

THE NATIONALISTS AND THE NAVY

THE Nationalist influence in the Borden Government has been paralyzing. It completely paralyzed the whole Administration during the entire first year of its existence so far as action of any kind on naval defence was concerned. It rendered impossible from the outset, and still renders impossible, any pronouncement of a permanent naval policy by the Prime Minister, because Mr. Borden has given his word to the Nationalists, and the Nationalists have given their word to their constituents, that there will be no permanent policy without an appeal to the people. An appeal to the people is manifestly the last thing Mr. Borden desires, as witness his broken promise, publicly given on more than one occasion, that if denied by parliament the thirty-five millions for "emergency" purposes, he would appeal from parliament to the country. This same Nationalist influence rendered necessary an "emergency" policy, when there was no "emergency", as the only basis of compromise possible with the jingo imperialists. It accounts for the empty ships the Government proposed to send to Britain. With such a proposal Mr. Pelletier's followers in Quebec might state to their constituents, as he did in parliament, that Mr. Borden's scheme would render it unnecessary for Canada to supply any men, and that in case of conflict, the fighting would be done by "the English." This same influence controls the administration at this moment, allowing months to pass, and year to succeed year without anything being done by the Dominion towards carrying out the unanimous resolution of parliament of March, 1909 respecting the defence by Canada of her own coasts as part of the common defence of the Empire. This influence will continue to control when parliament meets, obliging Mr. Borden to find further excuses for avoiding a permanent policy, and compelling him to devise further devious and circuitous routes towards centralization in imperial affairs which is the end he is really seeking to serve.

FROM GRIT TO TORY

TORYISM has always found its stronghold in "the interests." Whether it has been land seeking to maintain its monopoly, or manufacturers claiming higher protection, or railways looking for subsidies, or banking corporations pressing for additional privileges from parliament, wherever, through the endeavour of government to enlarge the bounds of freedom for the mass of men, plutocracy in any form has thought its position of privilege threatened or assailed, it has rallied under the flag of Toryism in order to "conserve" its alleged rights. This is Conservatism undisguised. It has been during times of struggle for a wider liberty, that men fettered by the allurements of wealth or social prestige, professing Liberalism while Liberalism held the day, have openly forsaken the principles which gave them the common touch with the masses and enrolled themselves permanently with the privileged classes. The history of Conservatism in Canada has been no exception in this particular to the history of Conservatism the world over.

MR. CHURCHILL, THE ADMIRALTY AND THE SELF-GOVERNING DOMINIONS

NO more valuable or opportune contribution to the Naval controversy has appeared than a small pamphlet entitled "Mr. Churchill, The Admiralty and the Self-Governing Dominions," by Outis, published in London, England, during July by the National Press Agency Limited. It is "A Short Examination of Admiralty Intervention in the Sphere of Imperial Politics." Not less valuable than the pamphlet is the foreword by Mr. W. H. Massingham, for some years the Editor of The Chronicle and the present Editor of The Nation. This foreword is here quoted in part, as being "An exposition of the true attitude of Liberalism" towards Naval defence, whether it be in Great Britain, Australia, Canada, or among any of the other self-governing British peoples."

Mr. Massingham says:

"The following pamphlet is a clear and powerful statement of the case between the British Admiralty and the self-governing British peoples in regard to naval defence. It is also, and necessarily, an exposition of the true attitude of Liberalism, from which the policy of naval contribution is a departure. The history of that policy is divided into three chapters. The first chapter exhibits the Admiralty in an effort to press upon the Colonial Ministries the idea of a single Imperial Navy, directed from the centre, and fed by voluntary levies, in the shape of grants of money, men, or ships, from the Dominions. The second shows the breakdown of this idea, and the reversion, under Mr. McKenna, to the sounder conception of local Colonial navies, organized for Colonial purposes, but subject to the call of the Motherland in case of need. This, in brief, is the policy of co-operation, as opposed to that of contribution. It has the great advantage of stimulating the affectionate feeling of the younger British nations for the Motherland, while preserving their constitutional rights and responsibilities, and uniting payment and control. It also follows the general line of development of Colonial statesmanship in regard to defence.

The third chapter records a sharp and sudden reversion, under Mr. Churchill's guidance, to the most obsolete policy of contributions. Readers of this pamphlet will find it stated with great moderation of phrasing and argument, and, I venture to think, with an appeal to principles which are innate in Liberalism. In practice, the reintroduction of the centralised conception of naval defence has already broken down. Incidentally, it has given fresh vitality to our dying differences with Germany; but this, we may well hope, is an incidental and passing misfortune. It is of far greater consequence to avert a breach of good feeling between the Motherland and the Dominion, and to secure, while there is yet time, a reversion to the wiser policy of 1909.

We are all scaring each other (into fresh expenditure and no country in the world has the courage to stand up against it.—

David Lloyd George.