

National Defence

A GENERAL meeting of members of the London Chamber of Commerce was held in the council room, Mr. Charles Charleton (chairman of the council) presiding, in the absence, through indisposition, of Sir A. Spicer, M. P. (president of the chamber), when an address was delivered by Mr. Arnold-Foster, M. P., on "National Defence, an inquiry into the principles which should regulate national defence, and the extent to which those principles are recognized in our present organization for war," says the London Times. Among those present were Mr. Stanley Machin (deputy chairman of the council), Rear-Admiral G. W. Hand, Mr. Alexander Livingstone, Mr. Joseph Howard, Mr. F. H. Norman, Martin's Bank, and Mr. Kenric B. Murray (the secretary). Sir J. C. R. Colomb wrote regretting his inability to attend, as he was obliged to be at a meeting of a Royal Commission. He added "That more general appreciation of the principles which should regulate national defence should prevail is a matter of grave public importance. Its absence has been a fruitful source of waste and confusion in the past, from which we still suffer, and shall do so for some time. I consider the council is placed under a great obligation by Mr. Arnold-Foster's self-sacrifice in consenting to address it when otherwise so fully occupied, and feel sure great public advantage will result."

Mr. Arnold-Foster, who was warmly received, referred to his former connection with the chamber, and stated that, in conjunction with other members, he had a good deal to do with the movement which it initiated in favor of strengthening the navy. The movement was successful, public opinion supported the chamber, and the government of the day took action in correspondence with the chamber's desires. From that day the progress of the navy had been continuous. In 1900, on giving up his business in the city, he abandoned his membership of the chamber, and for the next five years he was occupied with public work of the greatest possible interest, first at the Admiralty and then at the war office. The work was, perhaps, the more interesting because it was only a continuation of what had been with him a lifelong study. It was one which, although he had no longer any official connection with either service, he still found a most fascinating and absorbing one. When, therefore, the secretary informed him a few months ago that the chamber had added his name to its defence committee, he accepted the nomination. Having done so, it occurred to him that the only manner in which he could justify his appointment to a committee which he could rarely attend was to propose to read a paper on a subject intimately connected with its work. (Hear, hear.) Continuing, he said that the main propositions which he desired to establish were as follows:—(a) Owing to its insular character the position of the United Kingdom from a military point of view was unique. (b) The unique and special character of the area and interests to be defended logically entailed a unique and special organization. (c) Our military organization, although in many respects unique, was not the logical outcome of our insular position, but was based on an incorrect appreciation of the duties which the navy and army would be called upon to perform in time of war. The wars in which the nation was likely to be engaged might, he said, be classified as follows:—(a) A land war for the defence of such of our possessions as had a land frontier. (1) A purely maritime war (an improbable contingency). (c) A war by land and by sea, carried on offensively, with the object of making the work of the navy effective and conclusive. (d) A land war carried on by this country as the ally of a Continental Power—such, for instance, as a war for the protection of the neutrality of Belgium. (e) A war for the protection of such of our possessions as were now wholly or partially under military rule. (f) A land war carried on against an invading enemy on the soil of the United Kingdom.

The Question of Invasion

The probability of the various wars described taking place was not equal. History told us that the least probable war was the war against an invader on land. For over 800 years—since the battle of Hastings—we had not had to resist a serious invasion. In view of the probability of any war in which we might be engaged taking place outside the United Kingdom it was obvious that the value of troops taking part in such wars was greater than the value of troops who were not available for such a purpose. The probabilities of successful invasion were less under modern conditions than they were formerly. In the case of an invasion, all the uncertainties of maritime warfare were removed, and the advantage lay with the nation invaded, provided the maritime defence were adequate. Maritime defence was cheaper and much more effective than military defence on land. There were many recorded examples of a successful landing in the face of military opposition on shore. There was no recorded instance of a successful landing in face of serious maritime opposition. If our naval force was not at present sufficient to render a landing impossible, it should be made so. There was, he continued, reason to believe that invasion was impossible, and that, if it were possible, it would be unnecessary; but, in view of the fact that this proposition was not generally admitted, it was necessary to consider the hypothesis of invasion, and to inquire whether the military measures

we were taking to avert it were adequate. If this country were invaded, it would be invaded by the best troops of Europe. These troops could only be defeated by troops as good or better. It was an error to suppose that an army possessed any advantage because it fought in its own country. The severest defeats which Prussia had ever had to submit to were at Jena and Auerstadt. Sedan and Metz were in France when the French armies suffered defeat there. Enclosed ground, such as was found in the United Kingdom, conferred an advantage upon the attack.

Citizen Soldiers and Regular Troops

Military history supported the view that citizen soldiers were always at a disadvantage when confronted by trained regular troops. This disadvantage was particularly marked in the case of skilled arms such as the artillery. The teaching of history at all times, and military opinion in this and every other country, combined to support the view that partially trained troops, led by partially trained officers, could not be expected to hold their own in war against highly trained and organized troops under highly trained officers. He therefore submitted, as a corollary to this conclusion, that money taken from the maintenance of highly trained officers and highly trained and organized troops, and spent upon partially trained officers and partially trained troops, was money misapplied. The history of the Boer war, he contended, in no way conflicted with these conclusions. If we accepted the hypothesis that an invasion was possible, we ought to accept its inevitable consequences. The military organization which we had in fact adopted proved that we had not accepted those consequences. At the present time the Board of Admiralty, in direct conflict with the War Office, was acting upon the hypothesis that an invasion was not possible. The question of extending the volunteer movement to the navy deserved careful consideration. (Hear, hear.) The reductions in the length of training which had been sanctioned for our troops were peculiar to our own army; no military nation accepted our standard of training as adequate. Our present system imposed a very heavy burden upon the national finances, and its continuance might lead to a dangerous reaction, which should be guarded against. The maintenance of the Cardwell system precluded the possibility of the reduction of the cost of the regular army without a further and serious destruction of its cadres.

Conclusions

In conclusion Mr. Arnold-Foster remarked that the foregoing considerations seemed to warrant the following conclusions:—(a) That the Royal Navy was our true and only protection against invasion, and that, if the navy were at present inadequate to that purpose, it should be made adequate. (b) That if the foregoing conclusion were not admitted, and if invasion were contemplated as a possible danger, such invasion could only be effectively resisted by an army equal in quantity and quality to that of the possible invader. We had not such an army, and were not taking any steps to create it. (c) That, in view of the probability that the army would always be employed overseas, the proper policy was to concentrate our resources upon perfecting that part of the army which could alone be relied upon to undertake work across the sea, and that for that purpose we should abandon the policy of reducing the regular army, above all of its specially trained branches, and should make every effort to create a large trained reserve, which would allow of the expansion of the regular army in time of war. (Cheers.)

A COMPARISON OF ROOSEVELT AND TAFT

The New York Globe, which seems to take the election of Taft to the presidency of the United States as a certainty, makes this interesting comparison of that gentleman and Mr. Roosevelt:

It is not disrespectful to either President Roosevelt or Secretary Taft to note the fact that they profoundly differ in their characters. Granting equal sincerity, and granting also that in the main they have reached common conclusions, nevertheless it is true that they travel along different roads. One has impressed the country as a man disposed to jump at his opinion with a priori speed; the other has been content with the slowness of a posteriori. One had an ambition to become a soldier; the other to become a judge. If Paul Morton is to be believed, the President is disposed to haste, if not irascibility, of temper. The tradition of Secretary Taft among his school fellows is that of genial good nature. The future Plutarch of America, when he comes to sum up and contrast the characters of these men, will find ample material for antithesis. Secretary Taft cannot be another Roosevelt, even though such be his heart's desire. Look over his public papers—have his words ever given the impression that a bunch of firecrackers has been set off? Imitate Roosevelt? In the sense that his critics imply, he couldn't if he would. In so far as any have been alarmed by a peculiar raucousness of the President's words and methods, there is every assurance that there will be a change at the White House after March 4 next. In so far as the Roosevelt policies, as distinguished from the Roosevelt, have been defined, Secretary Taft, as president, will unquestionably labor to bring them to fruition, but it will be as a Taft, not as a Roosevelt. None knows this better than the present occupant of the executive mansion, for it is incon-

ceivable that two men of such contrary humor could be intimately associated without forming an estimate of the temperament of the other—without, it may be assumed, more than one clash of opinion which warned of a divergence even though causing no loss of mutual esteem. It is time for the common sense of the country to insist on the public recognition of facts fully recognized in every candid private conversation.

VICTORIA PASTOR WRITES FROM ROME



THE Presbyterian, in its issue of April 9, has the following from the pen of Rev. W. Leslie Clay, of this city, who writes from Rome:

Among the many pleasures of our sojourn in Italy none has been more real than that of the intercourse with the brethren assembled in presbytery in the city of Rome on the 18th of March, inst. The Rev. J. Gordon Gray, D.D., of Rome, is Moderator, and the Rev. D. Miller, D.D., of Genoa, serves as Clerk.

The Presbytery of Italy is connected with the United Free Church of Scotland, although all branches of Scottish Presbyterianism have had a share in the work of displaying the blue banner in this land of beauty and song, of loftiest art and deepest superstition. Among the names of those who have ministered here in other days I find that of our own late Dr. Jenkins, of St. Paul's church, Montreal. In process of time, however, it was deemed expedient to fuse all Presbyterian effort into one Presbytery in connection with the Free Church, now the United Free Church, of Scotland. Some anxiety has been felt by their brethren in Italy over the tenure of their church property in consequence of the unanimous decision of the churches to enter the recent union and adopt the new name. This anxiety has, however, been happily allayed by the obtaining of a royal decree which clearly recognizes the identity of the church under the new name, and by the assurance of ministers of State that everything possible would be done to confirm the titles with the least possible trouble. This is surely a change from the days of 1866 when Dr. Lewis stealthily gathered such Presbyterians as cared to run the risk into his own "hired house" to worship God; and dismissed them by twos and threes, and suffered no psalms to be sung lest they should be discovered by the police; and when the services were ultimately discovered Dr. Lewis was informed that he had "placed himself in the power of the Inquisition both for arrest and imprisonment." Thus for the time our church was suppressed. "Nevertheless, it was not consumed." The 20th of September 1870 arrived with both unity and freedom for Italy. The Presbyterian church driven without the walls returned, and on a splendid location appropriately situated on a street which bears the name of that memorable date—Venti Settembre—built a comfortable church and manse worth \$75,000 whence she is sending forth the water of life to the thirsty and weary.

While the Presbytery is known as the Presbytery of Italy its bounds are much wider than King Victor Emmanuel's dominions, including also stations in France, Switzerland, Malta and until quite recently, Gibraltar—a field of no mean proportions, even when compared with our own western presbyteries.

In addition to work among the English-speaking people in the larger centres the native population is reached through the medium of colportage and the school. Also a very considerable work is being done through seamen's missions in Naples, Leghorn and Genoa.

In dealing with Italian converts the policy of the Presbytery has been not to establish another foreign church in Italy but to induce Italian Presbyterians to identify themselves with the native Waldensian church which is Presbyterian both in government and doctrine, thoroughly evangelical and strongly missionary. With the Waldensian church there has ever been the kindest and most sympathetic co-operation; and it was largely to help them in the days of their suffering that the first efforts of the Scottish church in Italy were put forth and Dr. R. W. Stewart began his labors in Leghorn more than half a century ago.

In the narrow valleys of Piedmont the Waldensians for centuries withstood the bitterest persecution, winning the admiration of the world by their steadfastness to truth and conscience. They now number about 35,000 and have in Italy 13,356 church members with 32 pastors and teachers in active service at home and 14 missionaries with many assistants abroad.

We had also through the hospitality of Dr. and Miss Grey, the great pleasure of meeting socially the members of Presbytery and others like minded. While occupied with their own work they were eager to hear of ours; and many were the questions put to me about Canada, our methods and our men. The Rev. Mr. Irving, of Naples, bearing a striking resemblance to the late Dr. Robertson, said, "Do you happen to know a minister in Western Canada by the name of Baird? He was with me in New College, Edinburgh." He was as pleased to hear as I was to tell of that long drive across the prairie from Winnipeg to Edmonton, the years of pioneer work of that remote post, the return to Augustine church, the faithful work on the F.M. Committee, the equally faithful work in Manitoba college and the recognition of worth by the conferring of the degree of D.D. upon his worthy classmate—Prof. Baird. Another said: "That must be a painstaking man—I cannot recall his name—who has just written a book on the planting of the churches in Canada." When I mentioned the name of the author—Mr. James Croil, of perennial youth—it was at once recognized and incidents of a visit paid by him to Italy many years ago were recited. Thus I was made to feel anew the oneness of the Presbyterian church in all the world.

Burns' Grandson



ONE of Burns' familiar songs has a curiously personal message for a delightful old gentleman who lives by the green slopes of Camp Hill, in Glasgow. His name, to the world, is James Glencairn Thomson, but his heart owns just as true a kinship as any church register can prove with no less a man than the poet himself. He is, in fact, Robert Burns' only surviving grandson. His grandmother was "gowden-locked Anna," for whom Robbie was prepared to flout both "Kirk and State," and to exchange moon, stars and everything for "the sunshine of her e'e."

Only recently—and thanks largely to the efforts of Mr. J. K. McDowell, the energetic secretary of the Scottish Football association—the government has learnt of Mr. Thomson's existence and claims. Having been for some years in straitened circumstances, he is probably to receive soon some slight official assistance, though there seem to be difficulties, quite unconnected with Mr. Thomson himself, in the way of a regular civil list pension, says the London Daily Chronicle.

Anyhow, in a long talk with a press representative, the old gentleman left no possible doubt as to the authenticity of his descent. One glance, indeed, was enough. Though once black as a raven's wing, his hair is snow-white now—for he is already in his 81st year. But about that "frosty pow" there is an unmistakable suggestion of the brow and profile that Nasmyth's portrait has immortalized.

In younger days the likeness was yet more striking. Once, for instance, Mr. Thomson was visiting Burns' own Tarbolton, whilst "Granny" Hey, one of the original "Tarbolton lassies," who remembered the poet in the flesh, was still hostess at the local inn. In a moment "Granny" recognized the newcomer as a genuine "Burns."

Above all, the story that Mr. Thomson had to tell—sitting in the little flat "up two stairs," where he has lived for forty years, and where his mother, Burns' own daughter, died—has a romance about it that will bring him closer to the hearts of those who love Burns than any pedigree could do.

Its circumstances are saddening enough. The "gowden-locked Anna" of the song was, it seems, niece of the proprietor of the Globe tavern, at Dumfries. At that time Burns was seeking to drown remorse and disappointment in only too many of these "pint o' wine," he celebrated so melodiously. Alas, while faithful Jean was away at Mauchline, "gowden-locked Anna" proved all too fond.

Finding herself about to become a mother, Anna fled to Leith, and there gave birth to a daughter, Bettie Burns. What became of Anna after that no one knows. It is believed that she died soon after. Anyhow, she fades out of the story—poor, foolish little heart, "gowden-locks," "melting form," "hinnny lips," and all.

Perhaps the baby, destined to become Mr. Thomson's mother, might have disappeared, too, from the scene had it not been for a noble act on the part of Jean Armour—one that is little celebrated, but deserves to be remembered for ever to her credit. Quietly, without protest, without telling even her father, Jean Armour adopted the little one, rocking it to sleep in the same cradle as her own child, William, who was born only a few days before. From that time forth Betty was brought up as a member of the Burns household, not the faintest difference being made between her and the others. She grew to woman's estate in the little home in Dumfries. She was married at Jean Armour's house, and in Jean Armour's presence.

It is possible that the truest tribute that could be paid alike to the character of Burns himself and to that of Jean Armour is Mr. Thomson's memory of his mother, to whom he was passionately devoted, and of her talks about the poet and his "bonny Jean." "Though she was but six when he died," said Mr. Thomson, "my mother minded Burns well. She minded him taking her on his knee and teaching her to sing, 'Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon.' She had a beautiful voice, had my mother, and he and Jean Armour would sing together.

Then my mother minded him coming home from Brown in the last days, when he was dying. She never forgot the sight of him sitting huddled up in the cart, his face buried in his hands. The next thing she minded was his funeral. She was at the graveside with the rest.

"Always," the old man went on, "my mother taught me to love and be proud of my grandfather. Jean Armour had taught her the same. Ye ken he was a very lovable man; and if he did wrong the lassies were partly to blame. Never an unkind word did Jean Armour speak to my mother. She taught her to read Scripture, and every New Year's Day Jean Armour would open the 'big ha' Bible' and choose a text haphazard for the year. My mother, like Jean Armour, became a very religious woman, and to us eight children she was the model of what a mother should be. She had my grandfather's poetic spirit in her, but she could not express it, save in singing his songs.

"She had a terrible struggle to make both ends meet both at Langside, where I was born, and at Pollockshaws, where we lived afterwards. My father was a weaver, and for some years a soldier, and courted my mother when he was stationed at Dumfries. Afterwards he went back to weaving. He was a good father to us in many ways, but sometimes stern, and I mind well what happy Sundays we used to

spend all alone with our mother, when he was out seeing an old soldier friend of his. Then she used to blossom out, and tell us all sorts of stories and sing to us. But it must have been a hard time for her. I used to greet sometimes when there were lumps in my porridge, but she used to say, 'You'd better eat it, Jamie; there's naething else the day!'"

Such were some of Mr. Thomson's memories of the two noble women whose heroism illumines the sorry tale of Bettie Burns' birth even more, perhaps, than Burns' own lyric ecstasies. It may be noted that they who suffered more for Robbie's faults than any other forgave and loved him. After that, does there not seem an impertinence about the strictures of little prating moralists! When he had finished, Mr. Thomson showed some precious portraits and other treasures, lovingly preserved in the pretty parlor or "ben."

One was a portrait of his mother—Bettie Burns herself. It was an oil painting by John Kelso Hunter, and showed, in an old-fashioned mob-cap, an exceedingly pretty woman with Robbie's own dark, lustrous eyes, full of intelligence and character and humor, but with a firmness of purpose about the slightly pursed mouth that Robbie lacked. "Can this have been an inheritance from 'gowden-locked Anna'?" One fears not! Betty lived, anyhow, to be 84, and a fine old lady she must have been. There were other keepsakes, too—a scrap of Robbie's manuscript, in the familiar, bold, clear, characteristic handwriting, pictures of scenes from his poems, given to Mr. Thomson by friends, old editions, engravings, and what not.

It is not only, however, as a repository of memories that Mr. Thomson has proved himself a worthy grandson of Robbie Burns. In his own personality he is a grandson of whom any poet might be proud—full of racy humor and enthusiasm, and one who "keenly feels the friendly glow." So far as the "softer flame" is concerned, he has never married, having spent his whole life in touching devotion to his mother, whom he kept, and with whom he lived, in this very house until her death.

Since then he has stayed on alone, "contented with little and cauty with mair," a well known Glasgow figure, respected by all who meet him. Though failing eyesight forbids him to follow his profession as an engraver, he can still walk his ten miles a day and pump on a tram while it is going, and is a great player of bowls. He confessed, indeed, that throughout the winter he has been "just wearying for a game." Till lately, too, Mr. Thomson could sing a good song, and "Duncan Gray" from him on a "Burns night" was always a great event.

Though the only surviving grandson, Mr. Thomson is not, of course the only grandchild. Three granddaughters still survive—Mrs. Brown of Dumfries (a natural daughter of Robert Burns, jr.), and Mrs. Hutchinson and Miss Annie Beckett Burns, of Cheltenham, daughter of James Glencairn Burns.

AERIAL CABLEWAYS

In the extensive mountain districts of Argentina, more especially in the north, there exists, says Engineering, enormous mineral wealth, in such abundance that the country stands, in this respect, almost without rival. At the present time this is still almost untouched, perhaps only a fraction of 1 per cent having yet been turned to account. The inaccessibility of these mineral regions, and labor difficulties, have hitherto rendered the development of these natural resources almost impracticable. In the northern districts of Argentina, where the Cordilleras form a natural boundary on the Chilean side, there are not only extensive fields of iron ore, but there exist also large deposits of gold, silver, and, last but not least important, copper deposits which were known and worked by the natives of Chili from very early times. It has, continues Engineering, been the endeavor of nearly every government of the Argentine Republic to open out these northern provinces, especially the La Rioja district, and to complete the line of communication between the Famatina mines, on the precipitous mountain side, and the railway system, which for some time had extended to Chilecito. Beyond Chilecito, which stands at an elevation of some 3,600 feet, tower the walls of the Andes, rising in places to a height of more than 22,800 feet. It is well known that this range of mountains is of a particularly rugged character, and no suggestion of establishing communication between the interior and the outer world by means of a railroad could be entertained. The mountains are intersected by wild, irregular fissures and ravine-like valleys, shut in by almost precipitous sides, and it soon became evident, on the subject being seriously considered, that the only possible solution of the problem lay in a suspension cableway, a system which, under such circumstances, has several peculiar advantages. The ascent to the mines occupied from two to three days, and the transport of each ton of ore from the mines to the valley cost about 50s. After the completion of the line to Chilecito, an English company took over the working of the mines from the government, on the condition that the state undertook to establish a cableway connection between Chilecito and the Famatina mining district; thus definite action became necessary. The distance from the station at Chilecito to the Famatina terminus is actually 21.5 miles, in a direct line, and the difference of level between the two stations is 11,500 feet. The calculated hourly capacity of the line is 40 tons for the downhill and 4 tons for the up journey,

ages." It gr... makes the thing in... scepticism, b... poverty you... A disinterest... sense. For I... ed; are simp... argue about... of art. Even... to know wha... not have ma... Men make w... one to say t... played. But... like ourselv... to exist, we... one does qu... pleasure wh... process of l... we are ma... we are mad... end of it. V... works of ar... ing way, fo... artist, a ma... who expres... his infirmity... like or dislik... character... race and a... stances, all... ficance and... agreeable... to works o... beauty wit... ways some... other facul... Nowadays... primitive p... cause we t... springtime... promise, lik... fossils, is m... summer pos... same way, is hidden... faint of a c... interferes w... learnt to be... tenth cent... tions, and... all their w... cal sense al... the flowers... um; but, con... ciled to ca... take a of things

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Sir Fel... of India a... Council of... the chair, ... miral Sir ... Sir Henry... Lumley; C... ton, Dr. M... Colonel G... Spenser W... Saxton W... and, Lieut... retary of... Sir R... in his mir... the whole... longed str... and naval... to provide... He desire... sical cash... such as w... still exist... to bring b... the difficu... the leadin... in war v... jeopardize... states affe... world get... was a for... tional cre... quately co... sidered fo... of fact, si... its moder... in which... to the sy... What wo... and Gern... again at V... plus a gr... broiled? ... itself to l... United S...