

THE NAVY THEN AND NOW

By H. F. GADSBY.

The caucus cocked its eye at the proposed navy and said, "not today." Admiral Jellicoe had presented a most accommodating programme, all sorts of combinations from twenty-five millions down to five, a sort of club breakfast bill of fare, but Canada had no appetite. No matter how cheap or nourishing, the meal did not tempt because her belly is full of the national debt and she cannot relish any more luxuries d'oeuvres until that lump is digested. The opposition hold no caucus on it, but there is every reason to believe that they heartily agree that a navy is something that can be put off until the day after tomorrow. They are on record for a plibiscite when the navy problem comes up again and no doubt almost any government would welcome that solution of the contentious subject. Passing the buck to the people at large has a nobler air than passing the buck to the various provincial governments. We may take it for granted, I think, that there will be a referendum on the Canadian navy, however modest the proposal. But not just now, brothers—not just now—plenty of time when we get our debts settled.

Rumor has it that Premier Borden is the only person in favor of an immediate navy. He favors it largely because the others don't and he would like to have a navy as a monument to his career. Critics say that Premier Borden has caught the navy habit from jogging around with Admiral Jellicoe and that he would dearly love a warship of our own to go yachting in.

Sir Wilfrid Triumphs.

It is admitted on all sides that Admiral Jellicoe made an excellent report and stressed if anything the idea of a home-made, home-controlled Canadian navy—the navy in short which Sir Wilfrid Laurier advocated and which Premier Borden did also until victory at the polls put him on top—and he went in for three dreadnoughts just to do something different. The chances are that when we get a navy it will be a Canadian navy of the Laurier type, but that will not be for some years yet. Just now, having taken over a couple of railways we are more interested in box cars than ever.

The prairie west is strong on box cars too and as we do everything now for the prairie west, where those fierce free trade farmers come from, the navy will have to wait over. Common sense suggests that we pay for the railways before we start paying for a navy.

Incidentally, the wait-a-bit policy of the government caucus rather hints that the British Empire has cost us a lot of money lately and that we don't want to buy any more war.

BAD COLD LEFT HIM WITH BRONCHITIS

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Mr. R. P. Sundblad, Francis, Sask., writes:—"I had a very bad cold which left me with bronchitis. I tried several cough remedies and oils of all kinds, but they all failed. At last I got Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup and after using two bottles I have never had a sign of bronchitis since. I therefore can honestly recommend it for coughs and colds."

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goods until we pay the bill for that last spasm. Perhaps it is another indication of that nationhood which Mrs. Rowell says we possess, that we know we've had enough of fighting Europe's battles.

Several reasons have been put forward why we should postpone our navy—to see what the United States does, to see how Japan behaves, to see how the League of Nations operates—but the best reason of all is that we need the money for more useful purposes. Even the Toriest newspapers are agreed that a navy is something we can do without until times are a good deal better. What we want in the way of a navy, is not a good navy, but a merchant navy that will carry our export trade at rates which display more bowels of mercy than we can expect from the British shipping trust. These rates are strangling our ocean-born trade right now and Mr. Ballantyne does a good work when he encourages the building of Canadian ships that will make us independent of these extortioners. It is not likely that Mr. Ballantyne's shipbuilding statement will be seriously criticised in view of our recent experience with ocean freights.

What About Sea Lords.

Admiral Jellicoe's report is more Canadian than the Canadians. He suggests a Canadian minister of the navy with a naval board of Canadian experts to advise him—the admiralty and the sea lords all over again. There are only two objections to this scheme—we can't get the right minister of the navy and we can't get the experts. For people who have been obliged to drink so much water lately we know very little about the nautical elements as a medium for floating battleships. Even Mr. Rowell, whose past has largely been on the water, and whose future is likely to continue so, might well hesitate to become first lord of the admiralty. It is a department which is hedged in with seasickness and rough weather.

It is true that Mr. Gilbert has pointed out the quickest way to become "ruler of the King's navy"—which is to stick close to your desk and never go to sea—but that applies only to England. In Canada we have a prejudice in favor of admirals who are good sailors and we can't lay hands on one of that sort in the whole damned country. What we would like as minister of the navy is a bluff old sea-dog like Sir John Fisher, a knocker-off of official hats, but there isn't anybody in sight who resembles him except Sir Sam Hughes, who still has the job of sea lord whose fighting days are over. When all is said and done Sir Sam was a great success as a pusher and there is no reason to doubt that he would be as good an admiral as he ever was a general. As for the present cabinet, I don't see how one member of it who would take the job of sea lord unless Britannia who rules the waves would agree to rule them straight so as to cut out the hippocampus.

The Fire is Quenched.

The decision to let the navy drift, short of the session, which we have a had job putting in its three months. Navy talk would have taken up two, possibly three weeks, with recriminations, tergiversations and equivocations from politicians on both sides of the question, not to mention imprecations and allegations from the patriots of Quebec. The last debate on the navy—the "emergency" navy—dwells in my mind as the hottest piece of life on the raging main that I ever witnessed. The main raged that night all right. Members shook their fists at each other, shouted, cursed. Newspaper men forgot their judicial pose, leaned over the gallery railing and swore. Mr. Speaker could not stem that tide of wrath, so he ran round and round like a chicken that had just lost its head. It was the only time the closure was applied on a vital question and it certainly raised hell. Nobody dreamed that there was such fire in blue water. The sea fairly boiled with the hot language. I did not believe that the navy will ever again raise such a hurricane of passion in the house of commons, but I am willing to stave off the chance of it as long as possible.

And what did it all amount to? Premier Borden got his three battleships through the house of commons, but the senate promptly scuttled them. It was the senate that put the nought in dreadnought.

Wants Itemized Bill.

Ottawa, March 25.—Hon. W. S. Fielding's interest in the League of Nations and Canada's share of the upkeep of that body has not been dulled by the answers to his questions given during the present session. The former Liberal minister has filed a request to be introduced on Thursday, asking for production under an order of the house, of all correspondence and documents relating to the apportionment of the expenses of the league and the payment, in February, of \$64,043.15 as Canada's share of the expenses of the league.

Is Theatrical Censor.

Toronto, March 25.—H. M. Wodson, a newspaperman, was appointed by the police commissioners, chief theatrical censor of Toronto, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of William Banks, senior. The salary will be \$2,000 a year, instead of \$2,250 as formerly.

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CAMELS.

They Were Numerous In America But Became Extinct.

The camel tribe is represented in South America by four species of animals—the llama (commonly used as a beast of burden), the guanaco, the alpaca, and the vicuna. The camels anciently so vastly numerous in North America, and varying in size from that of a cottontail rabbit to the so-called "giraffe" species (much larger than any camel now surviving on the earth), vanished long ago. Why they should have become extinct on this continent nobody knows.

Camels and their near relatives the dromedaries have been introduced in this country from the old world at various times. Some were brought to Virginia in 1701. But owing to lack of knowledge of their habits and of proper methods of caring for them, these attempts have proved failures. On a number of occasions dromedaries have been introduced into various parts of South America, and employed with some success for travel on desert plains difficult for any other animal to traverse. But they have not long survived.

It has been asserted that without the dromedaries the intercourse of mankind over vast regions in Asia would have been confined to districts where abundance of water is available. The products of one district could not have been exchanged for those of another; commerce would have been non-existent, and tribes distantly separated would have had little knowledge of each other.

A particularly desirable animal for this country would seem to be the "booghdee," which is a cross between the Bactrian camel and the dromedary of the plains. This hybrid is short-limbed and very muscular. It carries 600 pounds on level ground, or 400 pounds where the going is rough and hilly. Nearly as sure-footed as a horse, its great advantage as a mountain burden-bearer lies in the strength and development of the claw that terminates each foot.

The booghdee is almost as omnivorous as a goat, and browses cheerfully on desert plants of almost any kind. In the Old World it is annually shorn, its long fleece (equal in quantity to the wool of four sheep) being used for weaving. The fleece is nearly as soft as the wool of Tibet. But the so-called camel-hair shawls are woven from Tibetan goat's fleece, and not from the hair of any camel.

The "Go Slow" Strike.

Japanese laborers seem to have discovered a new practice some thing new in the relations of employer and employee, the "go slow" strike, and a writer in the Japan Advertiser, examining this form of protest against what the workers in any given plant have decided is an undesirable state of affairs, finds it interesting characteristic of Japanese ways of thinking and acting. The "go slow" strike, which was not long ago effectively employed by some 17,000 employees at the Kawasaki dockyard, differs radically from the "walk out" of laborers that marks the beginning of a strike in western nations, for the Japanese laborers work in as usual in the morning, but having arrived they calmly and unannouncedly "go slow" by refusing to work. The resulting situation, says the analyst, appeals to something which each side recognizes as the feeling of loyalty on the one hand and of paternal responsibility on the other, both well-marked features of the national character as it has been developed by a paternal-feudal system. To go to the factory, loyal and ready to work if only conditions are made just and fair, seems to the Japanese a nobler attitude than that of the arrogant western individual who walks out and refuses to work except on his own terms. Chinese laborers in the war zone, one seems to remember, initiated a similar strike one day when their morning rations had not been distributed. They came to the scene of their daily toil, and did nothing at all until food was provided, and the strike ended. Apparently, too, the "go slow" strike in Japan has so far had the approval of the public, and the static unanimity of the great body of laborers, waiting and ready to resume work when conditions are made satisfactory, presents an emergency which the employer sees no way of meeting by engaging strike breakers.

The Biggest Pair of Tusks.

It is said that in the stables of the Royal Palace at Mandalay, in Burma, may be seen an elephant with a remarkable pair of tusks, which the Burmese declare are the biggest in the world.

These tusks, it is averred, measure as much as seven feet nine inches on the outside curve, with a maximum circumference of no less than seven-and-a-half inches. To naturalists the most extraordinary point about the tusks, which are still being carried by their owner, is that they virtually touch the ground and almost meet.

Apparently, however, their owner experiences no inconvenience from these long and cumbersome appendages while taking exercise. As a zoological curiosity the elephant has naturally attracted wide attention and it is reported that several offers have been made for the tusks when the animal should see fit to depart this world.—Tit-Bits.

Holland Electrified.

Electricity has received a big boom in Holland as a result of the fuel shortage during the war. Of 140,000 houses in Amsterdam, 120,000 are now provided with electric lights, whereas before the hostilities started only 30,000 houses were connected up, says an exchange. Electricity's more general use in Holland is bound to make a big change in the appearance of the country, as the windmills that for centuries made the power for land drainage are being replaced gradually by electric pumps. Most of the generating plants and motor equipment have been supplied by the Swiss and the Germans.

Abolish Methodist Rule.

Harrisburg, Penna., March 25.—The Central Pennsylvania Methodist conference adopted a resolution suggesting to the General Conference the elimination of the church rule making members who attend theatres, dance, play cards, or indulge in other "worldly" amusements liable to excommunication.

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