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THE LONDON ADVERTISER COMPANY, LIMITED.
London, Ont., Saturday, Nov. 18.

THE NAVAL POLICY.

IN HIS NARRATIVE regarding the visit he made while in England to the British fleet, it was natural to expect that Mr. N. W. Rowell, M.P., would make some reference to the great service rendered by the fleet during the war. Mr. Rowell, who was the first Canadian to visit the fleet, did not attempt to turn the reference to partisan advantage, but described conditions, and expressed the feeling that came over him as a matter of interest to his hearers. What Canadian standing on an Australian ship would not have felt the same way?

Our local Conservative contemporary seeks to find fault with Mr. Rowell's reference as grossly partisan, and indulges in its customary hyperbole regarding the duty of Canada to the Empire. It does not seem to recognize how splendidly effective the Laurier naval service act has been found by the present Government. Under this act, which was never revoked, the Rainbow and the Niobe, training ships in the Laurier plan, were put back into commission and have done valiant service. Under the terms of the same act two submarines were purchased for the Pacific coast, and, under the terms of the same act, Canada is now enlisting men for the British navy. Laurier's naval machinery was gladly operated by Sir Robert Borden when the need was made apparent. The premier did nothing to improve upon it in the interim and through his recommissioning of the two Laurier warships, he recognized that the principle of a Canadian navy, as laid down by Laurier, also provided for service to the British Admiralty in time of war.

Much is made of the emergency cry at the present time, although the need for ships has been most apparent on the Canadian coast. Australian, British and even Japanese cruisers of the Laurier type have been guarding our shores and conveying our troops. The Laurier act gives the present premier power to construct ships, but he has never taken advantage of it, although the Vickers plant at Montreal, brought to this country to carry on the work of the Laurier navy, has been constructing warcraft since the war began.

Not only did the Laurier act provide the means of Canada's present service to the navy, small though that may be, but the resolution of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as assented to by both parties in 1909, made ample provision for the meeting of any genuine emergency that might arise. The resolution of the prime minister of that time, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was as follows:

This House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada as they increase in numbers and wealth to assume in larger measure the responsibilities in national defence.

The House is of the opinion that, under the present constitutional relations between the mother country and the self-governing dominions, the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence.

The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the speedy organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial navy along the lines suggested by the admiralty at the last Imperial conference, and in full sympathy with the view that naval supremacy of Britain is essential to the security of commerce, the safety of the Empire and the peace of the world.

THE HOUSE EXPRESSES ITS FIRM CONVICTION THAT WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES THE CANADIAN PEOPLE WILL BE FOUND READY AND WILLING TO MAKE LOYAL AND HEARTY CO-OPERATION IN EVERY MOVEMENT FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE INTEGRITY AND HONOR OF THE EMPIRE.

Here was opportunity for Sir Robert Borden to have carried on any sort of naval program he cared to adopt. He might have made a contribution if he had cared to do so. No doubt he has seen that it has been unnecessary, but the Liberal resolution, for which the present premier voted, made the way clear. The Liberal party did its full duty and provided for every contingency in its naval policy, defying the Nationalists. Can the Conservative party prove a case as unassailable?

THE LOST LEGIONS.

WHY SHOULD CANADIANS be deluded into believing that they have created an army of more than 270,000 men when the actual figures, according to well-informed authorities, should be at least 35,000 less than that?

It may be true that 270,000 men have been enlisted for overseas service, but it is equally true that many thousands of them are not now in khaki. All over the Dominion there are thousands

of deserters. Many thousands more have been enabled to procure civilian clothes and have gone over the border into the United States. Those who are still living in Canada are well known to the authorities, but there is no machinery by which they can be rounded up and returned to duty. The battalions themselves do not like to go after the men for fear of the possible adverse effect on recruiting, and if they did the Government until late in the war had no provision to reimburse the units for the expense which they were put to in securing them. Civilians, presumably people who in their sympathies are heart and soul for the cause of the Empire, are shielding these men, apparently being under the delusion that they are doing a favor to individuals which has no effect on the ultimate outcome of the war. The actual circumstances are that such civilians are conniving at, with the men, defrauding the Government out of a considerable sum of money, not to mention the services of very badly needed soldiers.

Apart from the deserters thousands of men have been enlisted, afterward found to be medically unfit and subsequently discharged. They are still reckoned in that 270,000. In one battalion alone which was brought to London last June 238 men were rejected as unfit in one day. Scores were rejected in all of the battalions at the camp, and the condition is said to be general over the country. It is claimed on excellent authority that one battalion which left Toronto some months ago approximately 900 strong, sailed from Halifax with less than 500 men.

The actual figures naturally are not available, but it is certain that more than 100,000 men are needed to complete the promised half million, and the sooner the people of this country are enlightened on the matter the better.

BEYOND THE LIMIT.

THE Conservative party holds office at the present time on the sufferance of the extension granted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party. It is folly to assume that Sir Wilfrid ever would have consented to extension if he had not been anxious to give the Borden Administration every encouragement, and to assist it with the prosecution of the war.

At one time Hon. Robert Rogers threw his hat in the ring for an election, but this was quickly rescued for him. He was like a naughty boy who threw his hat in front of a street car. The Government was mighty glad to have the Liberals agree to a further extension.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier wanted honest government, and he wanted a fair deal when he gave up his right to appeal to the country for a certain period. His reward has been vilification for himself and sneers at the party from many of those who are existing merely on the indulgence of the Liberals. The situation has become intolerable. A man cannot hold to a business agreement if the other signatory uses the agreement as a breastwork behind which to carry on questionable business and from which to launch attacks such as the one that issued from "Hon. Col." W. E. McNaught recently. The Government should have been big enough to realize that the Opposition is a great-spirited Opposition to consent to extension. The Opposition sought to do a great service to the country, but its wartime faith in the present administration proved to be thankless. A government which used its extension as the Borden Government did deserves no further consideration from the Liberal party or the country as a whole.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

And there is no joy in Lindsay, Miltie Sammy has struck out!

Since London is on the water wagon for good, we should see to it that the wagon is kept full.

The Industrial Association deserves the support of every citizen who wishes to see the city advance.

The record now having a great name with the Tory press is "Samuel Hughes, Shame On You!"

London has ordered a jug of water, but the boys of the utilities commission are slow to deliver the goods.

Perhaps that Canadian nickel on the Deutschland kicked up the row that sent the Deutschland back to port.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier wants the Government to state its plans. The country is anxious to hear the proposals also.

Don't let the croakers get busy and injure the industrial loan plan. It should receive the widest publicity at once.

If an election is a crime, what an awful set of rogues are the Conservatives sending out tons of campaign literature.

Every organized agency for reaching the public should be utilized to bring the industrial loan plan before the ratepayers.

Liberalism and the country gave the Government an extension and the Government gave Liberalism and the country a raw deal.

Germany is starving her French prisoners. That announcement means many hundreds of yards lost to the Huns on the west front.

We have no power of imagination to conjure up a picture of the Hamilton Herald and Ottawa Journal giving the waiter an order for their morning's "oleomargarine toast."

The Liberals of Eastern Ontario, in session at Ottawa, have come out strongly in favor of paying all pensions irrespective of rank. This is in line with the suggestions of an Advertiser editorial published during the early part of this week.

London should get in line solidly in support of the board of trade's plan. Businessmen are prepared to put up their money, and if the city is to reap

Brother Has Always Locked His Bedroom Since He Began to Raise That Military Moustache, But the Other Day He Took a Nap On the Couch.

BY FONTAINE FOX



the benefit of the commissioner's quiet industry, he must be given the tools with which to work.

London is fortunate in the possession of an industrial commissioner of unusual ability and devoted attention to duty. In an unobtrusive way he has occupied his time in building up a structure, the keystone of which is the industrial plan to be offered to the people at the January elections.

Mr. Robert Norwood's new book, "The Witch of Endor," will be received with pleasure by a considerable community who has come to know and admire this writer. It is a play, the product of study, dramatic impulse and painstaking care. The poet knows his Bible history, the scenes and spiritual currents of ancient Israel struggling for existence and for its ideals amongst open and secret enemies, and he has added a new song with a new and lively interpretation.

Some of the most interesting stories of the old Hebrew life are to be found in the Apocrypha that used to have a place in the sacred volume. Mr. Norwood adds a new book to the Apocrypha. He has woven a romance around the tragic figure of Saul, representing him as the lover of a lovely priestess of Ashtoreth, who is identified with the biblical woman of Endor. The man whom Browning in his famous poem made a fool for the mission of David, is here treated sympathetically as a hero.

Mr. Norwood's verse-play goes back to the old five-act scheme of the Greek and Shakespearean drama. Matthew Arnold made a revival of the stately classical tragedy with its chorus in his "Meropis" some sixty years ago. Before and since then Browning and Tennyson were writing poetic dramas in the romantic Elizabethan manner, generally in five acts. Other dramatists using the medium of verse in recent years have been Stevenson, Hensley, Robert Bridges, the poet laureate, Austin, the late poet-laureate, and a school of lesser fry. Then came Stephen Phillips, himself an actor, who succeeded in combining beautiful poetry with dramatic vitality in his "Paolo and Francesca." Phillips used a three-act scheme, or sometimes merely a scene sequence, a great deal of scenic effect, lyrical interludes and a classical economy of character and incident. Like other present day practitioners of the poetic drama Mr. Norwood runs much along Phillips' lines, though he reverts to the five-act plan.

In the first act of "The Witch of Endor" we see that Saul, abroad one time, happened into the Temple of Ashtoreth at Ascalon and there met his fate in the dazzling young priestess, Lurhamah. They fell in love at first sight. Doeg, an Ashtoreth worshipper who wishes to keep Saul from the throne of Israel and so destroy the religion of Jehovah, makes Lurhamah swear an oath by the goddess not to allow her lover to become king, and if possible to win him to "idolatry" with her. But the fair lady both breaks her oath and renounces with pain her love in refusing finally Saul's offer of marriage, either on or off the throne, though she has a prophetic vision of Saul coming to grief in royalty. So he is crowned, but marries another, while Lurhamah goes away somewhere and offends herself, in a sense.

Perhaps it is not altogether clear why Lurhamah should thus act. Why not keep her oath, accept Saul's offer of marriage and exile, and so remove him from the throne of Israel? She says: "The gods have decreed" her fate. As she suggests later in the play to Michael (p. 71), why not at least keep love and marry him? Ahimelech could avail little against the people's manifest need and demand for the peerless leader. However, it appears from her words on page 40 that she mistakes her vision to mean that Saul's royalty will bring him sorrow just as he marries her. The course of the play later shows the king suffering partly because he did not marry her, because she denied herself his love. Apparently she made a mistake, but out of love and generosity.

The second act carries us to a time eight years later. Saul is now prosperous and victorious. He makes the cunning idolater, Doeg, an Edomite and the bad man of the story, his prime minister, so as to secure the alliance of Edom against the still dangerous Philistines and others. He summons Lurhamah from "somewhere" in Israel to a secret interview; she seems to be under his command in

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Here the Byronic energy of Mr. Norwood, his oriental lavishness of speech (suited to the subject), gets full play. He is, of course, far from Byronic in his philosophy of love and laughter that he always in evidence, though he keeps himself in a perverted way. It may be remarked that Lurhamah is more notable for what she suffers or does not than for what she does, up to the last act.

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A year later is depicted, in the fourth act, the splendid friendship of David and Jonathan, and no less of David and Saul. But Doeg discovers that Samuel has anointed David to be king in Saul's place and as the youth cannot deny the fact a breach opens between Saul and him, between the bride of a day, Michael, and her husband, and only that eternal friendship of David and Jonathan is not broken. Jonathan is like a rock of basalt. But now is Saul ruined in spirit with the loss of David and of the love between them. The witch of Endor plays no part in all this. She does not hear of it till two months later (act v.) and cries in love and pity, "O, Saul! Thou utterly forsaken one!"

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Abner had run out of the cave at the first sight of the ghost. Doeg tries to kill both Saul and Lurhamah, but is interrupted and killed by good old Abner, who comes back. Saul and Abner reviving from their swoon, Abner starts away at the sound of trumpets. Then comes the recognition between Saul and Lurhamah and the renewal for an immortal moment of their love. Saul's agonized cry that it is too late for love, he must die, Samuel had spoken it, is answered by Lurhamah's assurance of immortality: "You are not ruined and rejected, Saul. You shall live. The trumpets call, the hero must go."

"But my last moment thunders with such sound That all earth's voices mingle into it!"

he exclaims, something in the style of the speaker in Browning's "Child Roland":

"When noise was everywhere! It tolled, Increasing like a bell. . . . One moment knelled the woe of years."

With a last embrace Saul leaves his daughter and the bride of his soul, going to death in his present life but radiant and at peace in the certainty of the eternal love that is his and Lurhamah's. She rejects her gods, both fix their faith on love. Saul is able to forgive David his anointment by Samuel. The Eternal Feminine has saved Saul from death's embrace, "restored his soul" and found the true religion for herself and him. This passionate energy makes very effective.

The play as a whole, covering so many years, consists of a series of dramatic situations, which are nevertheless well knit together, though the "Witch of Endor" is rather a background figure between the close of Act II and Act V. Of course it is her renunciation still, this keeping away and the communication flowers, like a and the salvant, in the salvation of Saul at the last. From the ruin to which active Doeg contributed, the inactive, patient water, Lurhamah, succeeds in rescuing her beloved. There is skillful construction in it all, and thought, but not too much of it. Mr. Norwood is to be congratulated on a very considerable achievement in this interesting work, which ought to be popular on the stage.

—W. F. T.

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