

AN IMPERIAL COCKTAIL.

THE Conservative Press of October 6th, has the following reference to cablegrams exchanged between the Premiers of Canada and Australia on the occasion of the official reception in Australia of battleships for the Australian Naval Service.

"Cordial greetings have just passed between Premier Borden and the first minister of the Australian Commonwealth, Hon. Joseph Cook, on the completion of the battleship Australia and the cruiser Sydney.

"The Canadian premier cabled as follows: 'The Government, on behalf of the people of Canada, tender their congratulations on the occasion of the official reception of the battleship Australia and the cruiser Sydney. Be assured that Canada stands shoulder to shoulder with Australia and the other overseas dominions in the firm resolve to safeguard our common heritage.

"Premier Cook's reply contains the same strong note of imperial unity.

"'Cordial thanks', it ran, 'for kind congratulations. Heartily reciprocate their brotherly spirit. We are celebrating today the completion of an Australian unit of the Empire's peace-compelling navy, gladly sharing the obligations for the defence of the whole King's Dominions. In this spirit we greet our Canadian brothers. May the cement of Empire set ever more firmly as our navies grow'."

These cables will stand a second reading. When it is remembered that Canada, through Mr. Borden, has broken faith with Australia in failing to carry out the agreement reached at the Admiralty Conference in the summer of 1909, whereby Canada and Australia were each to organize Naval Services under the control of their own Parliaments, the assurance of the Canadian Premier sounds a little gratuitous.

It will be observed that Premier Cook's thanks were of necessity confined to the "congratulations" extended, and that it was the "spirit" alone which Australians felt it in their power to reciprocate. The care with which Premier Cook points out that Australia is celebrating the completion of the Australian unit must have made Premier Borden feel that there was something wanting in substance in the assurances he sent Australia.

These cablegrams remind one of the story of the man who was

famished for want of food, and whose friends told him that what he required was a cocktail. Having partaken of this drink, and asked how he felt, the hungry man, thinking that the cherry was the only nourishment provided, replied: "I can't say I think very much of its substance, but I like the spirit in which it is given."

No doubt the Australians feel that they would like on the part of the Borden Government a little more evidence of accomplishment and a little less in the way of assurances. In the meanwhile their courtesy compels them to reply to what Mr. Borden sends in the way of greeting—they like the spirit in which it is given.

HON. W. S. FIELDING, EDITOR.

HON. W. S. Fielding will actively assume in December the chief-editorship of The Montreal Telegraph. His return to the sphere of journalism as head of a great Liberal daily is a gain to the whole public life of Canada and to Liberalism as well as to the newspaper which has been fortunate enough to secure his services. It ensures for The Telegraph, which recently absorbed the late Daily Witness, an editor-in-chief of long experience in public affairs, alert mind, and sound judgment. It means to the cause of Liberalism the active re-entry of Mr. Fielding into the fight for progressive, honest and efficient government in Canada, as a leader and moulder of public opinion. The whole public life of Canada gains the continued service of a man of broad-visioned statesmanship, of high sense of honor and of splendid ability.

Mr. Fielding first entered journalism on the Halifax Morning Chronicle, in 1864, at the age of sixteen. By rapid and well-merited promotions he reached the post of managing-editor. He left that position in 1884 to accept the Premiership of Nova Scotia which office he held continuously until 1896, when he became Minister of Finance in the Laurier Ministry. His Federal record of sixteen years as a consummate Parliamentarian, and as an honest and successful administrator of the Dominion's finances, is written in the progress

and prosperity of Canada during his term of office and in the esteem and honor, which all Canadians, irrespective of party, now accord him.

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