



T H E

Canadian Courier

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

VOL. 6

Toronto, November 20th, 1909

No. 25



PEOPLE generally should be glad that the Dominion Iron and Steel Company and the Dominion Coal Company have again been brought under one management. The elimination of Mr. James Ross from active control of either of these companies is also a pleasing feature. Mr. Ross is capable and clever, but he is not a man who makes for peace either among corporations or among industrial workers. With his passing from the active stage, there should be a more congenial atmosphere in the Nova Scotia coal and iron region.

Furthermore, the union of these two companies will probably mean that the "bonus" era will have passed so far as the Dominion Government is concerned. In the last twelve years, the Dominion Government has paid out sixteen and a half million dollars in bonuses to industries—a sum quite large enough to have built a number of warships suitable for patrol work and coastal defence. Of this huge sum, most of it has been paid to the iron and steel companies. Last year for example, the total amount paid in this way was \$1,864,000, of which \$1,067,000 went to the Dominion Iron and Steel Company. On this basis, Canada must have paid the Cape Breton concern something like eight million dollars—a bonus necessitated by early mistakes on the part of the builders and financiers, and not by the industrial conditions the company had to face.

As for the Hamilton Steel Company, the Drummond Iron Companies, the Lake Superior Corporation and the other participants in the iron and steel bounties, we know that they are all in a position to take care of themselves when the bounty system expires next year. The only doubt was in connection with the Cape Breton company, and that doubt has happily been removed by this newly accomplished merger.



READING speeches on the Budget as reported in the British newspapers is rather an amusing recreation. It is like taking part in a Canadian general election which exists only in the imagination. A Canadian reading about a big political fight in Great Britain or the United States can always get a much clearer idea of the issues than if it were a Canadian fight. It is comparatively easy to take an impartial view of a fight in which you are not vitally interested.

When you see one British politician arguing that the Budget will break up many of the British landed estates and unjustly and unfairly crush the rich people, you wonder if it is so. Then you read that another (Mr. Arthur Lee, M.P., et al) states that the budget bears more hardly upon the wage-earners than any other class of the community. You begin to smile. Your wonder changes to amusement. You know that both cannot be right — and you realise that the speakers are politicians.

Again, when you read that Mr. Acland has stated that the Government has reduced the public debt by 126 million dollars in three years you begin to think Great Britain must be a prosperous country. Then you turn to an address by Mr. Clavell Salter, and you find his statement that while the savings accounts of the British people have decreased 70 million dollars, those of the German people have increased 300 millions. You smile once more—for you realise again that here are two more politicians.



ONE should always read of political controversies in other countries; it helps to keep one sane. When one sees two honest, fair-minded citizens taking the same set of facts and drawing opposite conclusions from them, it is manifest that at least one is wrong; probably both are wrong. After a little practice of this kind, one returns to the reading of the editorials in the party newspapers at home and ordinary credulity vanishes. Unbelief is the first step in being an independent patriotic citizen. So long as you believe what

REFLECTIONS

By STAFF WRITERS

you are told, you are a partisan. When you learn to believe nobody, to listen respectfully but doubtingly to all expressions of opinion, you are on the highway to be a citizen of real importance and a man whom the politicians fear.



TAKE this Canadian navy question, and think of it along this line. Mr. Jones says Canada should not build a navy of her own, because Canada has no say as to whether the British Empire will go to war or not. Jones maintains that we have no right to plunge Canada and Canadians into a war about the merits of which we know and can know nothing. He would not build a single ship; send money to Great Britain if you like, but don't build a Canadian "tin-pot" navy to lead Canada into unnecessary international complications.

Along comes Mr. Brown and he tells you confidentially that he is opposed to giving money to the British Navy. He declares that if we control our own navy we can then keep out of wars of which we don't approve. If the Canadian navy is directed and controlled from Ottawa, it will not be sent into any war of foreign aggression not approved by the Canadian people. He sees great danger in contributing to the British fleet, and is quite satisfied that all will be well if the Canadian people control their own naval expenditures and decide when their ships shall fight or remain inactive.

These two men Jones and Brown are typical. Each one wants to avoid a bad result. To secure his object, each would do the thing to which the other objects. Each is honest; each is in earnest. Who shall say which is wrong?



WHILE the opinion of the writer is strongly in favour of a Canadian navy, he sympathises with those who think that the Canadian people, not Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. R. L. Borden, should have decided the question. Indeed, he believes that the proper method for those opposed to the Canadian navy idea is to invite the political leaders to open up half a dozen close constituencies and let the people vote on the question. This is the method which the Britisher adopts. For example, let Mr. C. A. Magrath, member for the constituency of Medicine Hat, offer to resign his seat and contest the constituency with a man, Liberal or Conservative, who is in favour of a Canadian navy rather than a cash contribution to the British Naval Fund. Let them agree beforehand that this is to be the main topic for argument, and that no other is to be discussed. It would be a pretty fight, and the result would give a fair idea of the feeling of the people of Alberta. Let Mr. Monk do the same in Quebec, and others in the Maritime Provinces, Ontario and Manitoba.

It is hardly necessary to hold a referendum on the question, although if the House of Commons thought it advisable such a proceeding would be quite possible. The question is the largest and most important that has been up for decision in recent years, and a referendum to the people would create much discussion and interest. The objection to it is that it would be expensive and would relieve members of a responsibility which they are, under acknowledged practice, entitled to assume. On the whole, we would prefer to see a few by-elections in representative constituencies. The educative effect would be almost as great and the expense would be a bagatelle.



ON the authority of such men as Colonel Steele and General Sir Percy Lake, Canada is coming rapidly to the front as a nation capable of self-defence. General Lake states that now, for the first time in our history since the British troops left this country, we are in a position to put an army in the field and to successfully keep it there. The army has always existed on paper but until recent years no adequate provision was made for feeding it, transporting it, keeping it in good health and paying the men on duty. We have now reached the stage where we have an army service corps capable of