

methods by which the war shall be carried on, these are being directed by a small war cabinet in London, formed for the particular purpose of concentrating power in the smallest possible number of men. It would be absurd to expect such a numerous body as the Imperial Conference to be asked to do any real work in directing the management of the war.

The terms of peace are the remaining question. These, it must be remembered, are not to be settled by the Conference, or by the British authorities, but by the Allies. The Conference can only express its views as to what is desirable. The Colonies which have special interests to advance respecting the captured territories may find the Conference helpful to them. As Canada has no such interests—no interests that are not those of the Empire at large—the Conference will concern Canadians in a sentimental rather than a practical way. As a gathering representing all portions of the Empire it will still be of interest to British subjects everywhere, and it may even be of value as expressing again to the enemy the determination of all parts of the Empire to see the war through to a victorious end.

### Britain's Latest Move

THERE have been conflicting reports concerning the state of public opinion in Great Britain in relation to the war. While to many visitors it has seemed that the gravity of the situation was generally appreciated, to others it has appeared that of official circles, and perhaps some other quarters, this was true, but that the general public had no such realization and that consequently a great many people were pursuing their way in the careless assumption that the war could easily be won. If the latter view was entertained in any quarter those who have held it must have a rude awakening when they read Mr. Lloyd George's speech made in the House of Commons on Friday. The Prime Minister has had no illusions on the subject; he has fully appreciated the critical character of the situation and has endeavored by forcible—even startling—statements to have the British people see it in the same way. But a little while ago the proposals he has just made would have been regarded as so revolutionary as to be impossible of adoption. In the light of the present moment they are found to be reasonable and necessary.

Not because of the German submarine operations—though these are an added reason for a remedy—but because of the transfer of British merchant ships to the war service, that of the Allies as well as that of Great Britain, there is a shortage of tonnage for ordinary business purposes which is proving most embarrassing to all concerned. There are not ships to carry the vast amount of traffic that is offering. This being the case there is need of more careful discrimination in the choice of what shall be carried and what shall be discouraged, and this can only be had through official action. Hence it has been determined that the importation of things that are not urgently needed shall be either totally forbidden or largely restricted, in order that the things that are of most importance to the winning of the war may be promptly handled.

More important even than the restrictions on importations are the arrangements announced for the encouragement of home production of foodstuffs. While Great Britain has not been pre-eminently an agricultural country, but has relied largely on other countries for food supplies, there is no doubt that the United Kingdom

has been capable of much greater agricultural development than has taken place. The capacity of the nation for producing is to be tested now as never before. All who have land capable of production are urged and encouraged to devote it to the growth of food, so that there may be less need of reliance on imports. To aid this movement a step is taken which at any other time would have been impossible—a guarantee of a liberal, though not excessive, price is to be given to the farmers for several years. As a further step in the same direction, the agricultural laborer—hitherto, in most cases, very poorly paid—is guaranteed a reasonable minimum wage.

The new regulations will interfere with trade in many directions. There are Canadian interests that may suffer, for some of the things that are banned or restricted are among the important exports from this country. But since the new arrangements are demanded by the war situation, in the interests of the Empire at large, they will be accepted cheerfully. At such a time as this all considerations of trade must be subordinated to the one great purpose, the winning of the victory which is necessary for the Empire and for civilization.

### Blindfolding Bernstorff

COUNT BERNSTORFF and his numerous staff of embassy and consulate officials have been enjoying for a few days the hospitality of British protection in the harbor of Halifax. It can hardly have been an agreeable thought for the German ex-ambassador that for his safety in the harbor and on the high seas he is indebted to one of those "scraps of paper" which his Government, in the case of Belgium, had so much contempt, to the chivalrous generosity of the nation against which he has so long been conspiring at Washington, and that while he was so protected by the British flag, the once vaunted German navy was lying with rusting anchors in the Kiel canal. That Count Bernstorff was glad to be assured of this protection of the British flag may safely be assumed. Yet at the moment when he and his family and staff were being treated with every courtesy by the British officials at Halifax he must have reflected on the difference between that courtesy and the treatment accorded by Germany to British subjects wherever German power prevails. There was, however, a limitation to the privileges granted to the German party. Usually the good city of Halifax is delighted to show its visitors the many attractions of its harbor and the approaches thereto. But in this respect Halifax is not doing "business as usual." It is doubtful if any of the beautifully illustrated literature of Halifax was handed to the Count on his arrival. He was not invited to "wait and see" Halifax. To wait, indeed, he was courteously asked, but not to see.

Halifax is one of the most strong fortified places on the North American continent. Many of the fortification works are so concealed that they do not meet the eye of the ordinary observer. But there are portions of them that are quite visible to all who enter the harbor in daylight. Plans of these fortifications, as they were in former years, are no doubt on file in the Berlin war office, for the Germans were busy for many years in assembling information of that kind. But the fortification works of a few years ago and those of the day are not the same. If any of the Kaiser's rusting ships should come across the sea and make an attack on Halifax, relying on the old plans from the Berlin office, the

attacking party would in all probability experience some surprises. At all events it was not deemed advisable to encourage studies of the harbor works by the German party, even from the deck of a neutral vessel. So, when the ship bearing the German visitors came within ten miles of the entrance to the harbor in daylight, she was politely met by vessels of the ubiquitous British Navy and escorted out to sea again, to await the coming of darkness. Then, as midnight approached, the Scandinavian ship was brought in, passed under the frowning but unseen forts, up through the main harbor, past the city, through the narrows and into the quiet waters of Bedford Basin, where the most prominent object to meet the visitors' eyes on the heights the next morning was the large city edifice known as Rockhead Prison. There, with wireless disabled and all communication forbidden except that of the polite British and Canadian officials engaged in examination of the ship, the cargo and passengers, Count Bernstorff and his party passed several days which they are likely to remember with interest—and possibly with pleasure—during the remainder of their lives. The party will probably be, in some respects, wiser men and women from this visit to Halifax. But they will not be any wiser than before respecting the fortifications of the Canadian Gibraltar.

### A Good Word for Fritz

IT IS a long time since we were able to say a good word for the Germans. Now justice demands that even the devil shall have his due. Among the numerous items in which the ever-increasing high cost of living is painfully manifested one of the most prominent is the homely potato, usually occupying a very modest place in the background of foodstuffs, but now gaining a place in the aristocracy of supplies. Potatoes are selling in Montreal in quantities at two dollars and more a bushel. In England under the regulations of the Food Controller the price is less than half of that. But if we wish to find a market where potatoes are comparatively cheap we have to go to Berlin. One is inclined to envy the Berlin citizens when he reads that in the German capital potatoes are to be had at seventy-two cents per bushel. It is true that there are not a great many of them to be obtained. One has to have his food cards to get any, and only a few pounds at a time will be delivered. But the Germans have managed to so control the price that this important article of food is sold at about one-third the price that the consumer pays in Montreal. At the risk of being prosecuted for treason, we have to admit that there are some things the Germans manage better than we do.

### New Brunswick

It is a curious fact that while the suggested holding of a Dominion election is widely objected to, Provincial elections have been held, apparently without protest, in several of the Provinces where the political organizations in Dominion and local politics are substantially the same, and where Provincial contests are conducted quite as keenly as one for the House of Commons would be. The latest example of this appealing to the people in the midst of the war is the Province of New Brunswick, where a Conservative Government, which brought on the elections, has had a close call and probably has suffered defeat. The Liberals have a majority of seats. Whether they have the number and material to form a strong administration remains to be seen.