

The Case for the Creation of a Canadian Navy

By D. D. Mann, in National Review for May

Those who anticipate a Canadian navy as pre-eminently an engine of Canadian patriotism may have a different point of view from many of those who, in the Imperial city, all the time think of the Empire first and its component parts secondarily. There is no necessary incompatibility between the two points of view. The problem of Imperial statesmanship is to converge diversities of approach into confederated action. I wish to indicate the lines upon which, it seems to me, the creation of a Canadian navy might contribute to this end.

In the United States one occasionally finds persons who believe that Canada pays money tribute to King Edward; and it is always an amusing experience to undeceive them. There is a certain amount of belief in Canada, that the Englishman regards this Dominion rather as a subordinate than as a partner in the Empire. What is sometimes alleged to be the unpopularity of the Englishman in Canada most likely arises from the fact that the education in Imperialism of some Englishmen amongst us has not proceeded as far as, knowing the views of the leaders of opinion in England, we have taught ourselves to expect.

We are sometimes said to be provincial. There is truth in the criticism. We sometimes think that the Londoner is the most provincial of all men, because he has the least appreciation of the great place which communities outside London occupy in Britain itself and in the Empire generally.

It is easier for the Englishman to think of the Empire as a whole than it is for the native-born Canadian. The place of England in the world was achieved long ago. England is also the centre of the Empire. If anything could destroy provincialism of mind in a man it should be his residence in the capital of such a country. Sometimes we wonder that the great advantages of such a position do not lead to more Imperial thinking. We imagine also that if the average Englishman could realize a little more than he seems to have done, when he first comes to Canada, that the Empire has become what it is because those who preceded him conquered wild parts of the earth, far removed from the British Islands; and that what has been done in the Britains beyond the seas within living memory is of a part with the achievements of men and women whose remoteness from today gives them a heroic aspect, the modern Empire would be even greater in his eyes than it is.

Canada is a new country. Such prestige as she has in the Empire and in the world is almost entirely of modern making; and even though our views on Imperial questions may not be quite as broad and disinterested as those of statesmen who have grown up in the most fortunate school in the world, we know, because we live here, that we are engaged in constructive work for the Empire, which, by comparison, is not second to that which is being accomplished by those who do their thinking and their work in the ancient capital.

If we did not approach Imperial questions from the standpoint of "Canada First," we should be very inferior Imperialists. Under any circumstances, our geographical and climatic distinction plus our nearness to an extraordinary republic of eighty millions of people, would determine our development on somewhat different lines from those which mark the progress of the Old Land. The best children are not always the most exact reproductions of their parents, even in early youth. And, when they marry and are given in marriage, they are found to be affected by new surroundings and ideas. A young nation, like a young man, should be something more than a chip off the old block.

In Canada there is a remarkable intermarrying of people and of ideas, which is a revelation to many older fashioned Canadians; and is doubly a revelation to those who come to us with the ideas and sometimes with the prejudices of the British Islands. The immigration returns of this century show that in Canada, and chiefly in Western Canada, there is a new population as varied in speech and racial characteristics as was and can be found in the most cosmopolitan city of the Old World. The Bible Society publishes the Scriptures in eighty different languages for use in the Dominion.

The immigrants from Continental Europe, when they know anything about England, know of it as a foreign country, and many of them have no friendly ideas about their new connection with it. During the last ten years nearly half a million Americans have come to Canada, with something of the prejudices against British institutions that comes from the public reading on every Fourth of July of the Declaration of Independence, with its interminable criticism of George the Third. Then, there are two million French-Canadians, and who, though they are more than loyal to the form of government that has achieved so much success in Canada, are not dominated by British ideas in the same way that the native-born Britisher is. In the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists, the devotion to British ideals of justice and methods of government has not produced that quality in the relation to the Mother Country which makes the Australian and South African of the second and third generation speak and write of England as "home."

Now, Canada represents herself to the incoming American and Galician—to take two extreme types—in an exceedingly favorable light. Each comes to better his material condition; and unless he is incompetent, or worse, he succeeds. Financial prosperity will go a long way to reconcile a man to the institutions of an alien country. But the Galician and the American find something more than better financial prospects. The Galician becomes a new man. The bugbear of military service does not rise up behind him, or before his children. He is in a world of unexpected independence. He knows nothing about the Empire, and he cares less. But he does learn something about Canada, and contentment with, and devotion to, the land of his adoption are as much as can reasonably be expected from him for some time. A British Imperial instinct cannot be created in him in a moment.

The American is very different from the Galician. He thinks he has observed England through the assertions of the Declaration of Independence, and through the coronets achieved by various heiresses whom he knows by repute. He was brought up in the tradition that Canada never did and never could amount to much; and when he became convinced that the country has fertile lands, good markets and excellent dividends to offer for his enterprise, he moved in, still thinking of the United States as the first, second and third country of all the world.

But in Western Canada he finds himself in an atmosphere more agreeable than he expected. If he has any acquaintance with new settlement in the Western and Northwestern States he is delighted to find that law and order, in the shape of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, preceded the settler. In new towns he finds churches more numerous than saloons. On the illimitable prairie, where he finds that in any township thirty-six square miles in extent, ten children reside, the parents can successfully demand a school, for the maintenance of which one-eighthent of all the land was set aside when the country was first surveyed.

To the American in Canada the incredible thing has happened. He has found it impossible to take the oath of allegiance to the descendant of George the Third; but in so doing he has not troubled himself to think that he has readjusted his relation to the peerage. His allegiance is given to Canada. It is surely not necessary to labor the point that in bringing the Galician and the American into the Empire, and affording to both of them honest administration of justice and unlimited opportunity to bear a high part in the making and observing of laws, the Dominion of Canada has made a noble contribution to the strength of the Empire itself, as well as to the broadening of her own bases of strength. For there will go on, more and more quickly, in an invigorating climate and on a fertile soil, a blending of races, which will eventuate in a type as virile and enduring as the English type itself became through the intermarriage of the different people who, from time to time, invaded the shores of Great Britain.

As the Empire is vaster than England, we do not seek merely to help our new population to become loyal to England. We very much desire their loyalty to the Empire, as we ourselves are loyal. But the first thing, the vital thing, is to secure their loyalty to Canada, and as one of the most important steps in that evolution, I would place the creation of a Canadian navy.

The navy will be a natural consequence of placing the Canadian militia on an entirely Canadian basis, and controlled altogether from Ottawa. There is, of course, this difference between a militia and a navy—that a land force is entirely suitable to a country which has no foreign relations, and does not have to prepare for possible quarrels with states beyond the seas; whereas a navy, by the very fact of its existence, proclaims the country which establishes it to be, in some degree, at least, a world power.

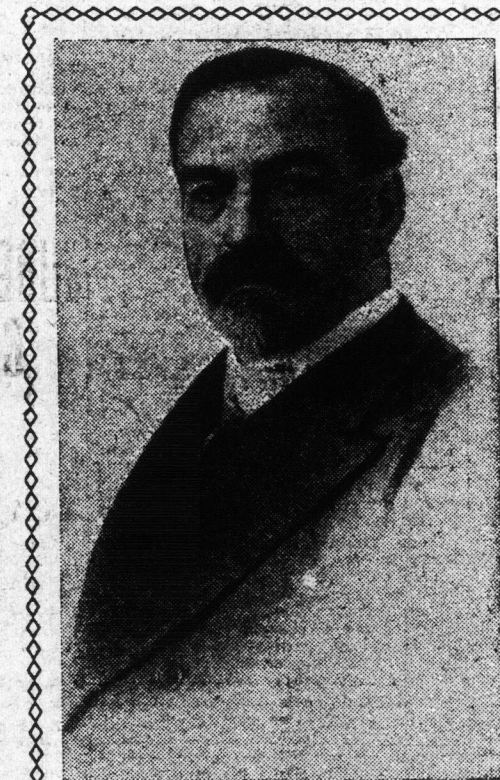
It might be argued that, for a country which has no foreign ministers, to have a navy of its own is an impossibility in international politics; and that there is no halfway between a navy of Canadian origin, subject absolutely to the direction of the British Admiralty, and a navy, the instrument of a totally independent power. If precedents were allowed to govern policies, this argument might have some weight; but, if the Empire had always waited for precedents, it would have ended long ago. This generation is just as capable of creating precedents as its forerunners were. There is no more reason why a Canadian navy should be wholly responsible to the Admiralty in London, than there is reason why the Finance Minister of Canada should be a creature of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

I do not conceive that Canada would propose to contribute to the cost of the Imperial navy, without direct representation on the Admiralty Board, and in the Parliament which reviews the cost and conduct of that body. We are quick to admit the force of the argument that inasmuch as the colonies are advantaged by the Imperial navy, they ought not to be entirely free from financial obligation. The fact that our share in the Empire is so essentially constructive, strengthens, if possible, the position on which great issues have before now been fought, with only one ending—that the people who provide the money shall absolutely control the spending of it. When the House of Lords controls money bills, and the Australian budget is revised in Whitehall, we shall no doubt receive gladly the idea that the Canadian people be

taxed for the Imperial navy. We have read enough of English history, and have had enough experience of our own, to know that the lynch-pin of self-government is this absolute control of taxes by the taxed.

Nor is it conceivable that Canada would desire to borrow or purchase vessels that have "obsoleted" from first-class service in the Imperial squadrons. It has been suggested and endorsed in the Times, that the Admiralty should lend us two or three obsolete vessels for policing our fisheries, as the first step in the discharge of Canada's duty to the naval development of the Empire. It is unwise to be contemptuous of small beginnings; and much may be said for the scheme of obtaining a few sea policemen that are too small or too slow for active service with, say, the Channel Squadron. But, if we are to deal with the question at all, we had better begin as though we mean business. To make a debut in second-hand clothes is to be too economical of dignity. We must assist our new citizens to understand that we are partners in the Empire, and not merely one of its poor relations. Where would a couple of poacher-catchers belong? Would they be creatures of the Marine Department, or would a little Admiralty be created for their direction?

The first consideration in any attempt to realize the naval possibilities of a country that overlooks the Atlantic and Pacific oceans is that it must wear the appearance of a thoroughly Canadian origin. To allow the impression to spread that, primarily, it is the financial stress of England which imposes new burdens on our people would jeopardize the movement. In starting a navy policy of our own there is no risk of establishing the



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idea that we have notions of a naval independence that will approximate to Holland or Greece. Our neighbors are rapidly emerging from the supposition that we are in a state of vassalage to England. By inaugurating a navy of our own, we should enhance the prestige of the Empire in the Republic; first, because it would be obvious that only in a truly great Empire could there be such interdependence of parts with the complete acquiescence of the original power; and secondly, the establishment of a navy on a thoroughly Canadian basis, but ready to act with and for the Mother Country, would be a standing sign of our contentment within the Empire, and an effectual proof of the futility of supposing that the relation could be broken.

We must develop the naval spirit. We must begin by training our youth within sight of our shores, rather than by looking for poachers on the high seas. For maritime activity there is a natural, healthy craving in all nations. No one is so foolish as to suppose that Canada would ever dream of a navy finally, regardless of Great Britain. Every discerning man would perceive that, whatever Canada did, would be merely an evidence of the strength of decentralization in an Imperial Government, based absolutely on the will of the governed.

Our maritime assets, so to speak, are three—the Atlantic seaboard, the Pacific seaboard, and the Great Lakes. Hitherto our defensive instincts have been served only by the militia. In view of the distribution of our population, I suspect that we have more drill halls and armories than England has. But it is anomalous that, with our great coast line in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and far Eastern Quebec, but young fellows, to whom sea legs come by nature, should be compelled into the militia, when their choice would be the marines.

The population of the interior should chiefly supply the militia force. But there is enough blood in the country which first came here in sailors to furnish a naval contingent—even if our many rivers and innumerable lakes did not swarm in summer with all kinds of pleasure craft, which promote a love of life afloat.

The pact which keeps armed vessels off the Great Lakes must never be broken. But the example of the United States in using the Lakes, even as far as Duluth, the western extremity of Lake Superior, as training grounds for her naval youth, should be followed. The further you are from the salt water the less likely are you to appreciate the importance of the oceans to the development of your national commerce. The greater is the need, therefore, of utilizing the Lakes to show your people that the carriage of ore and wheat in twelve-thousand-ton boats, is not the whole extent of your navigable interests.

In front of the Parliament Buildings at Toronto is a gun taken in the Crimean War. At Detroit recently I saw a gunless United States cadet ship—it was taken from the Spaniards. We cannot put such an advertisement of modern British naval history on the Lakes; because observant nations have been too wise to collide with Dreadnoughts. But we can find some means of repeating, on the Lakes, what has been done on the lawn in Queen's Park, and in other similar places. Where an out-of-date gunboat might be an irritant, some modern Arcturion might speedily provoke our naval emergence. Whatever the form, we must have the substance of naval training on the Lakes. Literally, we must teach the young idea how to shoot.

There must also be, of course, training stations on the Eastern and Western coasts. Halifax and Esquimaux are available. Nova Scotia has ideal marine conditions. British Columbia has, potentially, a great part to play in the Pacific. In winter the youngsters who had spent the summer on the Lakes would be sent, some to the Atlantic and some to the Pacific, to become masters of navigation by cruises to Europe, to the West Indies, to Australia and Japan. When Canadian warships are brought to Canadian coasts they must be equal with the best. We have observed the naming of battleships after counties in Britain, as we have seen the naming of similar United States vessels after different states of the Union. The propagandist tendency of patriotism has been born in us, as well as in the other English-speaking peoples.

The question of control—of relation to the Imperial Navy—is not difficult of solution. It may appear difficult to eyes accustomed to the measure of red tape, and to men of little faith in the cementing power of blood. In the first place, we should get our instructors from Great Britain. Even those who were not exactly delighted with the Imperial officers' part in the Boer war glory in the unquestioned pre-eminence of the British seaman. We know that, whoever would be loaned to us, would realize the difference between getting our instructors from England, and taking instructions from the same source. A very little tact, and capacity to excite enthusiasm, would imbue every Canadian cadet and seaman with the splendid traditions of the Navy, and make them feel their partnership in it. In peace times, everything would depend on the good sense of all parties to the arrangement—which is true of all political ententes.

But, as in peace we prepare for war, must not your plans, from the beginning, be based on the assumption that, at any moment, the discipline of warfare may become imperative? Somebody must give orders and somebody must obey. What would Canada do then? How are you to avoid the danger that would arise from the virtual independence of the Canadian navy? For does not independence mean possible neutrality, and, therefore, possible hostility?

Admit the apparent anomaly, and there is no need for alarm. Happily, against the fears of the littlefathers, we have the experience of the centuries. The presence of the Canadian contingent in South Africa was not surprising to us. We foresaw it, even when Lord Lansdowne was declining colonial aid. We knew it would happen, even when Sir Wilfrid Laurier was backing up his own views with the plea that there was no Parliamentary provision for participating in a quarrel seven thousand miles away.

It must not be supposed, though, that Canada, beforehand, will unreservedly pledge herself to fight for Britain.

The partnership idea has not yet reached that point of sacrificing every principle on which her national development thus far has been founded. If there are Canadian advocates of such a pledge they are in a hopeless minority. Nobody would dream of Great Britain making a treaty with the United States in reference to Canada, without consulting Canada. Canada has no formal, constitutional locus in negotiating between Great Britain and the United States. But, in practice, she is at Washington all the time; and we have lived to see the British Ambassador to the United States paying a visit to Ottawa and addressing public audiences in Canadian cities.

It is quite safe to leave open the question of whether a Canadian navy would have to fight in every British quarrel, for the double reason that the Foreign Minister and the Cabinet in London are Imperial statesmen, and Canada is not a Crown colony. In dealing with foreign affairs generally, the Imperial cabinet inevitably considers the probable attitude of the over-seas dominions towards any impending crisis. Anything on such a matter it does not know, it can easily find out, for the telegraph practically places the council chamber of every one of the overseas dominions next door to the council chamber at Whitehall.

The question of agreement with, or hostility to the Mother Country in any international quarrel, could never be governed by any hard and fast compulsion to fight in the Mother Country's cause. If the Mother Country could not win the sympathy of her kith and kin in her quarrel that would be a very strong presumption that her quarrel was not worth powder and shot. We are aware that sometimes war has to be risked secretly. But the risk is not so great as it seems, for no European powers will risk a serious war on some matter about which public feeling has not been roused. Wars are not made any more in the back parlors of irresponsible autocrats.

With the recent experience of southeastern Europe before us—an experience which, fifty years ago, would have resulted in war first and discussion afterwards—we are quite willing to take our chances of agreement with the Mother Country without a formal contract being entered into beforehand. And, as we should expect that the commanding officers would be selected because of their capacity to command, we should not be afraid to take our fighting instructions from such chiefs. When the time came it would be seen that the loyalty of the French-Canadian, of the American, of the Galician—of all the one-time aliens—would be transfused into a loyalty to the Empire which is greater than us all.

POSTSCRIPT

The foregoing was written at the suggestion of friends, after some remarks of mine at a public meeting in Victoria, before the disclosures of the naval situation as between Great Britain and Germany had led to the remarkable outburst of patriotism throughout the Empire. The Dominion Government, at the time of writing, is being urged to offer Dreadnoughts to the Mother Country, a method of showing our devotion to Imperial interests which I heartily approve. This development does not change my views—it only accentuates them. The chief naval necessity for Canada is still training schools for her youth; and the provision of one, two or three battleships would do much to stimulate the naval spirit of which I have written. But it should be expressly stipulated that any vessels so provided by Canada would be lent to the Admiralty until our own crews are ready to man them. The knowledge that ships were provided in this way would perhaps do more than anything else to achieve the creation of a Canadian navy.

Toronto, March, 1909.

A NATION'S HEIGHT

Some interesting remarks were made recently by John Gray, the secretary of the Anthropometrical committee of the British association, upon the cable reports that American college students are taller than their fathers and grandfathers. Mr. Gray said of the conditions in England:

"The aristocracy, landed gentry, and cultured professional classes are improving in stature, but diminishing in numbers. The artisan class is holding its own in height and numbers. The laboring class—the term includes the unskilled millions of the people in the slums, even the vagrants—is perceptibly declining in stature while it increases more rapidly in numbers than either of the other two. These conditions apply not only to this country but practically to all Europe."

Some of the interesting facts mentioned by Mr. Gray may be summarized: Scotsmen are the tallest in Europe (average height, 5 feet 8 inches); then come Scandinavian and English (5 feet 6 inches), and German, French and Italian. Through the conditions of life in the valley of the Nile, the physical type of the Egyptian peasantry has not varied in 1,000 years.

"The English race," said Mr. Gray, "is naturally tall. Thus a decline in stature for us might reasonably be said to spell a decline also in physical and mental energy. The stature of our manufacturing classes has been reduced far below the average of the country. The shortest people I have measured are those in the great towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire. They have, through new conditions of life, become quite a different type from the dwellers in the country."

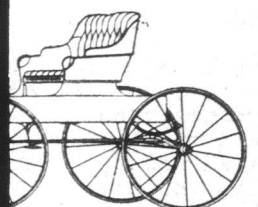
OLD-TIME ACTORS' EARNINGS

Richard Burbage, who was considered the best as well as the most popular actor of his day, received a regular salary of £130 a year (equal in present day money to £1,040), besides shares in the theatre, which brought in a large sum. An efficient actor received in 1635 as large a regular salary as £180, of which sum £1,440 is the modern equivalent. The lowest known valuation set an actor's wages at 3s a day, or in modern money about £360 a year. Shakespeare's emoluments as an actor before 1599 are not likely to have fallen below £800 in modern money; while the remuneration due to performance, at court or in noblemen's houses, if the accounts of 1594 be accepted as the basis of reckoning, amounted to some £120. Nell Gwyn got 20s a performance—about £4 in present value.

You are either a magnet that attracts all things bright, desirable, healthy and joyous—or one that draws all things disagreeable, gloomy, unhealthy, and destructive.—Dorothy Quig

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President American Bible Society.
New York, May 8.—The election of
Theophilus Anthony Brouwer, of this
city, as president of the American
Bible society, as successor to the late
D. Gilman, was announced yesterday.
Mr. Brouwer has been connected with
organized Bible work in New York for
sixty years, has been connected with
the American Bible society for forty-
two years and was vice-president of
the society for twenty-three years.

Good Fishing at Kokislah.
Kokislah Hotel, May 8.—Mr. Sloan,
M. P., and Mr. Scovell arrived in their
auto from Nanaimo on Monday even-
ing, fished on Tuesday morning in
Covichan River with W. C. Forney,
though, proprietor of the Kokislah Ho-
tel, and caught a beautiful basket of
large trout. The smallest weighed one
pound and one-half, and the largest
three and one-half. Both rivers are
in good order and there are plenty of
fish.

Fatality at Big Tunnel.
Winipeg, May 8.—Two men were
killed and two injured in a dynamite
explosion in the big tunnel at Field,
B. C. The killed are P. Zinichette,
an Italian, and Thomas Duff, a Scotch-
Canadian. The injured are J. Mc-
Dougal and P. J. Bonner.