

Imperial Defence. Mr. Haldane, Secretary of State for War, announces that as a result of the Imperial Defence Conference, the Empire is to have a great Imperial Army equal in numbers to that of Germany. The troops of the self-governing colonies are to have precisely the same training and the same equipment as the home regulars and there is to be a continuous interchange of officers between all parts of the Empire. This announcement will probably postpone "The Day" toasted habitually by German military and naval officers (the day when England is to be over-run by gentlemen in spiked helmets) indefinitely. In view of Great Britain's world wide interests on sea and land involving corresponding possibilities of entanglement, British supremacy is essential to the peace of the world. Certainly the absolute independence of the Empire must be maintained at any cost. The result of the Conference surpasses all expectation. Of course, the magnificent programme adopted for the army does not obviate the necessity for keeping the navy ever up to the standard.

Canada's Navy. It is gratifying to learn that the Canadian delegates to the Imperial Defence Conference have (no doubt, with the approval of the Dominion Government) arrived at a thoroughly satisfactory understanding with the home Government regarding the establishment of a Canadian navy. Construction is, it is understood, to be commenced at once and will include naval stations both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The places mentioned so far are Halifax, Esquimalt, Prince Rupert, and possibly Quebec and Montreal. The Imperial and Dominion Governments are reported to be in complete accord on the whole question. It is stated that the Admiralty strongly favours the idea of Canada going in largely for sub-marines and that work will be commenced very shortly on the construction of first-class cruisers, torpedo-boats and sub-marines. We imagine, however, that Parliament will have to be consulted before anything definite is done. Its consent is a foregone conclusion.

Australian Navy. The Australian representatives at the Imperial Defence Conference have arrived at a good practical agreement with the Imperial authorities regarding the control of the proposed Australian navy. Normally the Commonwealth navy is to be absolutely under local authority, but should necessity arise for united action it will be at once placed by the Australian Government at the disposition of the Admiralty. Both in time of peace and in time of war, there will be free interchange of officers. The Australian ships will not pass automatically under the

control of the Imperial authorities on a declaration of war; but it is understood that whenever the need arises the colonial authorities will at once transfer their authority to the home Government. The arrangement has much to commend it. While at all times carefully respecting the colonial sentiment in favour of local autonomy, it will provide the Admiralty with a valuable auxiliary fleet in time of need, and it will go a great way towards developing the Imperial feeling which is so necessary to the solidification of the Empire.

South Africa's Constitution. The South African Constitution Bill has been read a second time in the British House of Commons. Mr. Balfour well said that in dealing with this measure Parliament was discussing one of the most important events in the history of the British Empire. He wisely counselled the Government to put implicit confidence in the representative institutions they were creating in South Africa and to meddle as little as possible with their operations. One thing the British and the Boers learned during the late unpleasantness was to respect each other. It should not take them long to learn to trust each other's political good faith, patriotism and sense of justice; all that is needful to make the South African confederation a success.

A Remarkable Vindication. A year ago the Ross rifle was the best abused institution in all Canada. Some of our papers habitually spoke with less disrespect of an alderman than they did of this terrible weapon, which was alleged to be much more dangerous to the man behind it than to the man in front of it. Since the splendid record made at Bisley, Canadian volunteers are refusing to enter the Dominion Rifle Association matches unless they are provided with the Ross rifle. If "he laughs best, who laughs last," Sir Frederick Borden and Lt.-Col. Sam Hughes must be having a merry time over the situation.

Aerodrome Experiments. McCurdy & Baldwin have been having bad luck with the Canadian built aerodrome at the Petewawa Camp, only in so far as much publicity has been given to the failure of the machine to rise. All the aviators throughout the world have had similar experiences, with less notoriety. Their courage and their ultimate success are not to be questioned; and they have shown excellent sense in avoiding unnecessary risks to life and limb, to say nothing about the danger of destroying the valuable and interesting machine in their possession.