

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1913.

AN IMPERIAL MISSION.

The visit which King George paid to Portsmouth recently in order to inspect the battle cruiser New Zealand, during which every Dominion will be visited, recalls the opening of an important chapter in the history of the Empire. It was in March, 1899, that Mr. McKenna, then first lord of the Admiralty, made his remarkable statement on the subject of rivalry in naval construction. He had been reminded that the policy of the British Government was traditionally one of "peace, retrenchment and reform," but there were moments, he said, when the most determined economist was willing to make a sacrifice. He went on to state that Germany had accelerated the execution of her programme. The extent of German shipbuilding and ordnance making resources had been underestimated, and the need had arisen for a great effort to be made.

This remarkable avowal exerted a great influence upon public opinion throughout the Empire. To New Zealand belongs the credit of making the first response. Within less than a week of the speech, Sir Joseph Ward's Government had decided that the cost of building and completing a vessel of the largest class and had indicated the intention to the British Government with the expression of their willingness to be responsible for a second vessel of the same class if the need should arise.

The Secretary of State accepted the offer on behalf of the Mother Country with warm recognition of the loyal and spontaneous Imperial spirit of the Dominion. The contract was awarded to the Fairfield Company on the Clyde. The New Zealand was laid down at Govan on June 20th, 1910, and launched on July 1st, 1911. When she left Devonport for Portsmouth last September, it was said she was "the smartest ship which ever left the Sound."

The sailing of the New Zealand marks a new epoch in the Empire's naval annals. She is the first gift of the Dominions to the one Navy upon which every Imperial interest depends. The London Telegraph well expresses the importance of the New Zealand's Imperial mission. "A bare description of the cruise of this gift ship," it says, "must be something of an inspiration. Though we are all familiar with the extent of the British Empire and its distribution, the recital of dry statistics conveys little impression to the mind. But here is a Dreadnought setting out on an Empire cruise, linking the Mother Country with this Dominion and then with that, crossing the Equator four times on her voyage, and at each of the principal ports of call being welcomed with British cheers, rising spontaneously from the hearts of British subjects."

"First a visit is to be paid to Cape Town. The battle-cruiser will be the greatest and most powerful man-of-war ever seen in Simons Bay under any flag. She will dwarf into insignificance the only two cruisers now on the Cape Station, and will remind the people within the Union of South Africa of the character of the instruments by which our naval supremacy must be supported, and of the cost it imposes. They will see a single ship representing an expenditure of £2,000,000, and they will learn that one Continental country, already possessing the most consummate military machine in the world, has passed an Act to provide sixty-one battle units of equal or greater power."

"The British inhabitants of the sub-continent, who owe so much to sea power, may well ask themselves whether the time has not come when they should stand beside New Zealand in assisting to maintain that general supremacy of the sea which is as essential to the Dominions as to the Mother Country."

"Then the ship will pass onwards, still further south, to her home—the land from which she sprang, to the people who will always follow her career in peace and in war with peculiar and intimate interest—there to be received with acclamation and enthusiasm."

"From this Dominion she will shape her course to Vancouver, the great entrepot of Canada on the Pacific shore, and finally, after putting in at some South American ports, including Panama, and paying her respects to the inhabitants of most of the islands of the British West Indies, she will return to this country when our thoughts are directed towards Christmas."

"This is the programme, and behind it lies an object far transcending in importance the immediate purpose of the voyage, which is, of course, to permit New Zealanders to see what manner of ship they have built and dedicated to Imperial ends. The vessel has been commissioned to show the flag with dignity in distant waters. Advertising is the soul of business, and this man-of-war is to carry the same and fame of all that is British

into a score or so of ports—British political ideals, British naval efficiency, British shipbuilding and warlike equipment; and, lastly, she will remind all and sundry that what is ours we hold, and intend to defend by the only possible means.

"Nelson regarded a line-of-battle ship as the best negotiator there could be, and he knew the world. We do not share a jot in our recognition of this truth, but though the battle-cruiser is designed for war, she goes forth today on an errand of peace. She is charged with the almost inarticulate aspirations of an Empire searching for the means of translation of the old proverb that union is strength into terms which the world will understand."

"If this cruise brings nearer to realization this ideal, if it helps to cement into one confederation the British family of nations, then the people of New Zealand, by their splendid act of well-being of humanity than all the will have contributed more to the Peace Conferences."

By an arrangement made last May with the British Government New Zealand's battle cruiser is to be attached on her return to the fleet in the North Sea. Those who are acquainted with the trend of public opinion in New Zealand will be aware that in that Dominion there exists a clear and definite conception of fundamental facts of naval strategy. New Zealand recognizes, as the people of Canada recognize, that there must be one navy—a navy with a single direction, and in the great essentials, a single control.

Canada's three battleships are also destined for the first line of Imperial Defence. They can be recalled by the Canadian Government after reasonable notice, should the people at any time in the future decide to establish a Canadian unit of the British Navy. In the meantime, they will protect and safeguard the interests of the Dominion and the Empire at whatever point the Admiralty may direct.

ATTACKING THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

The papers supporting the Alberta Government, while professing that the recent judgment of the Privy Council on the matter of the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway is not unfavorable to the Province, are attacking the Privy Council for having delivered such a judgment. The Edmonton Bulletin goes so far as to charge the members of the Privy Council with the deliberate intention of "punishing the people of Alberta for daring to attempt to enforce their rights against a defaulting company," while other newspapers are panning, while other public prejudice seeking to arouse public prejudice against the Privy Council as an ultimate court of appeal on similar grounds.

There is much justice in the contention of the Calgary Herald that the statement of the Bulletin is unworthy of a respectable newspaper, implying as it does, that their lordships deliberately rendered an unjust decision in order to achieve a scandalous object. Few people, if any, will take this attack seriously, but it is none the less deplorable that a newspaper controlled by a gentleman who has so recently been one of His Majesty's advisers should make so false a statement.

These criticisms, however, tend to increase the absurdity in which the Liberal papers in the West find themselves. If, as they claim, Alberta has not lost this case by the Privy Council's decision, why their unreasonable criticism of the decision, which is the fact, and they know it well, is that the Privy Council's decision was an utter reversal of Mr. Sifton's contentions. It declared his action to be unlawful, it reversed the statute which the Legislature had passed at his instance, and it declared that the use to which he proposed to put the money of English bondholders was illegal.

A "FREE" BREAKFAST TABLE.

In the course of his speech in East Fife Mr. Asquith made the significant admission that there are "many defects and shortcomings in our industrial and social arrangements," but he did not believe, he added, that the unionist policy of tariff reform was "the way to make them good."

It is noteworthy that British statesmen who hold "Free Trade" views do not dwell at any length on these "many defects." One of the crying evils in the Old Country today is the tax on such articles of food as sugar, cocoa, coffee, tea, plums, raisins, cur-

rants, etc. In the last ten years some £120,000,000 of taxation has been levied on food, and the overwhelming proportion of these taxes has been paid by those least able to pay. The poorer a man is the more he has to pay in indirect taxation in proportion to his income.

Taking the actual figures for the past four years, the food taxes have been as follows:

1908-9	£10,217,965
1909-10	9,678,458
1910-11	9,943,217
1911-12	10,302,584

With an election plank of a free breakfast table, there has actually been an increase of well over £500,000 in food taxes in two years, and that during a time when the price of food has very much increased. This is one of the "many defects" for which a moderate tariff on the lines proposed would provide a remedy.

A NEW DIVORCE BILL.

"An Act to Restrict the Evils of Divorce," is the title of a Bill introduced into the Senate of Canada by Senator Cloran, and which has received its second reading. It is one of the shortest measures of the session, consisting of only two clauses; but what it lacks in length it makes up for in explicitness and severity. The Bill provides that when a divorce has been obtained in Canada on the ground of adultery, bigamy, or other offences, the man or woman so divorced, whose suit has been the ground on which the divorce was granted, shall be incapable to marry any person except the one from whom he or she was divorced.

Everyone who goes through, in any part of the world, a form of marriage with any person whom, under this Act, he or she is incapable to marry, will be guilty of an indictable offence and liable to seven years' imprisonment. The measure is sweeping and the penalty drastic. Whether it will become law, however, is problematical.

CURRENT COMMENT

Hearts That Beat As One.
(Montreal Gazette.)

At the opening of the Legislature of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia reference was made to claims of the Provinces for greater financial grants from the treasury of the Dominion. At a recent meeting in this Province also a minister gave expression to his desire for more money for Quebec from Ottawa. British Columbia has a standing claim of the same purport. Some of the Western Provinces also are getting financially where they will have to get more from the Federal treasury or tax the people, which latter at least the hearts of all the Provinces beat as one.

They Are Responsible.

(Boston Post.)

The New York Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has just decided what seems to need emphasizing every now and then, namely, that the proprietors of restaurants are responsible for the coats and hats of their patrons, no matter what signs they stick up or print asserting that they are not. It is a good thing to remember. The same practice of irresponsibility on their own say-so is current in restaurants of Boston, some of them large and important. Patrons should always bear in mind that the owners do not bear the law and that they have been beaten in the courts of the state on this very point.

Why Not Raise Them Here?

(Medicine Hat Call.)

According to the Monetary Times, Canadian dealers have imported into Canada 150 cars of eggs this season, representing nearly 2,000,000 dozen, upon which a duty of three cents per dozen was paid, equal to \$60,000. The farmers and poultry keepers have a great leeway to make up in this matter. Canada ought not to need to go outside her borders for eggs.

A Restricted Citizenship.

(Toronto Telegram.)

"A British subject in Ontario may pay his taxes to the public schools or the separate schools irrespective of his religious beliefs. A British subject in Saskatchewan has no choice but to pay his taxes to the clerical schools if he is born and remains in the Church which dominates these schools."

Favorite Authors at Etom.

(London Free Press.)

What are the favorite books of the boys at Etom? According to N. Brucher, the librarian, Rudyard Kipling is their favorite author. At one time they revelled in Charles Kingsley's books, but he has gone right out. After Kipling, Thackeray, Charles Dickens, George Elliot and Charlotte Bronte are read most.

A Reminiscence of Canute.

(Hamilton Spectator.)

It is a far cry to the days of King Canute, recalled by the discovery of the coffin of his two children in Lincath. It is also a reminder that he did not object to getting his feet well in order to reprove his courtiers for their flattery, that the waves of the sea would recede at his command.

Nothing New Under the Sun.

(New York Post.)

It having been discovered that the palace of the Caesars had elevators, we may now expect to learn that the contest between Caesar and Pompey was at the bottom due to a disagreement over the awarding of a telephone franchise.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

Donald the Pioneer.

It is to the pioneers of big movements that the credit and honor belong, not to the followers, said a lecturer on vegetarianism in a Highland village, and he exhorted his hearers to become pioneers of vegetarianism in that neighborhood.

At the conclusion of his lecture he was warmly shaken by the hand by an old lady, who thanked him for speaking so kindly of her son Donald. "But I think you have made a mistake," replied the lecturer, "I don't know your son, and I'm not aware that I mentioned him tonight."

"Yes, yes!" said the old lady. "Donald is one of those pioneers of big movements."

"What is your son, madam?"

"What is Donald?" said the proud mother, in a surprised tone. "Why, Donald walks in front of a steam roller with a red flag."—Tit Bits.

Negative Showing.

"How did that flash-light picture of your debating team come out?"

"A very strange manner. The undeveloped picture showed all of the affirmative debaters in the negative."

The Thoughtless Novelist.

"She stood in tears," the story ran, "for some time after he had gone. Next day, no doubt, she had a cold. For she had no handkerchiefs."

His Finish.

"Did you read about the man who drank shellac varnish, supposing it to be a tonic?"

"Yes, and the poor fellow never saw his finish."

A Warning.

"Never write letters, young man, that you'll regret in after life."

"You speak as from experience."

"I do. In early correspondence with her wife, my wife I signed myself, 'Your obedient servant.'"

An Old Ballad in a New Shape.

Mary had a little lamb;
She loved to watch its gambols,
But when the cost of living soared
She sent it to the shambles.

An Early Bird.

The Clock—Cuckoo! Cuckoo!
Cuckoo!
Outlate—Rah! Spring is here!
Competent.

Barber—Do you shave yourself?

Victim—Yes, I also talk to myself.

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One on Solomon.

Perry—"Solomon himself admitted that he was puzzled by the way of a man with a maid."

Mrs. Perry—"Well, he'd have been more excited over the way of a maid with a new set of dishes."—Judge.

His Tactics.

Grand Vizier—Your Majesty, the cream of our army has been whittled and is now freezing. What would you advise?

Sultan—Add a few cherries and serve.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

Wednesday the 19th inst. is the anniversary of the founding of the order of Knights of Pythias, and this year the order will be forty-nine years old. Each year the lodges take notice of this date and the three local lodges in this city will celebrate by holding a banquet in the Temple building, North End, on Thursday evening, the 20th inst., at 8.30 o'clock.

There will be addresses and music and an interesting and entertaining evening is expected.

On Sunday afternoon next, the 23rd inst., the order will hold their annual united service in Centenary church at 4 o'clock. There will be music by a male choir under the direction of A. C. Ritchie, and Mr. Fox will preside at the organ. The sermon will be preached by Rev. Geo. Ross.

Mr. NEWLYWED said—"Hello! Is this a new kind of salt we are using? It shakes all right, doesn't it?"

Mrs. NEWLYWED said—"Yes, it's WINDSOR SALT. The grocer told me about it—said it was the only kind his customers would have."

Mr. NEWLYWED said—"Well, if he keeps such good salt, I guess everything else in his store must be good, so I would do all my trading there. (It were you!)"

Mrs. NEWLYWED said—"I intend to."

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