

Some American papers are boasting about American boots and shoes and American steel and iron having been sold in England lately, and the same fact has disturbed a number of English manufacturers. Still there are very few of the latter—a number not worth mentioning, in fact—who think for a moment of asking “protection.” The more sage among them quite realize that competition from the United States will grow more dangerous as the United States approaches free trade in its fiscal system. They know that the people in the republic have in the past deliberately handicapped manufacturers by their high tariff policy, which has materially increased the cost of production. The tendency in the States now is to cheapen this cost, and of course the more it is lessened the more dangerous will the competition of American manufacturers become. American artizans are now working for smaller wages than their English brethren, and the active American shrewdness is so applied as to get more work out of each man. An English iron trade journal in speaking of the competition in iron and steel says that in wire-making, for instance, “the American workman will generally look after two blocks, while the Englishman only attends to one.” In connection with the boot and shoe business another journal remarks: “It is brought out that in the American factories the most effective machinery is used, and that the workmen have no disagreement with their employers on this account. In Leicester and Nottingham towns, on the contrary, the prejudice against labor-saving machinery continues, and hand work is still practiced to a much greater extent than in the United States.” There are two plain conclusions to be drawn from the situation. One is that Britain’s only plan of meeting competition is to further develop the free trade idea of lessening the cost of production, in which development let workmen will have to assist. The other is that if the United States chooses to recant its protectionist folly and adopt the free trade system it will press Great Britain hard in supplying manufactured goods to the outside world.

The Globe: Mr. Laurier and his colleagues do not profess to have a panacea for all the ills of the country. To carry the medical metaphor further, they are the honest physicians, who say that the patient has already been dosed and bled beyond her strength, and that recovery will depend upon nature’s remedy, fresh air, good food and exercise. When Mr. Laurier says that Canada ought to be made a cheap country to live in, he is saying simply that Canada must accept the conditions and tendencies of the age and not try to maintain a little world of her own. And the prime economic phenomenon of the time is an increase in the powers of production resulting in abundance, or what short-sighted people contemptuously call cheapness. The speech from the throne admits that our efforts to fight against that mighty force are failing. The decline in revenue is accounted for by “low prices and recent reductions in and removal of taxation.” However little reduction of taxation had to do with the matter, there is no doubt about the low prices. Staples of many kinds are growing cheaper; we feel the reduction to the fullest extent in what we have to sell, and even the tariff cannot prevent our getting some benefit of the world-wide cheapening of that which we have to buy.

The Province on Saturday said: “A controversy has been raging lately, between the Colonist on one side and nobody on the other, as to whether Mr. Bostock is in accord with the platform of the Liberal party and Mr. Laurier’s declaration of its policy. Now that our contemporary has lashed itself into a “fine rolling frenzy” by two weeks’ rambling at this interesting topic, we promise to calm it by simply announcing that Mr. Bostock adopts, in its entirety, the Liberal platform and endorses Mr. Laurier’s views on the trade policy. Is this plain enough?” It seems quite plain enough for everybody but the Colonist.

Winnipeg Free Press: Premier Bowell says the Ottawa government, in case of the remedial order being returned, will be its duty without fear of result. If Clark Wallace does what he considers his duty in the school difficulty, and Mr. Olmsted sets about his particular duty on the same matter, the direction government action may take will be a puzzle. Meanwhile, no one will fear the result.

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THE VICTORIA WEEKLY TIMES, FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1895.
AT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL
The Opening of the Parliamentary Session Wakens Ottawa From Sleep.

Mr. Laurier Severely Castigates the Government in His First Speech.

From Our Own Correspondent.
Ottawa, April 21.—Parliament opened on Thursday with the usual pomp and splendor which Lord Aberdeen wishes to surround everything of that kind which he is called upon to do. There were a few additional frills thrown into the ceremony this year, which were intended a year ago, but which had to be dispensed with then because of the death of Lord Tweedmouth, the Countess of Aberdeen’s father. The weather, as I indicated in my telegraphic dispatch of the proceedings, was delightful and the bright sunshine threw a halo of glory all over the proceedings from the time that the bright helmeted dragons left Rideau hall with the vice-regal carriage until the gun was fired by the saluting party on Nepean Point.

In the common the vacant desks of the late Sir John Thompson and the late Felix Geoffrion were literally crowded with large floral wreaths, placed there by their old parliamentary colleagues. There was the usual routine business on the opening day.

On Friday the house settled down to business with a will, and six good speeches were delivered on the address before the house adjourned. The debate will last for a few days.

Hon. Wilfrid Laurier made a splendid speech despite the fact that he has not been in really good health for some time past. He, however, is rapidly recovering. On the question of the government not summoning parliament sooner, the Liberal leader said: “Why, Sir, it is well known, it is a matter of public notoriety, that if parliament was not called at the proper season, at the usual season, at the season at which it should have been called, and at the date often promised, it was not a session and another in favor of dissolution, both afraid to meet parliament or the people. But at last the day came when they had to make up their minds to do something, when they had to face the issue and have a mind of their own, when they could no longer postpone and put off a delay, and had to take some action, the action in favor of dissolution which had almost triumphed, was upset, and the government decided in favor of holding a session. I must pay this compliment to them, that from their point of view they were wise in their decision. It was true that during the session there might be some very bitter pills to swallow, it was true that during a session the finance minister would have to face that spectre, that monster, an ugly defect, that spectre which seemed last year lurking in the distance, but which the hon. gentleman promised to ward off by economy and retrenchment, and the hon. gentleman could depend, at all events, on the majority, which was there, being equal to the occasion and prepared to swallow the pill, bitter though it might be, and the majority might perhaps hang the deficit sitting in their midst, though it is a new friend to them, as the non-member for Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) said a moment ago; but finding a deficit in their ranks they might come to the conclusion that it was not so bad after all and was not so formidable as it appeared during the administration of public affairs by hon. gentlemen opposite, and that perhaps indeed it possessed some redeeming features. So the government decided in favor of holding a session whilst, if they had dissolved the house and gone to the country, their majority would have disappeared, would have vanished under the warm rays of the April sun. We have had evidence of it. The wisdom of their course was fully vindicated on the 17th of April, just two days ago. There were four elections on that day. As to one I shall not speak, because the hon. member for East Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) said a moment ago, the Liberal party offered no fight in Halton. It was a family quarrel which they agreed to settle amongst themselves. But in the other three constituencies I claim a victory for the Liberal party. I claim a Liberal victory for Vercheres, and though there is not much to be proud of there because it is an old Rouge country, and Rouge is the standard there; but I also claim a Liberal victory in Quebec West, an old Conservative constituency. My hon. friend from East Simcoe said a moment ago that the candidates were two Tories. To some extent it is true; but there were Tories and Tories. On the one side there was Mr. Dobell, whose record I am sure is above suspicion; and on the other side there is our old friend McGreevy, who is well known in this house. I will quote to the hon. gentleman what was the programme of Mr. Dobell. He said: ‘And if you send me to parliament as your representative I shall not allow party spirit to warp my judgment, and shall record my vote upon all questions as in my belief the best interests of the country demand.’ I shall use my best endeavors, if elected, to have measures carried which will benefit the Dominion, increase its foreign trade.’ What a departure from sound principles is that. Remove obstacles to closer and freer trade with our sister

colonies and the mother country, and I shall not cease to advocate reciprocal trade, on fair and just terms with our great neighbor, the United States.’ I do not observe much cheering on the part of the hon. gentlemen opposite in regard to that opinion. Now let me take the City of Quebec upon paragraphs of Mr. Dobell’s address: ‘Mr. Dobell’s platform embraces reciprocity with the United States, freer intercolonial trade, and closer foreign trade relations, superinduced by more liberal terms than we now possess. Of course, this is a programme to which Mr. Laurier could interpose no objection, since he has opinions of a similar nature himself. Give me such Tories every day, and have them elected everywhere.’ Mr. McGreevy, we take it, has not lost faith in the National Policy, which he helped to create. Well, Sir, it is a matter of record that the Liberal party unanimously supported the candidature of Mr. Dobell. It is equally a matter of record that the Conservative party from the leaders down supported the candidature of Mr. McGreevy, and I suppose at this time Mr. McGreevy’s health is sufficiently restored to have allowed him to take his place among the Conservative members of this house. But, Sir, the government decided in favor of holding a session. They were wise. But it was an effort to make such a decision. Why, it was such an effort that it almost broke the government. We have it on good authority, we are not in the secrets of the gods, but we know ever since there has been, at all events, among them, from one I take to be a god of war, that he would no longer soar Olympian heights, but he was determined to come down to the level of frail, ordinary, mortal flesh. For three days the voice ministerial would was the type of expectation. ‘Will he return or will he remain out?’ That was the anxious question which every ministerialist harbored in his breast. But as good fate would have it, peace was restored. The wandering one returned to the fold, and ever since there has been, at all events, peace on the surface, and the government seems to me to be very much like one of those sulphur springs whose waters are calm and quiet on the surface, but whose muddy bottom is ever boiling with sulphuric gases.”

The trade question was dealt with by the Liberal leader in an able manner. He showed with telling effect that the National Policy had failed in all the promises made for it, and declared that the great thing for Canada was to make it a cheap country to live in. “Sir, the hon. gentleman told us that it is not a grave charge at all, not a thing that is much worthy of the consideration of an important body like us, if parliament is summoned together nearly three months after its proper time. To the hon. gentleman’s mind it is of very little consequence whether the 200 other gentlemen facing the great and serious issue are put to grave and serious inconvenience by the incompetence of himself and his colleagues; it is of very little consequence in the hon. gentleman’s mind whether the whole mercantile community of Canada is put to grave inconvenience by reason of this extreme delay in meeting parliament; it is of very little consequence in the hon. gentleman’s mind, I suppose, whether the whole public service of Canada is gravely disorganized by reason of the extreme delay in summoning parliament. Now, Sir, the idle pretence that there is no real difficulty, as to the idle pretence that these gentlemen if they were really possessed of the business capacity they claim, could not have met parliament at the proper time let me call the attention of the house to the way in which the public business was administered at a time when there was genuine business men in charge of the government of this country. In the year 1875, parliament met on the 4th of February; in 1876, parliament met on the 10th of February; in 1877, parliament met on the 5th of February; in 1878, parliament met on the

11th of February. Sir, there are four successive years. We had important questions to deal with, we had deficits to face, we had a world-wide depression, a far greater depression than exists today, to contend with; but, Sir, we never hesitated to meet parliament, we never hesitated to meet the hon. gentleman’s predecessors, we never hesitated to explain clearly what our policy was, we never hesitated to stand or fall by the course which we, in our conscience believed, and which the history of Canada has ever since conclusively proved, was the policy which alone Canada could look to for safety and salvation, if Canada is ever to become worthy of the resources which Providence has placed at our disposal. Sir, the hon. gentleman is good enough to tell us that the lamented death of Sir John Thompson was a reasonable ground why parliament should not be summoned together. Well, Sir, was there any change of policy caused by the death of the lamented Sir John Thompson? Did not these gentlemen tell us on all occasions that their policy is the same as his? Was there any great alteration in the personnel of the cabinet? Was there any great alteration in the offices held by these hon. gentlemen? Not, at any rate, so far as I am aware.” SLABTOWN.

THE EUROPEAN CHESS BOARD
The Machinations of Russia May Create Fresh Difficulties in the East.

Balfour Bows to “Brum” and “Joe” May be Chancellor of the Exchequer.

London, April 27.—The final decision of the British government to refrain from meddling with the Eastern question as regards China and Japan has been taken on the advice, strongly put, of the British diplomats in Peking and Tokio. It is likely that the condition of the treaty of peace when seen with unprejudiced eyes will show that Japan has won a complete victory, not only by force of arms but in the field of diplomacy. The reports made after the Chinese New Year indicated that Japan was determined to dictate in Peking terms far more rigorous than those exacted at Shimoda.

Lord Kimberley, secretary of foreign affairs, has received assurances from the British representative at Tokio that the present Japanese ministry are experiencing their last day of existence as a composite body, and the British agent expresses his belief that the conditions of the treaty of peace, as already published, are incapable of reduction in respect to their exactions and that the minimum of the Japanese claims is greater than before the war, when, as a matter of fact, an accession of territory was the chief aim of the Mikado’s government. It is represented by the British agent at Tokio that Count Ito, president of the Japanese council of ministers, will be unable to govern much longer, owing to the tactics of the opposition in the Diet in rejecting war measures and refusing to vote supplies, virtually bringing the legislative machinery to a standstill. Although the complete success of the war has greatly subdued this spirit, there is no doubt that the Ito party will be overthrown if they accede to the demands of Russia.

Lord Kimberley and his colleagues take the same view of the situation as that which Viscount Curzon, M. P., outlined on the eve of the war, that if the Ito ministry should fall it would be a genuine calamity not only to Japan but to the European powers. The British government ascribe the early and successful close of the war to his tact and capacity in spite of the clamor of the vast majority of the people that Japanese troops shall occupy Peking. In view of this feeling the British and other European representatives in China and Japan have advised that any proposal that Japan surrender any portion of the ceded territory at the bidding of the European powers would be likely to jeopardize the Japanese constitution and undo the greater part of the progressive work which has been done in Japan within the last quarter of a century.

A dispatch from Berlin announces that Germany’s decision to join Russia and France in the protest against the Shimoda treaty surprised and displeased the majority of the German politicians. It was such a sudden departure from the Empire’s policy of non-intervention, that at first the report was discredited. When the course of events was made known by the semi-official dailies, the general impression was that Germany had plunged considerably into a dangerous policy. Many persons expressed doubt that the cautious and experienced Hohenlohe had decided to move. In the last three days the belief has grown that the Kaiser planned and directed the new move personally, so as to identify himself with

Russia’s foreign policy and to show the court of St. Petersburg his approval of the Czar’s managing international politics to his own taste. He probably aims also to demonstrate to the Czar how much better it is to have a faithful ally like Germany instead of a selfish one like England, which is likely at any time to slip away and look after her own interest without stopping to assist others who are less sagacious. This explanation of the Emperor’s conduct is supported by the persons most intimately acquainted with the Czar’s peculiarities.


Ever since his tour through China and Japan, Nicholas II has regarded himself as an expert judge of Oriental politics. Japan’s swift progress has impressed him and perhaps frightened him a little. He has had work on the trans-Siberian railway pushed forward with all possible speed with a view of using it for the transportation of troops to eastern Asia. His opinion is that the war ought to be postponed, if possible, until the railway should be ready for all the uses of a strategic railway, and thus enable Russia to play the arbiter of affairs in the Yellow sea.

The Frankfurter Zeitung’s St. Petersburg correspondent says that Prince Lobanoff, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, has assured several diplomats that he is convinced that the united action of France, Germany and Russia in regard to the China-Japan treaty will not cause any serious complications. The correspondent asserts that M. Hanotaux, French minister of Foreign Affairs, tried to exclude Germany from the alliance, and only yielded to Russia’s insistence that the united action of the three governments be confined to certain limits. The feeling in St. Petersburg according to the correspondent is that the danger of an armed conflict is very remote. A cable from Yokohama states that the demand made by Russia, France and Germany that Japan refrain from annexing the Leetong peninsula is expected to try the self-restraint of the Japanese very severely. The government will find it difficult, if not impossible, to comply without great risk of internal trouble. The present situation is viewed with much apprehension, but at the same time it is believed that the government will be constrained to do its utmost to meet the European views.

A dispatch from Peking says that it is the cession of Southern Manchuria, as provided for in the treaty of peace, that is chiefly opposed in the Chinese capital. The agreement made to this end by Li Hung Chang grieves the Emperor, because the province of Manchuria is the ancestral portion of the empire. There is less opposition regarding the cession of the island of Formosa, which is a new province. The other articles of the treaty are regarded as bearable. Several governors and some of the generals opposed submission to the public proclamation that has been made.

Washington, April 27.—Yang Yu, the Chinese minister, called upon Secretary Gresham at half-past three o’clock to-day and half an hour later, within a few moments after Yang Yu departed, the Japanese minister, who came by appointment, was closeted with the Secretary. Both visits related to the clauses in the treaty of peace relating to the occupation by Japan of the Regent’s Sword promontory and the Korean bay coast from Port Arthur to the Yalu river, to which Russia has so strenuously objected. It is understood that Russia is endeavoring to induce China to resist the demand, which was agreed to by Li Hung Chang. The United States have declined to be drawn into the controversy to such an extent as to take sides, but will continue its good offices, as in the past, to secure peace between China and Japan.

London, April 27.—The English press devotes column upon column of space in comment upon the speech of Mr. Balfour at the annual assembly of the Primrose League yesterday. The utterances of the Conservative leader are regarded in the light of a great victory, inasmuch as the rupture between the Tories and Unionists which was foreshadowed in last week’s dispatches would undoubtedly have occurred if Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour had not promised to go to the country with a programme embodying the social reforms which Mr. Chamberlain advocates. With the personal followers of Mr. Chamberlain, together with the support of the Moderate Liberals and Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour, the meaning is that he (Mr. Chamberlain) will be the next chancellor of the exchequer, and that the Duke of Devonshire will also be in the Cabinet. Many expect to see Mr. Chamberlain’s scheme of Irish local government, which Mr. Gladstone overruled in 1885, reproduced with alterations made in accordance with Mr. Balfour’s experience in Ireland during his term as Secretary of the Treasury and versaries of Mr. Chamberlain, however, are not subdued. The Standard, in its comments on Balfour’s speech, describes as quite unnecessary the warmth with which he dwelt upon the cemented political friendship between himself and the Unionist leader, and doubts that the sentiments which the Conservative leader expressed were those of a majority of the party.


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