

Mr. BALLANTYNE: I stated that the torpedo boat destroyers were constructed in 1916. I also said that the cruiser was a modern one, and I gave her speed and armament, but I said that the question of just what type of cruiser we were going to get had not been settled yet.

Mr. DUFF: I have to apologise to the minister if I do not remember his remarks correctly. But it does not make very much difference to my argument. It is a well known fact in the naval service that a cruiser becomes obsolete when she is five years of age and whether this cruiser is one year or five years old, it only means waiting two or three years until she becomes obsolete. For the purpose for which the Government will use this cruiser, the Niobe will be just as good, do just as effective service, and in fact better service, than this cruiser that he is going to accept from the British Government. The Niobe will do similar work at far less expense. You will notice that this new cruiser is going to burn 1,345 tons of coal and use 260 tons of oil. Let us see the class that the Niobe is in. The minister in his statement gave quite a glowing description of the work which the Niobe did during the war. The minister's statement is quite correct; the Niobe has a record of which we all ought to be proud, short though that service was. Her work off New York harbour when she watched the steamers coming out of that port and put boarding officers on them to search them reflected great credit on the Niobe. There is only one ship in the British navy that put more boarding officers on vessels for the purpose of examining them than the old Niobe. Until her boilers went bad, this ship was used for patrol work. Instead of laying her up as a depot boat the Government should have fixed the tubes in her boilers and allowed her to remain in commission during the war. I contend that this new cruiser which the minister is going to accept from Great Britain will only be a plaything for some gentleman in his department and some officers and men in this country who will be taken from productive industries. Instead of allowing them to remain in the fields, the fishing boats, the mines or the lumber camps, these men will be taken from productive industries and put on board this cruiser. All this cruiser can do, and all we can expect her to do, for the next few years is to sail up and down the Atlantic coast, or go through the Panama canal and sail up and down the Pacific coast. There is nothing else for her

to do and yet we are asked to spend a large amount of money to provide a pleasure yacht for a number of people in this country.

I do not intend to talk about the torpedo boat destroyers, but I want to say in regard to the submarines that every man, woman and child, not only in this country but in every country in the civilized world heard enough about submarines during the war, and this Government will be ill-advised to accept from anybody those death-dealing instruments which the Germans used in the North Sea and other places during the war. Do we forget the Lusitania? Do we forget the hospital ships sunk by German submarines? Yet the minister and this Government intend to accept from the British Government boats of this type. We should turn that offer down—spurn it with scorn—rather than accept such boats from any Government.

We had the pleasure of listening the other night to the very distinguished gentleman who represents Montreal, St. Antoine, in the person of the Financial Director of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Sir Herbert Ames, and I am sure that every person who heard him listened with a great deal of interest to his remarks. He told us what the League of Nations had done and what he expected the League of Nations to do. If we are to believe what Sir Herbert Ames told us, or if we are to give heed to what he says we can expect in the future, we certainly do not require even the nucleus of a navy. Let me quote what the right hon. Mr. Balfour says about the League of Nations:

If the League of Nations fails to promote a diminution in armament, remarks Mr. Balfour, "much of its value will be gone and we will have to admit that it has failed to carry out the great expectations entertained with regard to its future activities."

And commenting on this utterance the Montreal Gazette says:

To which may be added that if the nations were honest in their war-time protestations, and if they are wise in their intentions now, there will be a check in the mad race of armies and navies that inevitably leads to war.

These are the wise remarks of a statesman in the Old Country for whom every person in Canada has the greatest respect. It seems to me that what Sir Herbert Ames and what Mr. Balfour expects to be accomplished by the League of Nations must go to show us that it is not necessary for us to embark upon a naval policy of this kind.