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Canadian Courier

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY



VOL. 7

Toronto, January 22nd, 1910

No. 8

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

CANADA prohibits prize-fights, but it does not prohibit the exhibition of moving pictures of a prize fight. To be consistent, the same authority which prohibits the one should prohibit the other. Not only should these brutalising pictures be kept out of the country, but the authorities should proceed at once to regulate the cheap picture shows, which now form such a prominent feature of the national entertainment. Murders, burglaries, hold-ups and other degrading events are freely reproduced for the amusement of innocent children and curious youths. The five-cent show is taking the place of the yellow press, of the "Police Gazette" and other prohibited publications and is giving our youth practical instruction in crime.

This is a question which should interest the mothers of Canada. They do not seem to realise that a most degrading influence occupies a quite prominent position in our midst. It is an old evil in a new form, and it must be fought with the old weapons.

ON account of the illness of the Hon. Mr. Brodeur, it fell to the lot of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, last week, to introduce the Naval Bill. Its full title is "An Act Respecting the Naval Service of Canada," and its general features correspond to those of the Militia Act. The navy is to be under the control of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, is to have a naval director with the rank of rear-admiral and a naval board to advise the department. While all service is to be voluntary, the Governor-in-Council may call the force into active service in case of war, invasion or insurrection. In case of emergency the Governor-in-Council may place the force at the disposal of His Majesty for general service in the Royal Navy.

"Emergency" is the first contentious word. At the request of Mr. Foster, Sir Wilfrid explained that "Emergency means war, invasion, riot or insurrection, real or apprehended." This is the wording in both the Militia Act and the Naval Bill. Sir Wilfrid explained that war included both Canadian and British wars. "When Britain is at war, Canada is at war; there is no distinction."

There is a distinct effort here to meet the objections which have been raised in some quarters that the Canadian navy might not go to Britain's aid even if needed. The decision of all such questions is left in the hands of the then cabinet. This will satisfy most people and will more than satisfy those who believe that Canada should not mix herself up in Britain's wars without parliament's consent. In other words, it does not go far enough for some, and it goes too far for others.

AS to the extent and character of the fleet, the Bill is also a compromise. It provides for a larger fleet than some expected, although it does not go as far as others would like. There is to be a fleet of eleven vessels, four Bristols, one Boadicea, and six destroyers. This is a smaller fleet unit than that of Australia, which consists of thirteen vessels, including one Indomitable. But in Australia's case, Great Britain contributes part of the cost, while in Canada's case, the whole cost is borne by this country.

The total cost of these eleven ships, according to British figures, is \$11,000,000. If built in Canada, they will probably cost more, but they will be constructed here if possible.

MR. BORDEN expressed his pleasure that Sir Wilfrid had receded from his position that parliament's consent must first be given before the navy could be placed at the disposal of Great Britain. He regards any other proposition as impossible. When Great Britain is at war, Canada is liable to attack. "In time of war, the Canadian unit of the British navy must be part of the British navy when engaged in the preservation and defence of this great empire."

Indeed Mr. Borden went farther than Sir Wilfrid in expressing

his approval of a Canadian naval force. "Canadian interests will exist and must be protected not only upon the high seas, but in every quarter of the globe." He also pointed out that if

Canada were independent, or if she were part of the United States, the naval expenditure would be much greater than if she remains a portion of the British Empire.

Mr. Borden also answered the argument that the creation of a Canadian navy will have a tendency towards the separation of Canada from the empire. He believes the opposite. The Canadian navy is to be organised along lines suggested by the admiralty and the service is to be in "co-operation with and in close relation to the imperial navy."

He also emphasised his continued opposition to a system of annual contributions. Strategically this might be advisable, but "from a constitutional and political standpoint, I am opposed to it." It would not endure, it would be a source of friction, and it would become a bone of partisan contention. It would not be permanent or continuous. It might ultimately cause separation.

THE only point on which Mr. Borden differed from Sir Wilfrid was that of immediate action. He is in favour of a Canadian fleet, but while that is being built he would contribute a Dreadnought or its equivalent in cash. He prefers the latter part of the alternative. "In taking this course we will fulfil not only in the letter but in the spirit as well, the resolution of March last, and what is infinitely more important we will discharge a great patriotic duty to our country and to the whole empire." He took this position because he believed that there is a present peril and that the peace of to-day can only be maintained by an unusual and emphatic preparation for war.

THUS, is practically settled the greatest question which has come before the Parliament of Canada for many years. With the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition agreed, a Canadian navy is assured, and a direct annual cash contribution is vetoed. The question of an additional emergency contribution of a Dreadnought or its cash equivalent will be settled later, but that is a detail. It may occasion much talk, much heart-burning and much rivalry, but after all it remains a detail.

The opponents of a "tin-pot navy" have lamentably failed to intimidate either the Government or the majority of the Opposition. Sir Wilfrid has undoubtedly an almost undivided majority of his followers with him; most of Mr. Borden's followers are with him. Therefore, the Canadian navy is supported by about seven-eighths of the present House of Commons.

MR. CLARENCE JAMESON, member for Digby, in his speech in the House, recognised the situation clearly. He admitted that a permanent policy was being considered and decided upon. Because this policy was to be permanent and because it was of great national and imperial significance, he demanded that the people of Canada should be consulted by means of a referendum or plebiscite. Mr. Bourassa, in his new daily paper, published in Montreal, takes the same view as to the advisability of a referendum. The two differ, however, in purpose. Mr. Jameson thinks the Canadian navy will not satisfy the people's desire to do something adequate and effective in the present emergency; Mr. Bourassa thinks that the people might decide against any naval expenditure whatever. Mr. Jameson rather favours a direct contribution of ships or money; Mr. Bourassa and Mr. Monk favour an absolutely neutral attitude. Mr. Monk has declared in the House that "What is proposed to-day here is to invite us to assume responsibilities which I claim we are not bound to assume." These gentlemen represent those opposed to the pro-