

GOSSIP FROM PARLIAMENT HILL

Some Points For and Against the Navy Contribution—Mr. Ames' Keenly Logical Mind—Flowery Style of J. A. M. Aikens.

OTTAWA, Dec. 28.—The outstanding event of the last week in parliament before the Christmas holidays was the speech of Hon. Geo. E. Foster, which not only cheered up the supporters of the government but sent them home jubilant. It was a great effort, but to say that it was the greatest effort of his life would be unjust to Mr. Foster. It was a party speech designed to put life and vigor into the followers of the government; intended rather to keep Conservatives in line with their party than to convince Liberals or independent voters that the policy of the government was, after all, the best. Thus, slings and arrows were directed towards Sir Wilfrid Laurier calculated rather to stir up party bitterness than to ally party strife.

Mr. Foster had the best of the argument, as the government has the best of the argument in maintaining that the most direct and efficient way to aid the empire, at this moment, is by a prompt and direct contribution. Canada has enjoyed the protection of the Imperial navy so long without contributing anything towards its maintenance and support that she can well afford to make a generous gift or pay up the old score, and nearly every one agrees to this; the point in dispute seems to be what shall be the permanent policy of the government?

At first blush, the opposition seem to be in an untenable position, when they declare that cash contributions or their equivalent is to be the permanent policy of the Conservative government while those authorized to speak for that government may the contrary; or, at least, maintain that the permanent policy has not been discussed, but that the government has formulated. But when one examines the debate there is some reason for the contention that some supporters of the government, if not the government, are disposed to make cash contributions a periodical affair. Thus, the arguments against starting the Canadian navy are the same that were advanced three years ago, and might be equally pertinent three years hence.

We are told, to begin with, that we have not the facilities for building ships in Canada, and that even if we could build the ships we could not find any Canadian to man them. Mr. Stevens of British Columbia maintains that his province would not furnish a sailor to any Canadian dreadnought, but the British Columbia mariners are of dreadnoughts on her shores, and in any other province in Canada. For this Mr. Stevens blames the Laurier government, which, he says, has refused to land in British Columbia and crowd the white fishermen out of business. But in the Maritime Provinces there are seventy or eighty thousand fishermen, but these, we are told, will not enlist. They do not enlist, we are told, for service on the ships. Mr. Ames, however, suggests that sailors are not needed on dreadnoughts, but machinists, and these are to be trained, and they cannot be trained without ships. The argument thus presented seems to go around in a vicious circle. We are told on one breath that ships will be used because we cannot get any more, and we are told in the next breath that it is no use to enlist any men because we have no ships on which to place them.

It may be true that in 1909 we were utterly unable to form a Canadian navy either by building ships or enlisting men; the same conditions may obtain today. Will not the same conditions obtain five, ten or twenty years from now? If so, here anything we can do except to keep on contributing? Put in this fashion the Liberal charge against the administration appears to have more foundation.

Mr. H. B. Ames, of Montreal, who has a keenly logical mind, says that the policy of the government and the policy of the opposition are very much alike; resembling two trains running on parallel tracks. He rather spoiled the simile, however, by suggesting that the trains are running in opposite directions; a good many people believe that they are running in the same direction; that the government train is running on the main track, and that the Liberal program is merely a cut-off on the turnout, which will eventually make a running siding and become the rear section of the government express. Mr. Ames foreshadowed something of this kind when he said that the government had established shipyards in Canada, which would soon turn out cruisers and smaller vessels for the admiralty, and for the possible Canadian navy of the future, and that at the head of the Canadian navy of the future could be placed the three great dreadnoughts to be built with the \$35,000,000. This would contemplate that Canada was an "Indian river" she is giving three dreadnoughts to Britain, but she is liable to take back the present hereafter.

To avoid this appearance of an "Indian river," both Mr. Foster and Mr. Ames argue that Canada is not making a gift to Great Britain at all, but that as a part of the empire, she is contributing to the common defence of the empire.

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empire. Mr. Ames, developing this idea, quite frankly declared that Canadians need not insist in the future as they have done in the past upon autonomy. Thus, he said: "Autonomy, which was the slogan of the last century, has done its work, accomplished its purpose, and belongs to the last century, it does not belong to the world of today."

He then proceeded to show that Canadians had obtained representative government, and had no reason to fear that the boon would ever be taken from them. He more than intimated that Canada might become a state or province of the British Empire, with its legislature attending to local affairs, while the supreme government would be in a parliament of the empire. To quote:

"The spirit of the Canadian constitution is full of this idea. The idea of a unit within a unit. We have the municipality making its own bylaws, collecting its own taxes, looking after its own local affairs, absolutely autonomous within its own sphere of action, although it lies within the province. Again, we have the province completely supreme in the matters which are relegated to its control, although it lies within the Dominion. And I say the day is coming when the Dominion will hold the same relation to the empire that the province holds to the Dominion."

The objection to this, which will be urged quite strongly, is that in practice we find the municipality constantly encroached and interfered with by provincial legislation; and provincial rights constantly infringed upon by the Dominion government. Will not the tendency be toward centralization? Indeed, Mr. Foster hints at legislative union between Britain and the daughter states of the empire.

Mr. J. A. Aikens, the Conservative member for Brandon, opened the debate with one of the most flowery speeches ever heard in parliament. Mr. Aikens came to the house preceded by a great reputation for oratory but it may be said without offence that he has never acquired the parliamentary style of speaking. Some very eminent men have been unsuccessful in the past in the House of Commons. Sir John Aylesworth, for example, was a logical speaker and his speeches made in the house read exceedingly well in Hansard, but there was always a certain strangeness, or eloteness, in his style of speaking. Hon. Mackenzie King, who had no training in any other kind of public speaking to unfit him for parliament and was most anxious to succeed as a parliamentarian, was never able to catch the tone of the House. Mr. Aikens came to the house with a wide experience as a public speaker but his addresses so far have been somewhat strangely to his fellow-members, perhaps unaccustomed to showy rhetoric. His speech in the main was a good one but he addressed the house much as his fellow-speakers do in the House of Commons, speaking from a public platform, moving about and gesticulating freely. His preparation was couched in the following rather bold collection of metaphors and poetical fancies:

"When these three splendid Canadian dreadnoughts float in grim silence and power with the other dreadnoughts of the British fleet and a Canadian minister advises on its control whatever complaint has been made—such as the mentioned by the right hon. gentleman as to people in England, in ignorance giving away portions of land which otherwise might be part of Canadian territory—these complaints will absolutely disappear and every foot of farm land, every mineral vein, every waving tree-top, every one of the loving line and every fish that cuts in the joy the Canadian waters, every towering church-spire, every bowed worker, every humble home, and every happy fireside, will be of as much interest and as carefully guarded as the very beatings of the heart of the British Empire, the beatings of its own existence. While these clouds and that darkness surround the British Empire, they separate for a moment, and thru the rift comes a ray of light. It falls upon that tree of empire. It falls upon the tree of empire whose branches extend and strengthen to union and healing of the nations, and before that tree of empire stands Canada; the young shepherd of the empire, ready, because of his healthfulness, because of his experience, full of courage, because Canada has been soundly reared with the wilds of prairie and of forest; in his sling and pouch are three smooth stones, and there stands before that tree of empire an aggressor armed from top to toe in steel. And in his hand he holds a sharpened battle-axe ready to cut down that tree. But he stands, for he hears that young shepherd of the empire, Canada, saying:

"Aggressor, spare that tree! Touch not a single bough; In youth it sheltered me, And I'll stand by it now."

Appropos of the naval debate there was an amusing colloquy in the house the other day between Hon. J. D. Hazen, Minister of Marine, and his ancient enemy, Hon. Wm. Pugsley. It appeared that the floating dry dock, the Duke of Connaught, recently placed in position in Montreal, escaped payment of duty by registering itself as a ship. To this Mr. Pugsley took exception, and Mr. Hazen, in defence of his department, read from English authorities to show that anything like a coal barge, for example, which was hollowed out for cargo and would float upon water was in the eyes of the law a ship. Mr. Pugsley looked upon this definition of a ship as empty soda water bottles could be registered, but Mr. Hazen pointed out that it would not be of sufficient size to carry cargo. The Canadian Deer proposes to begin the Canadian navy, might more aptly fall under this somewhat elastic legal definition of a ship.

Minister Has Appendicitis. ST. JOHN, N.B., Dec. 28.—Rev. George Gordon Edwards of Calgary, here with his wife and two children on their way to England, was stricken with appendicitis today and was operated on in the General Hospital. His condition is reported as critical.



ROBERT LORAIN, IN "MAN AND SUPERMAN," AT THE PRINCESS WEEK OF JAN. 6.

No Election on Naval Issue Liberals Leave Grant Alone

(Continued from Page 1.)

his bill to revise the Bank Act it was evident from the questions that rained in upon him from all sides that there is a keen interest throughout the country in the banking and currency question. Ordinarily when a bill is read the first time members listen with interest but in silence to the explanation of its terms by the minister presenting the same. This was not the case, however, when the bill to revise the bank charters came before the house for a first reading. Members interrupted the minister's statement, eager to put some question as to some particular section or to ask about the general policy of the government.

It would seem, in the first place, that the outside audit proposed by the bill does not go far enough to satisfy many people. True, the stockholders of the bank elect the auditor who is said to be independent of the board of directors, but the ordinary man knows well enough that the directors usually hold enough proxies to control the annual meeting of shareholders and to elect whom they please as auditor as well as to re-elect themselves as directors. One good feature of course in the power given to the finance minister to direct the auditor of the bank to report to him when there is obscurity or uncertainty in the monthly bank statement submitted to the finance department. But on the other hand the minister, under the present bill, has no power to act on such information and Mr. White may be confronted some day with a situation somewhat similar to that which more than once confronted Mr. Fielding during his term of office. Indeed, the White bill is almost a replica of the Fielding bill introduced a year ago and indicates a reluctance on the part of the government to assume any responsibility for or supervision of the business of the various chartered banks.

Practically No Control. Mr. Cochrane has intimated that he will propose a number of amendments to the railway act, and these may, in effect, codify or even renege the legislation. For one thing, something must be done to make the Railway Commission less cumbersome and unwieldy. As it is at present, four or five members of the commission get on a special car or special train, and go in a body to the place where they are to perform their duties. This is a very costly and often a very inconvenient mode of transportation. It would be well to engage a great part of the time in examining into some phase of the railway work, such as telegraph, telephone, or express matters, so that every member would become somewhat of an expert on some branch of the commission's work. Of course, this is only one of many subjects to be considered in this regard, but the slow progress made by the commission in dealing with the Western freight rates, has attracted attention to the methods of the commission and to its limitations.

Too Much Detail. Sir George Murray, in his excellent report, points out that the cabinet, or governor-in-council, proceeds in much the same cumbersome manner as the Railway Commission. The cabinet meets almost every day, and often in a room where the minister of the day is not present. It is not considered that he had to sign with the cabinet a lot of detail which should be left to the minister of the day. It is not enough time to consider the big questions of policy for which they are responsible. Hon. F. D. Monk, when minister of public works, complained that he had to sign with the cabinet a requisition for a blotter needed upon his desk, and was kept busy with an immense amount of detail which he said in other countries is never reached or troubled a cabinet minister.

MISS WALKER'S SUCCESS. Miss Mildred Walker, the popular entertainer, appeared in Grimsby, Dec. 26, for the annual high school concert. After commenting favorably on the other artists, The Hamilton Spectator, Dec. 23, says: "The star of the evening however, was Miss Mildred Walker, of Toronto, soprano and elocutionist. Miss Walker's attractive stage appearance, her versatility in pathos and humor, her flexibility of voice, and mastery of the art of facial expression, won for her the warm appreciation of the audience, calling forth round after round of applause. A grand finale to the program was a vocal duet, 'Excelsior' by Miss Walker and Mr. Arthur Brown their voices blending beautifully."

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS. Lively interest, too, promises to be taken in the transportation question, and especially in the matters of railway capitalization and railway rates.

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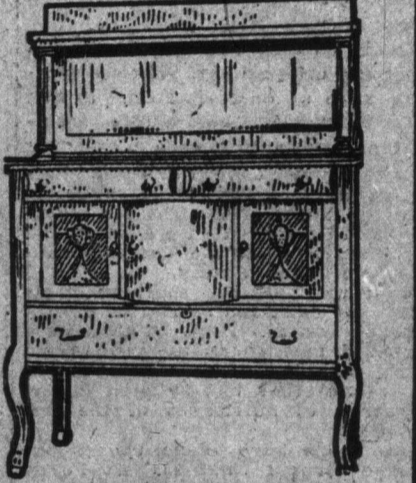


Columbia Records

If Santa Claus was good enough to make you a present of a talking machine, you'll probably want some nice records—some of your own favorite pieces. It doesn't matter what make of instrument you own, Columbia records will fit it. And you may be sure they'll please you, for there are none better. Big, double side (3 tunes) records 85

Buffets \$27.90

Some of them were regularly priced as high as \$42.50. A really fine collection of high-class designs that we are marking away down for Monday selling. 46 and 48-inch cases, made of selected quartered oak, fumed, golden and early English finishes; one design has three, others two cutlery drawers, one lined, full length linen drawer, double cupboard, best quality locks, with wooden trimmings; one design has long display shelf, others plain back with full length heavy British bevel mirror. Regular prices up to \$42.50. Special on Monday for 27.90



Wilton Art Squares Very Much Reduced 50 only, in floral and Oriental patterns, with medallion centres, in browns, tans, greens, reds, blues, suitable for parlors, dining-rooms and dens, size 9 x 12 feet. Regularly worth \$50.00. All clearing on Monday for only 34.50

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A thoroughly dependable Davenport, exactly like cut, solid oak frames, finished in golden, early English or fumed, as desired; davenport is equipped with upholstered spring back, and a well filled all felt mattress, comfortable spring and under tray for extra bed clothes, etc., covered in best grade two-toned striped green, brown denim. Regularly \$34.50. Special Monday at 24.75

Monday Sale of Draperies

Brass Beds Only \$12.95

In bright or combination satin finish, 2-inch posts, with large flat grooved high head and with full drop extension foot, each having six 2 1/2-inch rollers with massive rod ends in best quality English lacquer—absolutely guaranteed. Regularly \$20.00. On sale Monday \$12.95.

Madras Muslins Rich glass effects; a large range of mixed or two-tone colorings, suitable for living-rooms, halls, etc.; 40 inches wide. Regular prices range up to \$1.00 per yard. Monday, per yard 49

Cretonnes Fine quality of English prints, dainty effects, suitable for bedrooms, in shades of blue, rose or green, etc.; 30 inches wide. Regular price per yard, 50c. Special on Monday at 19

Portieres Made to order for any sized arch up to 6 feet wide by 7 feet high, including measuring and hanging; a large range of any material up to 1 1/2 per yard, including ruffles, hoppers, armures, etc.; corded edges; a nice assortment of colorings to select from. Regular price \$21.00 per pair. Monday, per pair 13.95

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We make it extremely easy to buy a good range or heater by accepting a small amount down and balance in little sums after. Here are three that are under regular cost for Monday. Buy them on credit if you like, without extra charge.

"Domestic Treasure" Steel Range \$36.75
4 only, with 6 holes on top, deep firebox, duplex grate, drop oven door, full nickel-plated with high warming oven, guaranteed splendid baker. Our regular \$46.00 range. Special on Monday at 36.75

"Crown Treasure" Base Burner \$32.25
4 only, base burner, double heaters, automatic swing top, fancy urn, full nickel-plated, nice front, large ashpan, duplex grate, a splendid heater. Reg. \$47.00 worth \$37.50. Monday only 32.25

"British Treasure" Heater \$35.75
6 only, No. 8, the latest design, with removable nickel, polished top, firebox, duplex grate, steel oven—the nicest finished and the best baking stove on the market. Regular price \$44.00. Special on Monday for 35.75

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