

That Son-in-Law of Pa's—By Wellington

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CANADIANS TOO PROUD TO LET MOTHER COUNTRY BEAR THE ENTIRE BURDEN

Continued from Page Four

Organization of the Home Fleet.

The Home Fleet is divisible into three classes in accordance with the preparedness of the several divisions for immediate action.

There is the First Fleet, ever ready, with full complement of men with stores and ammunition aboard, ready to put to sea at an hour's notice.

The Second Fleet has nucleus crews—that is the trained men in the essential positions are ready, but the number of men would require to be increased before the vessel could be ready for active service.

The Third Fleet has reduced nucleus crew—it is well known however, where and how the balance of the complement can be obtained. Probably within a fortnight, the Third Fleet could follow the other divisions.

In the harbors of Portsmouth and Devonport may also be seen ships composing the material reserve, vessels of older design than those now in service—to be called into the fighting line only as a last resort.

It will be noticed that ships of like purpose and power are grouped together into squadrons and flotillas. The old idea of a so-called unit—composed of vessels of various classes—is no longer accepted as good tactics.

Eight battleships, of similar speed and power, form a squadron.

In this picture are seen most of the more recent types dealt with in the early part of the lecture. At sea they observe a uniform distance and

travel together under the command of an admiral.

Likewise the battle cruisers capable of making 27 knots an hour form the First Battle—cruiser squadron. These ships, having great fuel capacity, are especially useful for Imperial purposes.

The cruisers are also formed into cruiser squadrons of which, were the navy at full strength, there would be twelve.

Torpedo boats, whose purpose it is to "sting and fly away," and torpedo boat destroyers and submarines are all grouped into flotillas usually accompanied by a parent ship.

The Strength of the Fleet.

What determines the strength of the British navy. The sea power of her strongest possible enemy or combination of enemies.

Safe passage on every sea for merchant vessels that fly the British flag is absolutely essential to the life and continuance of the Empire.

The eight principal powers of the world are all building powerful navies.

While in the statement before us Britain's superiority seems beyond question, it must be remembered that the advent of the "Dreadnaught" greatly reduced the fighting value of earlier ships. Reckoned in terms of modern battleships Britain's navy is none too strong.

Germany was quick to appreciate the revolution brought about by the introduction of the all-big-gun ship. This nation realized that starting on a parity with Britain in ships of this character, she might hope to build a modern fleet of nearly equal strength. Thus we find that, reckoned in terms of super-dreadnaughts, Britain has in the spring of 1913, 22 ships to Germany's 12; this spring (1914) she has 29 to 21, and next spring she will have in commission 35 to 23.

Not long ago Mr. Winston Churchill proposed a naval policy. This offer was rejected by Germany. Admiral Von Tirpitz declared that the

naval act of 1912 would be carried out by Germany whatever course other nations might pursue.

Now British naval authorities are agreed that the British fleet must be 60 per cent. more powerful than that of any other power. We know what the strength of the German navy will be in 1920 for it is set forth in their Navy Bill. That fleet will then comprise, built and building, 61 capital ships. To maintain the rate of 10 to 10 Britain then must have by 1920 no less than 96 such ships. She must therefore build four or five more every year.

Does Britain Feel the Strain?

Let us consider whether Great Britain, rich and powerful though she be can indefinitely carry without strain the burden of defending the British Empire. Prior to 1910 the largest sum expended in any given year for new construction was about £11,000,000. It was £7,500,000 in 1908. But during the last three years the expenditure has averaged £15,000,000, or \$75,000,000 per year and this figure is maintained in the Estimates announced in March 1914.

The Program of 1913-14 shows that five battleships eight light cruisers, sixteen destroyers, and seven submarine—besides auxiliary craft, costing £15,953,525 were authorized for that year. The British Admiralty regarded this expenditure as absolutely necessary and the British taxpayer feels bound to consent.

A second indication that the British Admiralty feel the gravity of the situation is shown by the policy of concentration—adopted within the past few years and continued to-day. Out of 372 fighting ships no less than 316 were in Home Waters in October of 1913. This means that 90 per cent. of the fighting strength of the British navy is kept at home leaving but 10 per cent. for foreign service.

Britain depends on overseas countries for the greater part of her foodstuffs. The Dominions find in Britain their best market. How these sources of supply are scattered throughout the world may be illustrated by the figures for wheat and flour. Britain grows but 18 per cent of the flour she consumes. 34 per cent comes from eastern sources, 48 per cent from across the Atlantic. The trade routes from these lands must be kept open at any cost.

The Mediterranean is the trade route to India and the Pacific. Britain has always, until recently, kept a powerful fleet in Mediterranean waters.

The island of Malta, with its splendid harbour, has been the midway station between Gibraltar and Suez. Here in times past many a powerful British squadron has lain.

But a comparative study of the Navy list for 1902 and 1913 will show to what extent the British Mediterranean fleet has been depleted.

In Sept. of 1902 there were 132 British ships on foreign service, in March of 1913 there were but 85. As the more powerful warships have been called home the naval force on foreign service was reduced in fighting power to hardly more than one tenth of what it was in 1902.

While eleven years before, fourteen battleships were deemed necessary for the Mediterranean, in 1913 there was but one battleship and three battle cruisers on that service.

When considering Britain's possible enemies it must not be forgotten that Italy and Austria are members of the Triple Alliance. It is conceivable that, in the event of war with Germany, Britain might have to fight their combined fleet as well. As it is to-day—in so far as the Mediterranean is concerned—Britain is dependent upon her ally France to ensure an open sea. France has stationed nearly all her battleships in the Mediterranean and Britain is expected to keep in these waters a reinforcement of adequate strength. Britain's present Mediterranean fleet—with only three capital ships—is obviously insufficient to meet the needs of the situation.

A further indication that the strain is being felt is to be found in the fact that the world wide service has been well nigh stripped of fighting ships. Compare the several stations as shown in the diagram, the solid figures indicate the vessels on station in 1902, the hollow figures those in 1913. It will be seen that all the battleships and most of the powerful cruisers have been called home. Few indeed

are the warships which to-day in distant seas show the British flag.

With these facts before us—that the British taxpayer has within the past six years doubled his contribution for warship construction, that British warships which formerly patrolled the trade routes have been called home; that the security of the waterway to India and the Pacific depends upon a foreign alliance—can it be said that no call goes out from the Motherland to her daughters beyond the seas? The conditions demand a putting forth of the united strength of the Empire.

In the Admiralty memorandum of Oct. 1912 a dignified intimation was given to Canada that her assistance would be welcomed, provided such assistance would be of such a nature as to increase the power and mobility of the Imperial Navy.

An Imperial Squadron for World-wide Service.

We have seen how the Admiralty desires that Canada contribute capital ships. Where would they be used and how would Canadian as well as Imperial interests be served thereby? A suggestion to this point was made in March 1913 by Mr. Churchill. It was in effect, that a new squadron be formed—to be called the Imperial Squadron—that should be based on Gibraltar—whence it could reach any portion of the British Empire. Ships of the "Queen Elizabeth" type—already described in this lecture—were to compose this fleet. The Malaya also would here be stationed and Canada's three ships would bring the squadron to the full number of eight ships.

The three Canadian battleships were not desired as an addition to the Home defence fleet. Britain can and will protect the heart of the Empire. They were wanted "to raise the margin of the strength available for the general defence of the Empire."

As a strategic point Gibraltar is well selected. The rock fortress is an impenetrable base of supply.

Within its harbour a fleet could safely lie and if necessary be refitted for sea.

No better scheme could be devised for the defence of the shores of Eastern Canada and the protection of our trade routes across the Atlantic. From Gibraltar to Halifax is a distance of 3040 miles. A vessel like the "Queen Elizabeth" capable of steaming the rate of 25 knots per hour, could traverse this distance in five days. More powerful in armament than any battle cruiser afloat, she could intercept and destroy any possible enemy coming from the North Sea or the South Atlantic. In contributing ships to form a part of such a squadron Canada would effectively serve both Imperial and Canadian interests.

In a speech delivered on March 17th, 1914, Mr. Churchill declared:

that the Admiralty still adhered to this plan. If in addition to three fast battleships, Canada would establish on the Atlantic seaboard stations, docks and repair plants, and would organize a service of destroyers and submarines (which might be built in Canada and manned by Canadians) to accompany the squadron when in Canadian waters then the Naval question, in so far as the Atlantic is concerned, would be wisely and satisfactorily settled from both an Imperial and Canadian point of view.

The Prime Minister of Canada believes this plan to be in the best interests of Canada and the Empire. He will persevere until it becomes an established fact. He counts on the active support of all patriotic Canadians to see him through.

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Scattered as are the British possessions, it is absolutely necessary that the paths across the sea be ever open. In securing this necessity, all those who enjoy the benefits should, according to their several ability, share the burden.

Canadians in this 20th century are too proud to let others bear the entire cost of their defence—when they are well able to assume their just share.

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that the Admiralty still adhered to this plan. If in addition to three fast battleships, Canada would establish on the Atlantic seaboard stations, docks and repair plants, and would organize a service of destroyers and submarines (which might be built in Canada and manned by Canadians) to accompany the squadron when in Canadian waters then the Naval question, in so far as the Atlantic is concerned, would be wisely and satisfactorily settled from both an Imperial and Canadian point of view.

The Prime Minister of Canada believes this plan to be in the best interests of Canada and the Empire. He will persevere until it becomes an established fact. He counts on the active support of all patriotic Canadians to see him through.

Finale.

The flag we know as the Union Jack is, as is well known, a combination of emblems. First there was the flag of St. George, borne by the ships of the Royal Navy.

Scotland, up to the time of the Union, had her own flag, the banner of St. Andrew with that of England, we had "The Jack."

The flag of St. Patrick was also incorporated.

So that the Union Jack of to-day is the united flag of the originally separated peoples of the British Isles.

Over a wide-spread Empire this flag floats to-day. English, Irish and Scotch, together with men of many other races are under it building up British institutions and developing a united Empire.

Scattered as are the British possessions, it is absolutely necessary that the paths across the sea be ever open. In securing this necessity, all those who enjoy the benefits should, according to their several ability, share the burden.

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