

ing its three cent character. There is no visible "3" on it. One must resort to arithmetic to discover the figure that should be clear at the first glance. The stamp is the ordinary two cent stamp, showing the words "Two Cents," with the figure "2" at each of the lower corners. In the middle of the stamp "1c." is impressed in white. If there is anybody who can explain why a stamp was not issued bearing distinctly in words and figures the declaration that it represented three cents, and of a color that would readily distinguish it from others, we shall be very much pleased to receive it.

Machine Guns

THE Government unwisely allowed announcement to be made that there was need of private subscriptions to provide machine guns for the Canadian army at the front, in addition to the number which was being supplied by the Government. There was evidence that our men were very inadequately supplied with such guns, while the enemy had them in abundance. The proposed method of obtaining the additional weapons for the Canadians was somewhat strange, but the public, without stopping to think of that, responded promptly and generously to the call. A Montreal journal, the Star, took an active interest in the movement, invited subscriptions, and received a large sum. Other subscriptions to a large amount went directly to the Government. Subsequently the public discovered that the whole business had been a blunder. There was no need for the money. The Government had already ordered all the guns of the type desired that the factories could produce. Additional guns, apparently were not needed, and, indeed, they could not be had at any price. The Star, on discovering this situation, notified those who had sent their subscriptions to its office that their money would be returned on application. Most of the amount raised in that way has now been returned to the donors. But the Government have received a large sum from people for purposes which are not being and probably cannot be carried out. Surely the Government will return this money to the subscribers, as the Montreal journal has done, or, failing that, will take steps to obtain the consent of the subscribers to the application of the money to some other patriotic service.

Canadian Shipbuilding

WHATEVER may be thought about the feasibility of building war ships in Canada—a question that seems to be unavoidably associated with party controversies—there can be no two opinions as to the desirability of a larger Canadian mercantile marine. And yet there is no question which has been found to present more difficulties whenever it has been approached in a practical way. In the palmy days of wooden ships, the construction of seagoing vessels was a most profitable industry in Quebec, and in the Maritime Provinces. Much of the wealth accumulated in the Eastern part of the Dominion in the nineteenth century came from the business of building and managing the ships, the sails of which then whitened every sea. In Nova Scotia it was a proud boast that in proportion to population the people of the Province owned more tonnage than any others in the world. Iron sailing ships built in Great Britain soon began to displace the wooden

ships; iron ships were succeeded by steel ships; steel sailing ships were displaced by steel steamships. To-day large sailing ships of any kind are few and far between, and the few that are afloat are nearly all of steel. Some few lines of trade continue to afford employment for wooden vessels of small size, and our large fishing fleet is built of wood. The construction of these still gives employment to a few small shipyards, chiefly in Nova Scotia. Apart from these the wooden shipbuilding industry is a thing of the past. The great bulk of the carrying trade is now carried on by steel steamships. In this line of business Great Britain has surpassed all other nations. Germany, before the war, had made considerable progress in establishing a mercantile marine, and had a fine fleet, a considerable part of which has been captured by the British Navy, and the remainder is rusting out in German or neutral ports. France, under her bounty system, made some progress, but did not become a serious competitor of other nations. Norway was Britain's keenest rival in the carrying trade, but even here British energy asserted itself, for many of the ships which bore the Norwegian flag were of British build. Japan has lately come to the front, both in the building and sailing of vessels, and evidently means to make a vigorous fight for her share of the world's commerce. The Americans have for many years been struggling with the problem of creating a merchant marine, and they have it on their hands now. But Great Britain, which has easily held the first place in the shipbuilding and carrying trade, bids fair to continue to do so.

In Canada we have built some very creditable specimens of steel steamships, chiefly on the Great Lakes. One steel sailing vessel of moderate size was launched several years ago at Glasgow, a Scotch town. It is to be claimed, however, that this branch of industry is either extensive or flourishing. Efforts to establish more extensive shipyards have repeatedly been made, with very limited success. Most of these efforts have been heard of on the Lakes or the Atlantic Coast. To-day the Pacific Coast is taking up the subject with keen interest.

A few days ago a meeting was held at Vancouver, under the auspices of the Manufacturers' Association, for the consideration of the subject. The need of transportation facilities for the lumber industry of British Columbia was, apparently, the moving influence of the occasion, though some of the speakers referred to other lines of industry as having the same need. If there were those present who had been impressed by the idea that Canada would prosper abundantly upon her home markets, they received an awakening in the speech of Mr. John Hanbury, of the Hanbury Lumber Company, who had just returned from Eastern Canada, and had discussed the subject during his visit to Ottawa. "If," said Mr. Hanbury, "British Columbia ever expects to make any headway, it must be by the water, not by rail, and our markets must be across the water. It costs ten dollars a thousand to ship lumber to any one of the prairie markets, across the Rockies, and the demand is limited. For instance, if we were to start our mills here working to capacity we could have the prairie markets blocked in a few weeks."

The suggestion was offered at the meeting by Mr. J. A. Cunningham, President of the Association, that a shipping company be formed, with a small share capital and a large issue of bonds to be guaranteed by Government—whether Dominion or Local was not specified—"the same as railroad bonds are guaranteed,

only in this case the security would be better," so the speaker said. It was while this movement was engaging public attention on the coast that a change occurred in the British Columbia Government, Sir Richard McBride retiring, and the Government being reconstructed under the Premiership of Mr. Bowser. The new Premier has issued an address to the electors in which aid to shipbuilding is among the many good things he has to promise. This part of his address is as follows:

"Ocean transportation must be provided for the tide-water capacity of our mills, now about 700,000,000 feet per annum, so that we may secure and enjoy our proper share of the world's trade. As the matter stands to-day, we have surpassing wealth of timber, an immense investment in manufacturing plants and every facility, save one, for large development. We have no shipping and are therefore powerless to reach the overseas markets. We must have vessels operated directly in the interests of our own industries, and also to carry our natural products. Only thus can the Province market its own timber wealth and so dissipate the depression that has hung over the industry so long. Recognizing the vital importance of this matter and the paramount need of a strong commercial policy to end the shipping crisis, the Government will submit decisive legislation at the forthcoming session of the Legislature. The development of our waterborne lumber trade will benefit our coast manufacturers and should, at the same time, give the mountain mill men larger trade opportunities in the Prairie Provinces, their natural markets."

The development of this movement on the Pacific Coast will be watched with much interest, particularly the part which the British Columbia Government is to take in the fulfillment of Mr. Bowser's assurance that the shipping business stands in a different light from that of most other lines, because it is necessarily international in its character, carrying on its operations on the high seas, conveying cargo to or from the ports of the wide world, and therefore not capable of being controlled by the protective tariffs to which some other industries look for aid. Bounties from Government have in most instances been the desire of those who have hitherto invited attention to the subject. Evidently some form of public aid is contemplated by those who now have the movement in charge on the Pacific Coast. The desire for a Canadian merchant marine will be found so general that every project designed to accomplish the purpose will be received with much interest. But every such project, especially if it is to be based on Government aid, will need the most careful and critical study. If ships were available now they could earn handsome returns on their cost. Anything that will float and carry cargo can at present find profitable employment. But a shipbuilding policy can hardly be properly based on conditions which are admittedly exceptional, and which may materially change before the first new ship laid down in British Columbia can be completed. The Canadian built ship, outside of our coasting trade, must meet the competition of the world's ships, and even in the coasting trade it must meet the competition of ships built in Great Britain. How such competition can be made successful is a big problem, and unless it can be satisfactorily solved a large shipbuilding industry in Canada cannot be permanently successful.