

than she does at present towards the military defence of the empire. The *Star* is a staunch British connection paper, but it thinks that Canada is doing enough for imperial interests just now by developing this portion of the empire and by maintaining the Canadian Pacific Railroad. We are simply sick of this line of argument, when used as an excuse for Canada to continue in her present thoughtless course of developing her resources without providing for national defence. The vulnerability of the country increases with its commercial development, and so does the national danger. Canada will be a more desirable conquest ten years hence than it is to-day.

The natural development of the Dominion is a loyal and natural ambition for the good people of this country, but they should realize that the progress of their work of development but increases the risk of foreign invasion. True, the increase of population which accompanies the development of a country's resources adds to the defensive power of the nation, but in every other respect it weakens it. The development of the natural resources of Canada has located flourishing towns and well-tilled farm lands where the American invaders of 1812 lost themselves in inhospitable forests or were surrounded in unknown bogs. Bush roads have been replaced by splendid turkpiques, railways and canals. And as our national prosperity increases, so will the natural defensiveness of the country diminish. How absurd, then, is this argument that Canada is doing her full share towards the strengthening of the empire by developing her natural resources. As a matter of fact, her progress in this respect is but still further weakening what is already distinctly the weakest link in the whole chain of imperial defence.

The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway itself increased the existing obligation upon Canada to provide some effective system of defence. In considering military matters every contingency has to be provided for, and in the event of Britain being involved in any great war necessitating the use of the much vaunted alternate route to the east, hostilities with the

United States would not be a very remote contingency. With Canada absolutely without any adequate defensive system, as she is at present, this great route to the east would be at the mercy of any adventurous Yankee tug boat which dared to make a dash across Lake Superior and burn a few of the trestles which carry our great trans-continental road across the northern inlets of our greatest fresh water sea.

We firmly believe that it is ignorance and nothing else which causes Canada to remain under the reproach of being a menace to imperial safety. Canadians are loyal to the empire, appreciate the advantages of the imperial connection, and are certainly honest enough to wish to bear their share of the burden of imperial defence. If they are not they are unworthy of the flag which protects them.

The admission of Lieut.-Col. Prior, M.P., to the Dominion Cabinet is a distinct advantage for the militia. Lieut.-Col. Prior is not only a well-informed militia officer, but he is an enthusiastic one. It will be a new thing for the militia to have one of its active officers in the cabinet, and that it will be also a good thing goes without saying. With Mr. Dickey as minister of militia and Lieut.-Col. Prior as a colleague in the cabinet, we ought to be able to expect of the government fair recognition of the requirements of the force.

What has become of that first consignment of the Lee-Metfords, and when may the next consignment be expected? And, while in an enquiring turn of mind, what about an explosive for the new arm, and the required new rifle ranges?

We are pleased to hear that there is some prospect of our suggestion that teams from the Canadian militia should be organized to compete at the royal military tournaments at London and Dublin being carried out. The proposal has excited considerable discussion in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Kingston, and Quebec, and the proposal will likely be carried out in the near future, if not this year.

Now is the time for the govern-

ment to prepare and carry out some scheme for the establishment on a permanent basis of a naval militia. Such a force would prove invaluable in case of trouble with our fire-eating neighbors. There are many steamers, both on the lakes and the St. Lawrence that could be transformed into useful cruisers for service on our inland seas.

Now also is the time to overhaul the rotten and antiquated equipment which is supposed to be in reserve in case of trouble. If we are correctly informed, the only knapsacks in store are those which were rejected by the British war office after they had proved so disastrously unsuitable in the Crimean War. There should be stored in the various depots throughout the country serviceable modern valise equipments sufficient to equip 30,000 men at the very least.

In view of the "jingo" talk of a large section of the American press and people, the following comparison of the naval strength of England and the United States will be of interest. It may be stated, moreover, that the difference between the two navies is even greater than is apparent from the figures mentioned, as a large proportion of the U. S. vessels enumerated are of antiquated patterns, and even their new ships are in many cases more experimental than many of the practical officers would like, and the number of breakdowns in them more frequent than they should be. The figures are quoted by the *New York Army and Navy Journal* and may be taken as very nearly exact for both navies.

Great Britain has in service 50 battleships, 11 armored coast defence vessels, 25 armored cruisers; a total of 86 armored vessels, besides 10 battleships and 4 cruisers building. She has of unarmored vessels 188 in service, viz., 52 protected cruisers, 88 cruisers, 14 gun vessels and 34 torpedo vessels, besides 22 protected cruisers, 4 cruisers and 2 gun vessels building, in all 28 unarmored vessels authorized and building. This makes a grand total of 274 vessels in commission and 42 building, besides 189 torpedo boats in service and 62 building.

The United States has in service, of armored ships, 3 battleships, 6 coast defence vessels, 1 cruiser; of unarmored vessels, 13 protected cruisers, 20 cruisers, 8 gun vessels, 2 torpedo vessels. We have building 5 battleships, 4 armored coast defence vessels, 1 armored cruiser and 9 unarmored gun vessels. This is the comparison of the totals of vessels in service and building: