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Future Resources of British Empire

Sir C. A. Parsons Says Britain Must Discover Some New Source of Power, to Maintain Her Present Problem.

BOURNEMOUTH, England.—After a lapse of three years the British Association for the Advancement of Scientific Knowledge resumed its annual meetings at Bournemouth this year. The presidential address was delivered by Sir C. A. Parsons, K.C.B., D. Sc., F. R. C. The advances in engineering during the last 70 years, he said, were too many and too complex to allow of their description, however short, in one address, and he had decided to refer only to some of the most important features of this wide subject. In reviewing the past, he continued, it appears that England has gained her present proud position by her early enterprise, and by the success of the Watt steam engine, which enabled her to be the first country to develop her resources in coal, and led to the establishment of her great manufactures and her immense mercantile marine.

James Watt had considered the practicability of the turbine, he continued. The turbine of today carries the expansion of steam much further than has been found practicable in any reciprocating engine, and owing to this property it has surpassed it in the economy of coal. Turbines have become the recognized means of generating electricity from steam on a large scale, although they have not superseded the Watt engine for pumping mines or drawing coal. Referring to the large increase in the engine power of ships, he said that in the Royal Navy the engine power of battleships had increased from 12,000 horsepower to 30,000 horsepower before the war, while the speed advanced from 17 knots to 23 knots. During the war the power obtained with geared turbines on the Courageous class was 100,000 horsepower with a speed of 32 knots, while in destroyers speed up to 39 knots had been obtained.

Developing the Steam Engine.
While on the subject of steamships, he continued, it might perhaps be opportune to say one word as to their future development. The limiting factor to further development in size is the depth of water in the harbors. With this restriction removed there is no obstacle to building ships up to 1000 feet in length or more, provided the volume and character of the traffic are such as to justify the capital outlay.

Probably the most interesting development during the war, Sir Charles said, has been the extensive application of sound-listening devices for detecting and localizing the enemy. The sound-ranging apparatus developed by Professor Bragg and his son, by which the position of an enemy gun can be determined from electrically recorded times at which the sound waves from the gun pass over a number of receiving stations, has enabled the British

fish artillery to concentrate their fire on the enemy's guns, and often to destroy them.

The successful development of sound-ranging apparatus on land led to the suggestion by Professor Bragg that a modified form could be used to locate under-water explosions. It has been found that the shock of an explosion can be detected hundreds of miles from its source by means of a submerged hydrophone, and that the time of the arrival of the sound wave can be recorded with great precision. At the end of the war the sound-ranging stations were being used for the detection of positions at sea, required for strategic purposes. The same stations are now being used extensively for the determination of such positions at sea as light-vessels, buoys which locate channels, and obstructions such as sunken ships. By this means ships steaming in fog can be given their positions with accuracy for ranges up to 500 miles.

Aeroplane and Airship.

Referring to the increase of the British Air Service during the war and in view of the recent Atlantic flights, Sir Charles stated that he felt it would be being equal. On the other hand, with the airship the advantage increases with the size, as in the case with all ships. The airship appears to have a great future for special commerce where time is a dominant factor and the demand is sufficient to justify a large airship. It has also a great field in the countries where other means of communication are difficult. The only limitation to size will be the cost of the airship and its sheds, just as in steam vessels it is the cost of the vessels and the cost of deepening the harbors that limit the size of the Atlantic liners.

The president then went on to the discussion of the supply and use of electricity, which have developed so rapidly during the last few years. The greatest element in reducing the cost of electricity, he pointed out, is the provision of a good load factor; in other words, the utilization of the generating plant and mains to the greatest extent during the 24 hours of each day throughout the year. This is a far more important consideration than the size of the station; and it is secured to the best advantage in most cases by a widespread network of mains, supplying a diversity of customers and uses each requiring current at different times of the day.

Sir Charles then went on to review the present trend of developments in harnessing water power and using up the fuel resources of the world for the use and convenience of man, and he emphasized the necessity of discovering some new source of power if England was to maintain her present position for an indefinite period.

Exploring the Earth's Interior.

As to the new sources of power, he continued, there is another alternative to that of molecular energy which appears to merit attention. In an address which he stated, he gave in 1904, he discussed the question of sinking a shaft to a depth of 12 miles, which is about ten times the depth of any shaft at present in existence. The estimated cost, he said, was £5,000,000 and the time required about 85 years. When it is considered that the cost of such a shaft is not much more than the cost of one day's war to Great Britain alone, the expense seems trivial as compared with the possible knowledge that might be gained by an

investigation into this unexplored region of the earth.

In Italy, at Lardarello, bore holes have been sunk which discharge large volumes of high pressure steam, which is being utilized to generate about 10,000 horsepower by turbines. At Solfatara, near Naples, a similar project is on foot to supply power to the great works in the district. The whole question to the future resources of the British Empire, Sir Charles said, demands the serious attention of all natural scientists. In such a task some people might suggest they need encouragement and assistance from the government of the country, but surely they had this in the great experimental step toward this which was being taken by the government at the present time.

Dealing with the uncontrolled use on the part of a nation of the power which physical science has placed within its reach with which to menace civilization, he concluded by saying that physical science had forged the remedy by making the world a small arena for the activities of civilization, by reducing distance in terms of time. Alliances and unions had therefore become possible on a wider and grander scale, thus uniting nations in a great League to maintain order, security, and freedom for every individual, and every state and nation, liberty to devote their energies to the controlling of the great forces of nature for the use and convenience of man, instead of applying them to the killing of each other.

About the Streets of Havana.

"Many of the streets of Havana," says A. Hyatt Verrill in "The Book of the West Indies," "are as narrow as bypaths, and lead, like canons dim and cool with shadows, between Spanish buildings, the tiled fronts and jutting balconies with scarce a dozen feet of space between them."

"Great archways in ponderous walls lead to huge colonnaded patios wherein fountains splash, birds sing, and flowering plants fill the air with perfume; . . . while the tinkle of guitars and the strains of soft Spanish music mingle with the roar of traffic and the honk of automobile horns."

"For ancient, picturesque, and delightfully foreign as are these byways of old Havana, yet through them flows a constant stream of modern traffic, pedestrians of every class, color, and race; rubber-tired victorias; mule-drawn drays and oxcarts; ponderous motor trucks and vans; rushing motor delivery vans; scotch purring limousines and clanging trolley cars. Marvellous it seems that the narrow lanes can accommodate the jam, . . . but the traffic moves swiftly and with scarce a hitch, for the police are efficient, and the drivers skilful."

"Overhead, during the sunny hours of the day, stretch canopies gay with color, gorgeous with painted advertisements and strange Spanish names and which, far above the streets, form a covered way like an oriental bazaar between the stores of the shopping districts. And such shops! No dingy, dusty, old-fashioned affairs are these, but modern stores with enormous plate glass windows, brass and mahogany fronts, and within which every article known to the world may be found."



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Newfoundland and Union.

The question of the union of Newfoundland with Canada is not at all a live issue in this country. In this respect, however, it is very much to the fore in the present election campaign in Newfoundland that each party is declaring loudly that it would not have anything to do with a plan to link the island up with Canada and that the other party is scheming to accomplish this wicked purpose.

The St. John's Advocate, the organ of the Coaker wing of the Opposition forces, offers what is described as "Proof" that Mr. Coaker "was not mixed up in any Confederation scheme" and denounces the Government leaders as being concerned in just such a scheme. The "Reids and the Canadian vultures," the paper says, "are watching and waiting for bad times to strike this colony," waiting, presumably for the opportune moment to force union. Confederation, the Advocate says in another passage, would mean "the death-knell of all local industries. When Confederation comes the factories will have to close and thousands of workmen will be thrown out of employment. Under Confederation, we would be under the heel of A. B. Morline, who would hold the office of Lieutenant-governor, and we should be the servants of Canadian speculators."

On the other hand, the St. John's Telegram, a Government Journal, accuses Mr. Coaker and Hon. R. A. Squires, the leader of the second wing of the Opposition group, of plotting Confederation. Referring to a trip made to Canada by Mr. Coaker a year or two ago the Telegram asserts that "all the proceedings there" were "part of the Reid scheme for Confederation." To force Newfoundland into union with Canada is declared by the paper to be "the object for which the Squires campaign is being so generously supplied with money by Canadian capitalists."

Canadians must be a worse lot than they had ever themselves suspected. Or, at all events, there must be some people in Newfoundland who think Canadians a bad lot; the Advocate and Telegram would scarcely give space in their fantastic declarations if they did not believe that they would appeal to some people in the country. But "Canadian vultures" is putting it a bit strong, even for an election article. Possibly the Reid—that is, the Reid-Newfoundland Company—desire the union of the two countries; maybe Morline desires it or Cashin or Coaker or Squires; but the good people of Newfoundland may rest easy in their beds; far from engaging in dark plottings to "capture" Newfoundland the Canadian people are not even thinking about the union of the two countries. If Newfoundland ever desires to join the Canadian Confederation overtures to this end will not doubt be met in a cordial spirit but the first move must come from the Newfoundland people. Vultures which are eager to prey upon Newfoundland are a species unknown in this part of the world.—Sydney Record.

Lord Fisher's Stories.

"ULTIMATUM" TO LORD KITCHENER.

Lord Fisher's opinions on the Dardanelles adventure and the events which led to his resignation are described by him in a recent instalment of his memoir in The Times. He also tells the story of an "ultimatum" to Lord Kitchener to stop him from denuding the shipyards of men.

"Without any doubt," he writes, "the 'beseechings' of the Grand Duke Nicholas in the Caucasus on January 2, 1915 (for a demonstration against the Turks to relieve the pressure on the Russians), addressed to Kitchener in such soldierly terms moved that great man's heart; for say what you will, Kitchener was a great man."

"But he was a great deception, all the same, inasmuch as he couldn't do what a lot of people thought he could do. Like Moses, he was a great commander-in-chief, but he was not a Napoleon or a Malak; he was a Carnot in exiles, and he was the facile dupe of his own fallings."

"But speak well of those who treat you well." I went to him one evening at 6 p.m., with Mr. Churchill's knowledge, and said to him as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty that if his myrmidons did not cease that same night from seducing men from the private stoddard to become "cannon-fodder" I was going to resign at 6 p.m. I explained to him the egregious folly of not pressing on our shipbuilding to its utmost limits. He admitted the soft impeachment as to the seduction; and there, while I waited, he wrote the telegram calling off the seducers.

"If only that had been stuck at after I left the Admiralty, we shouldn't be rationed now in sugar nearly a year after the armistice, nor should we be bidding fair to become a second Carthage."

The Dummy Fleet.

From a letter by Lord Fisher to Lord Cromer in October 1916: "As to the Queen Elizabeth, Mr. Churchill is right in saying there was great tension between Kitchener and myself. He came over to the

Admiralty and when I said, "If the Queen Elizabeth didn't leave the Dardanelles that night I should," he got up from the table and he left and wrote an unpleasant letter about me to the Prime Minister! Lucky she did leave! The German submarines prowling around for a fortnight looking for her (and neglecting all the other battleships) blew up her duplicate wooden image."

Lord Fisher adds: "We had constructed a fleet of dummy battleships to draw off the German submarines. This squadron appeared with effect in the Atlantic and much confused the enemy."



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