

The question, in its double aspect, must appeal to Canadians, if at all, as arising out of, and referable to, the independent commercial sovereignty already spoken of. It may be taken for granted that a Canadian navy, established for, and serving Canadian aims and objects, and managed by Canada from the Canadian standpoint and in Canadian interests, will, like her troops, be freely tendered for Imperial service on any occasion of Imperial stress. This, being granted once for all, disappears from the problem, and the Canadian view may be put and argued without reference to it.

Any existing Canadian duty ought to be referred primarily to the undisputed present national status of Canada. She is a country with sea-going traffic upon two oceans, and, therefore, a navy is an essential part of a well balanced national equipment. That Canada should have soldiers is, in this view, accepted both in theory and practice. That she should have sailors also is only another way of stating the original proposition that Canada has attained national stature. She cannot hope, limping into the arena of the world, to become a commercial factor in its progress. She must march in bearing those convincing insignia of her maturity and strength which a reasonably perfect equipment affords. She must hold up her head among the nations whose peer she proclaims herself to be, pointing to those twin guarantees of her efficiency—an army and a navy.

This first consideration, viz., the vital necessity of a navy to the national equipment of Canada, really covers much more of the ground usually debated than is plain in a casual glance. Clear ideas with regard to the proper functions of a navy must underlie the discussion. It will involve an examination of Canadian geographical and trade factors, because naval equipment becomes desirable or imperative in proportion to the extent to which the country's geographical position and its trade call for this branch of equipment. It will be concerned with the country's foreign relations, actual and possible, because Canadians will not blindly accept the burdens imposed by a naval equipment for the sake of protection against a mere bugbear or series of bugbears. It will call for careful inquiry into all questions of method and cost, because the nature and expense of equipment must bear true relations to the very purposes which the equipment is to serve. And all these questions must be examined and answered in the Canadian sense as distinguished from the Imperial.