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Special Articles

- Victory, Soon, Sure and Overwhelming.**
By J. W. Macmillan.
- The High Cost of Living—Peace Prospects.**
By Civicus.
- Banking and Business Affairs in the United States.**
By Elmer H. Youngman.
- Comments on Current Commerce.**
By E. Stanley Bates.
- Conditions in the West.**
By E. Cora Hind.

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Senate Appointments --- A Lost Opportunity

IT IS to be regretted that the proposal of Mr. A. K. Maclean, that no further appointments to the Senate be made until after the general election, was treated as a party matter, and disposed of accordingly, when the subject was discussed in the House of Commons at Ottawa last week. The proposal deserved a better fate. There was merit in the suggestion of Dr. Michael Clarke that the matter be reserved for further consideration on the return of the Prime Minister from England. This reasonable course has been adopted in the case of a motion by Dr. Pugsley, that inasmuch as the Provincial electoral lists are made the basis of the Dominion lists, it is expedient to provide that in any Province which grants the Provincial franchise to women, the women shall have the right to vote at the Dominion elections also. Instead of hastening to a decision on this important question the Government asked Dr. Pugsley to let the motion stand until the Premier returns, and this has been agreed to. Dr. Clarke's suggestion that a similar course be taken in the case of the motion concerning Senate appointments was not accepted. The fair presumption, of course, is that the Premier had already discussed the subject with his colleagues and that it had been decided to adhere to the policy of making party appointments to the Senate.

Apart from other considerations, the proposal that is likely to be made for a further extension of the term of Parliament would have been much strengthened by the manifestation on this occasion of a willingness on the part of the Government to make less use of the extension as a means of exercising party patronage. It may be too late now for the creation of anything like the "National Government" that some people have been advocating. But it need not have been too late to exhibit a determination to exercise power in a national rather than a partisan spirit. Mr. Meighen, speaking for the Government, said the appointments to the Senate were not to be regarded as matters of patronage, but were on the same footing as the appointment of judges. Even judicial appointments are not commonly supposed to be entirely free from party connection. Mr. Meighen's effort to present Senatorial appointments as anything other than the exercise of party patronage will provoke smiles from all who have had anything to do with the filling of vacancies in the Upper House. Dr. Clarke put the matter very mildly when he said, "there is a distinct suspicion that the appointments to the Senate are generally political." In some cases, though not in all—for there are some courts which have little to do—it might be shown that delay in filling a vacancy on the Bench would prevent

the prompt administration of justice. But nobody will seriously claim that any public interest would suffer from delay in filling any vacancy in the Senate. In any list of the unemployed in Canada, the Senate would have the first place. That House meets occasionally, only to carry motions for long adjournments. Is it not much more important to fill places in the people's chamber—the House of Commons—when they become vacant? The whole spirit of the constitution requires that the Commons shall at all times represent the people of every section of the country. Yet, though many vacancies have occurred and hundreds of thousands of the electors of Canada, in the districts as they have hitherto been established, are now entirely unrepresented in the House, no step is taken to hold bye-elections. Under a Redistribution Act passed several years ago there is now overdue to the Western Provinces a much larger representation than is accorded to them. Yet no move has been made to give effect to this very important enactment. In all these matters, so vitally affecting the representation of the people, the war situation is pleaded to justify the denial to the electors of their right of representation. But when it comes to the question of appointments to the Senate, where no public interest requires the filling of vacancies, party power is used and party patronage exercised.

In this matter of the Senate appointments the Government had an opportunity to show that they did not desire to make a party use of the extension already granted to them. If they had manifested that patriotic spirit they would have given strength to the position of those who have been disposed to grant a further extension rather than have the turmoil of a general election. The Government, unfortunately, have not availed themselves of the opportunity opened to them by this situation. They have, by clinging to their patronage, given a strong argument to those who are declaring against any further extension.

Shipbuilding Prospects

THE war has brought about conditions which make for the successful undertaking of some lines of industrial activity in which in former days the obstacles seemed to be almost insurmountable. There is every prospect that shipbuilding operations may be hereafter carried on quite extensively in various parts of Canada. Half a century ago, and some years afterwards, wooden shipbuilding was a prosperous industry in the Eastern Provinces. The facilities offered for that class of industry had attracted the attention of the earlier settlers. As far back as 1785 the Legislature of Nova Scotia passed an Act for the encouragement of shipbuilding, the main feature of which was the granting of a bounty of ten