It is this state of facts that explains the efforts of French diplomacy to provide an opportunity for mutual agreement between the great nations. Without any territorial ambition in the Near East, France has the advantage of being able to act without arousing suspicion of any hidden or selfish purpose.

THE PRICE OF AMERICAN ANTHRACITE COAL.

In view of the present high price of American anthracite coal general interest will attach to a conference which is to be held between the Merchants Association's special committee on coal supply in New York and a committee of coal producers. New York journals are reporting that the present coal situation has induced Mr. Henry Dalley, chairman of the committee on coal supply, to write to Mr. W. J. Richards, vice-president of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, urging that it is time for a conference. Inasmuch as the larger operators agreed to meet the committee early in the summer it is thought probable that they will agree.

The Merchants Association committee, it appears, was appointed last June to solve the problem of high coal. The committee had arranged dates for a conference when the Interstate Commerce Commission began an investigation into coal conditions, and the United States Congress directed the Department of Commerce and Labor to make a similar investigation. The committee thereupon decided to hold off its investigation until after the official inquiries should have been terminated. Because of many complaints the Merchants Association has received it is now decided to go ahead with the investigation, which only awaits an answer from Mr. Richards.

In his letter Mr. Dalley calls attention to the situation which prevails in New York. It is applicable to other localities including St. John. He says in part:

"Recently the association has received several letters from consumers complaining of inability to get coal at the normal prices based on the official wholesale prices fixed by the producing companies. It has also been said in the press that retail dealers are unable to get their usual supply of coal, with the intimation that from the market the available supply and that a part of the available supply is turned over to the control of the speculative interests so that a premium may be realized. Under these circumstances do you not think it desirable that a public statement, showing the facts of the situation, should be made by the producing companies? We suggest that a conference for the purpose of giving adequate assurances on the subject is desirable."

Retail dealers in New York are reported as claiming that the present high prices are due to the anthracite suspension in April and May. The operators have not raised their prices above schedule, but are not able to deliver all that the retail dealers want. The retailers have pressed for deliveries, buy in the open market and pay a high premium for the coal. The Standard received a confirmation of this view a few days ago from a local coal merchant in a large way of business. He stated that when he went to New York recently to buy coal it was quoted on the schedule at \$5.25 a ton. When he came down to business there was no coal to be had at that figure or near it. The Standard's informant said that \$4.15 and \$7 a long ton were the lowest prices at which coal was procurable. He claimed, and with some justification, that with \$1.75 or more added for freight and cartage and with coal selling here at \$9 a short ton to the consumer, there was but a very small margin of profit left for the coal merchant.

THE VENUS OF MILO.

A report comes from Paris of some interest to lovers of art in that it purports to decide the vexed question as to what was the position of the now vanished arms of the Venus of Milo. This problem has been periodically discussed, and many times settled, since 1820, when the statue of the goddess was found. It is now said to be "set at rest for ever" through the publication for the first time by M. Jean Alcard, the French academician and well-known man of letters, of some remarkable manuscripts in his possession.

According to the evidence in these documents, "which is regarded as unimpeachable," the statue of the Venus Victrix which is now in the Louvre was intact when it was found. Both arms were in place. The right arm descended a little below the hips, where it held up the draperies, while the left arm was raised above the head and grasped in the hand a small sphere, "which was probably an apple."

M. Alcard's documents show that the French naval officers who were the first Europeans to see the statue, and who were authorized by their Government to buy it, obtained the prize only at the cost of a sharp scrimmage with the crew of a Turkish brig. In the struggle, in which fifty sailors took part on each side, the goddess, and her arms were broken in pieces. M. Alcard's documents include a memoir by M. Dumont d'Urville, a manuscript by Lieutenant Matterer, who accompanied d'Urville on the expedition to Melos, and a statement by M. Jules Ferry, formerly ambassador to Greece.

M. d'Urville, who obtained the statue for the French Government, was afterwards noted as a Polar explorer. He states positively that when he first saw the statue Venus had her arms in the position described, adding that they were afterwards mutilated and detached from the body. The manuscript by Lieutenant Matterer contains the statement: "When I saw the statue in the hut of Jorgos Bottonis, in whose field it was found, the left arm was attached to the bust, and held an apple over the head."

To this evidence is added the statement of M. Jules Ferry, who when ambassador to Greece, visited Melos with the purpose of gathering any traditions as to the discovery or seizure of the statue. M. Ferry found that the popular account of these incidents was clear on the point that the mutilation of the Venus was caused by the conflict of the French and Turkish sailors. He was also able to find two sons of Bottonis, the original discoverer, who stated that when the statue was found it stood on a pedestal, with the left arm raised and holding an apple in the hand. The publication of these documents has naturally been received with great interest in the French capital.

A "SIGNIFICANT" VICTORY.

In the result of the bye-election at Richelieu last week, Liberal organs throughout the country have been endeavoring to find some consolation. The Telegraph, for instance, considers the re-election of Mr. Cardin "a very significant Liberal victory" and avers that it is evident Quebec "is not to be stamped by the Borden forces and their allies." The returns, however, are in evidence for anyone to read and they leave no doubt that in Quebec the Laurier influence is declining.

The Liberal majority was reduced from 734 to 201, and ground was lost in nearly every parish. In St. Robert the Liberal majority fell away from 93 to 67, in St. Louis from 85 to 48, in St. Joseph from 184 to 43. In St. Victoire, on the other hand, the Conservative majority of 127 at the last general election, was increased to 148; in St. Ange the Conservative majority was increased from 9 to 52, and in St. Rock, a Liberal majority of 5 was converted into a Conservative majority of 5.

As far as the campaign was concerned the Liberals had every advantage. No Cabinet Ministers took any part in the fight. Mr. Morgan, running as a Government candidate, conducted his own campaign. On the Liberal side Sir Wilfrid Laurier threw all his weight and influence into the constituency, paying it a special visit, accompanied by several of his former colleagues, and making a special appeal to the voters. Excursion trains were run from adjoining constituencies in an effort to create enthusiasm. Notwithstanding all these inducements the result clearly showed that Liberalism in Richelieu is on the decline and it is fair to assume that it is on the decline in other constituencies. Under all the circumstances Mr. Cardin's return in Richelieu by a majority reduced by more than a hundred per cent. is "a very significant Liberal victory" in that it points clearly to a Conservative victory in the next general election.

Current Comment

The Sailing of the Greeks.

(Winnipeg Telegram.)

"It is a glorious thing to die for one's country." That is a very ancient sentiment, but it is held in as high honor today as in any time in the past. We never know how much of true valor, of generous ardor, of beautiful unselfishness dwells in the human heart until the testing time arrives. There is as high a patriotism and as true a capacity for self-sacrifice in the heart of man today as at any period in the world's history. The sailing of the Western Greeks for the war is a striking example of this fact.

Hard on Tag Days.

(New York Times.)

Every one of these tag days, regardless of the excellence of the cause which it is designed to promote, degrades and demoralizes all who have anything to do with it. They are utterly detestable from every point of view, economic, as well as moral, and they are permitted only in towns where the municipal officials are either too stupid to know their duty or too vicious to perform it.

Self Control.

(Boston Transcript.)

It is urged by a friend of working girls that laws be passed to prevent them from being tempted by goods on the installment plan, but how much wholesaler for the girls to teach them the lesson of self-deliverance from temptation, a lesson that most of us need. Not more laws imposed from without, but a sounder self-control from within, is the crying need of this time, as it has been of all times.

Church Supervision.

(Regina Standard.)

Calgary ministers are quietly investigating the qualifications of the various candidates for municipal honors there, and will take active part in the civic campaign. They believe their action right and proper, and many there will be to agree with them.

The Unsheathed Weapon.

(New York Herald.)

Germany's unsheathed weapon today is the one thing that can prevent the general conflagration that Europe fears. Berlin has undoubtedly become for the time being the political centre of Europe.

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M'CURDY & CO'S FINANCIAL LETTER

Montreal, Oct. 23.—The unsettled conditions in the outside markets had their effect again on the local market on the resumption of business after the holiday. Right at the opening of the local market there seemed to be a fair amount of selling orders throughout the room and during the first half hour stocks had to be offered down to find purchasers. After the early selling the market held fairly well for a while, but later in the day as the New York market went off, the selling of the local market was renewed and local prices generally were about the lowest towards the close of the afternoon. Most of the declines on the local market, however, were effected on a small volume of transactions, a development which indicated that on any improvement elsewhere the local market might easily do better.

C. P. R. which had been most heavily sold for foreign account was the weak issue of the whole list, opening around 260 and selling as low as 25 1/2. Towards the close it was around 267 1/2 with the undertone inclined to the weak side.

The most active issues were the ones most seriously affected on the decline. Montreal Power, after opening at 220 was down to 22 1/2, closing at 22 1/2.

Domination Textile, after opening at 78 was down to 78 1/2, closing at 78 1/2.

Among the bank stocks Commerce was holding fairly well at 60, in the early trading, declined to 58.

Domination Iron bonds, however, were firmer in the early trading, gaining half a point from 95 to 95 1/2.

Among the bank stocks Commerce was slightly firmer at 222, while Bank of Montreal gained at 248.

The United Department, Brazilian Traction was affected by the selling from the continent, going off to 88, but little attention was paid to other untraded issues.

In the condition of weakness that the market was in, little attention was paid to news developments.

During the day the announcement was made that the directors of the R. and O. Company would shortly obtain authority to issue up \$8,000,000 of bonds with the intention of issuing about \$6,000,000 of the bonds with which it would retire all old issues of the R. and O. Company and the subsidiary concerns now included in the merger.

Montreal Tramways is also preparing for an important plan which it will lay before the Quebec legislature with a view of increasing its powers both in the city and on the Island of Montreal.

So far the company has not been able to reach any decision with the city council regarding extension of lines on the streets, and on this account it is stated that it will ask the legislature for a blanket franchise to cover the whole Island.

Twin City Rapid Transit earnings for the third week of October amounted to \$154,792, an increase of \$7,737 or at the rate of 5.35 per cent.

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This morning at ten o'clock the tickets for the spectacular production of Alice in Wonderland, will be on sale at the Opera House box office.

All persons holding tickets for entertainment may have this early opportunity of marking off the children in the extravaganza, it is probable that the plans will be much marked up throughout the week.

More stage rehearsing was done the Nickel theatre yesterday afternoon after five o'clock, and Miss Maud, the director, is perfectly satisfied that the children are going to make a most artistic success of production. In a few days, an orchestral rehearsal will be held in the House.

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