

thing in its path. It has swept lacrosse to one side in Toronto and proved to be even a greater drawing card, on a holiday, than even the annual race meet. It has gone into Quebec and eaten its way into the affections of the French-Canadian. It has yet to be checked in any country in which it has been introduced. It may take time to conquer the Englishman—but the latter had better beware.

J. K. M.

#### A PETITION FOR A PICNIC

IN London, Ontario, there has recently been a somewhat novel disturbance affecting trustees, teachers and school children. It seems that there was a good old custom of giving the children the June picnic, on which occasion the trustees acted as hosts and cheerfully expended three hundred dollars of the "funds" on giving the juvenile citizens such a good time as Springbank affords. This year, however, the school board came to the conclusion that the money might be more wisely spent and that the leafy month of June, when examinations are so near, is hardly the propitious season for a picnic. Some of the petitions which resulted will not prejudice the outsider in favour of London's juniors. The Collegiate Institute pupils declare with unbecoming haste: "We, the undersigned, do hereby demand our annual picnic, and if not given to us willingly, we will take it."

If the conduct of these strenuous youngsters is in keeping with the language of their petition, the lot of their instructors is hardly to be envied. It seems that they now demand as a right what was originally a favour and express themselves in a fashion which reflects small credit on their breeding. Other school-children in Ontario may be led to reflect on the reason for Londoners having been so highly blessed, while trustees throughout the province may take warning and refrain from showering favours on the young persons of the community. It may appear to the unenlightened stranger that picnics are a matter outside the duties of trustees.

#### A DRAMA CONTENTION

THE revivalist known as Gipsy Smith who recently visited the city of Toronto made many friends in that community and left behind him several matters for discussion. There is no question about his sincerity and high intention and his work in Toronto undoubtedly resulted in good. However, his announcement, or rather denunciation, concerning the theatre has, perhaps, caused more talk than all his more direct and personal appeals. He was vigorous and uncompromising in his opposition to the theatre as an institution and his interview with the *Toronto News* has attracted general notice. It must be admitted, even by those who shun the more vulgar theatrical performances, that the season's list of plays in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg shows little that is either intellectual or truly stimulating. Now that we have come to the close of another music and drama season, we may review the display without feeling that either managers or actors have complimented the Canadian public in the choice of theatrical entertainment.

The manager blames the public, and the public seldom talks back. As we remarked several weeks ago, the Toronto woman who said that the home is the source of dramatic, literary and artistic taste is nearer the truth than any censor. If we are a musical comedy people, with the mental equipment which such productions demand, we shall have musical comedy to the end of the chapter, while those who care for anything finer will ultimately leave the theatre to the patronage of those who cannot appreciate anything beyond the trivial tinkling of "The Isle of Spice." The good old days of Gilbert and Sullivan seem to have departed, while the tragedy which fulfils Aristotle's requirements is an unknown quantity on the modern stage.

FRITH.

#### SHIPYARDS AND NAVAL DEFENCE

SHIPYARDS are a first necessity for a country with ocean commerce and a navy. Canada has some inland shipyards, but none on the ocean. There should be well-equipped yards at Halifax, Sydney, St. John, Levis or Quebec, Vancouver and Esquimaux.

Germany has done more to encourage shipyards in recent years than any other country. A firm desiring to go in for a large yard could get government land on easy payments, with cheap water rights. It would be given special sidings from government railways. The Government would use its consuls and other officials to help it get orders. It would also receive from the Government an assurance

as to the continuity of work for a substantial period at schedule and profit rates. This latter assurance would make its financing easy. Such a policy would soon produce several good shipyards on our ocean coasts.

These shipyards would build our ships, both war vessels and commercial vessels. We buy a score of vessels of one kind or another each year which might just as well be made in Canada. Some people are asking that a duty be placed on British and foreign-built ships so as to encourage home production. The German plan, roughly outlined above, is cheaper and more reasonable. Moreover, the Government must soon place orders for some naval vessels. Canada is destined to have a navy sooner or later. Now is the time to devise a carefully worked-out plan which will provide by gradual development for the needs of the next half century.

In addition to building new ships, the new shipyards would provide repair shops for all the vessels which reach our coasts. At present when a large liner is injured, temporary repairs are made and the ship sent across the ocean for permanent repairs. This is nonsensical. It would be equally foolish to buy cruisers or dreadnoughts from Great Britain until we had a place in which to repair them. It is estimated by naval experts that one-fifth of all war vessels are always laid up for repairs. If we had but five naval vessels, they would require one shipyard continuously to keep them in repair.

Under our present system of making repairs to government vessels, the repairs usually cost more than the vessels. This is due partly to the inadequacy of our present yards. They are not encouraged by the government or the people, are not given continuous work which would justify the latest equipment and the most skilful workmen. There is also at present the drawback which comes from a government trying to run a government shipyard. All successful shipyards must be able to do both government and commercial work in order to produce the best results.

Shipyards imply dry docks. Montreal has plans for a new dry dock to cost two and a half millions. Halifax has a dry dock, but St. John and Sydney have none. Esquimaux has an excellent dry dock. Shipyards could be established at Halifax and Esquimaux at once if the Government so desired. It would require from three to five years to build adequate dry docks at Sydney, St. John and Montreal. Therefore the first orders should go to those who would establish large yards at Halifax and Esquimaux. By the end of five years, there would be sufficient business in sight to find work for a shipyard at Montreal and another at St. John.

Up to the present time, Canada has been busy building railways and canals and in developing inter-communication. We are far from being through with work of this kind. While this huge task has been confronting us, it was only natural that the question of ship-building and ship-repairing should have been neglected. We have, however, reached a stage where further neglect would be unwise. No doubt, when the Ministers of Militia and Marine return from the Imperial Defence Council next month, they will be prepared to recommend some sort of preliminary naval and commercial policy to their colleagues. The subject will be prominent next session. Now is the time for publicists, journalists and the public generally to gather information and to make preparations for a general discussion of the new national policy. A people which cannot build ocean-going vessels for either commercial or naval purposes, is not of much account. Canada may become the "granary of the Empire," but if it is not able to build even a 5,000-ton freight boat or a third-class armoured cruiser it will never be counted of much importance in the Council of the Nations.

A writer in the *Engineering Review* points out that in the last two years, the greater part of the \$230,000,000 additional capital put into German industrial concerns, has gone into steel-making, engineering, armament and ship-building plants. The Weser yard at Bremen is large enough to construct four huge ships at once, while the Krupp yard can provide for eight or ten. At Wilhelmshaven, three dry docks capable of docking a 25,000-ton vessel are rapidly approaching completion. Such development means commercial as well as naval strength. One has only to go to New York to see how the German passenger and freight boats over-top nearly all others in size, carrying power and commercial success.

Canada cannot expect to compete on a large scale at present with either Great Britain or Germany in the making of naval or commercial vessels. She can nevertheless make a beginning which would give Canadian steel-makers, engine and boiler-makers, and kindred manufacturers an opportunity of trying some experiments and of developing along new lines. When we have learned to make small boats successfully, we can then turn our attention to larger vessels. At present we cannot do any more than make a fair-sized dredge or a lake passenger boat. Yet our steel-making facilities and our mechanical abilities should be the equal of any country in the world.

The writer hopes that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association will take the subject up and give its members and the public some information at its annual meeting in September. If the matter is left to the Government, progress must necessarily be slow. Governments in this country are more apt to follow public opinion than to create it. The manufacturers, especially those interested in steel and machinery, should educate the public as to the possibility of making Canada one of the great ship-building countries of the world. For after all, it is a commercial as well as a naval question, a manufacturing as well as a government problem.

C.