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HAVE you made up your mind whether Great Britain is likely to be wiped off the map by Germany in 1912? Have you a mind to make up? Or perhaps you are sick and tired of the whole subject and you have reached the position where you are so confused by the conflicting opinions and official statements that you don't care. Eh, what?

Some time ago, we gave our readers the opinion of the United States naval experts, which is that Germany's naval strength is about one-third of that of Great Britain. Other people, justified in speaking authoritatively, have pooh-poohed the whole German scare on the same grounds. But the Unionists in Great Britain for their own purposes have kept the bogey-man well stuffed with straw and have displayed him constantly. The Conservatives of Canada have apparently felt it their bounden duty to follow their namesakes in Great Britain and to fanatically urge that Canada should give Dreadnoughts quickly. Because of this, the subject is still alive. Mr. Borden revived it last week. Therefore, the bogey-man must be punched again and the writer proposes to do his share once more.

THEN to the task. Most of the trouble has arisen from a speech made by Mr. McKenna, the First Sea Lord, in the British House last spring. The honourable gentleman was somewhat astray at that time and has since recanted through Dr. Macnamara, parliamentary secretary to the navy. In a speech at Hastings, on Jan. 13th, Doctor Macnamara stated that in April, 1912, Britain will have 20 Dreadnoughts to Germany's 13. At the same date Britain will have 40 pre-Dreadnought battleships to Germany's 20; also Britain's 40 will have a larger proportionate tonnage and gun-power than Germany's 20. Ditto in cruisers with 35 to 8. Ditto in Dreadnought docks with 12 to 6.

A report of this speech may be found in the London dailies of the 14th, and any doubter is invited to read it for himself. Why any sane Canadian, with such a report in front of him, can go on declaring that Britain is in immediate danger is more than an ordinary journalist can explain.

ONE can easily understand why the Opposition in Great Britain has tried to create a feeling of unrest in that country just before a general election. But why Canadian Conservatives should try to create the same kind of unrest with no general election in sight is hard to comprehend. The situation is absolutely senseless. Their attitude betokens either a sad loss of reason and judgment or else a weak-minded resort to a dangerous political expedient.

The resolution proposed by Mr. Borden last week in the House speaks of the "impending necessities of the Empire" and the need to "assure its peace and security." It further says that the Government's proposals "will give no immediate or effective aid to the Empire." All these phrases were apparently intended to indicate that the Empire is in serious and immediate danger. There are hundreds of thousands of loyal Conservatives through the country who will get that impression and be considerably stirred up. It would be rather strong to say that these honest citizens were being unnecessarily disturbed, and yet it does seem impossible to give any other explanation. No doubt Mr. Borden and those of his party responsible for the resolution have their reasons for trying to create this impression, but we question their soundness. So far as Mr. Borden is personally concerned, we believe that he is too well informed and has too much "horse sense" to justify the resolution on any other ground than political necessity.

LET us not be misunderstood. The Conservatives have a perfect right to attack the Government's naval policy. They are a real part of the governing power only when active. It is their privi-

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BY THE EDITOR

lege to say it is inadequate, indefinite and unjustifiable. They should, however, take other ground than the one which has been shown to be untenable, viz., that Britain is in immediate or

somewhat remote danger from Germany. If they believe that the Government intends to proceed too slowly in the creation of a Canadian navy and to build ships unsuited for Imperial defence they are quite justified in making criticisms of the strongest kind. There is room for honest difference of opinion on these points. But to intimate that unless we give two Dreadnoughts right away, John Bull will be in danger of being wiped out by Germany is used as an argument which is untenable and which will do unnecessary injury to the body politic.

Had the Opposition taken the ground that some of the eleven vessels which the Government proposes to build should be built in Great Britain and some in Canada, thus ensuring quicker delivery, it would have been a reasonable suggestion. The weakness in the Government's plan is that we shall not have a fleet for five years at least. Assuming that a fleet is required, and both parties seem agreed on that, five years is rather long to wait for it. This point is not touched upon in their somewhat involved and self-contradictory resolution, though it was pointedly discussed by Mr. Borden in moving that resolution. However, definiteness and unity cannot be expected from a party which is so sadly divided on a question as the Conservatives are on the proper policy for Canada to pursue in naval matters.

S PITE of all differences of opinion on the naval policy, every citizen must be pleased with the progress which Canada is making towards strengthening her position as a member of the Empire and as a member of the greater family of nations. The Canadian navy may never be used for the purpose of war, and the less fighting it sees the better for us all, but it will be an additional proof that the "Men of the Northern Zone" are increasing in number, wealth and national self-consciousness. Factories, railways, and universities are the symbols of progress which the visitor to this country will find most striking. The Canadian flag on ocean freighters, ocean passenger vessels and warships is the symbol which will impress the people abroad.

A Canadian-built navy should be but the fore-runner of a greater Canadian-built merchant marine. Providing that Canada does not carry Protection by Customs Duties to the extreme that it has been carried in the United States, and providing that our foreign commerce develops in the future as it has in the past, Canada will be known as a great shipping country. Because of mismanagement and because of her wonderful internal market, the United States has not achieved prominence as a maritime nation. Her failure should be both a warning and a stimulus to Canada; a warning not to allow the carrying of her goods to be performed by an alien race sailing under an alien flag, and a stimulus to do her utmost to develop her foreign trade side by side with her domestic trade. A nation without a foreign trade and an adequate merchant marine is but half a nation; she may be likened unto a man with one withered arm. Already Canada has, comparatively speaking, a greater ocean-going tonnage than the United States. Our three great transcontinental systems are stretching out and combining sea-carriage with land-carriage. To maintain this valuable superiority, Canada needs a ship-building policy. She needs graving docks where her vessels may be given their yearly out-fitting and overhauling and to which injured vessels may go for repairs, or may be remodelled and rebuilt. She needs also shipyards where new vessels may be constructed.

In all our study of economic conditions and in all our making of laws for husbandry, mechanics, manufacturing and general commerce, let us not forget to make such laws and inaugurate such policies as will give to Canada a ship-building industry. One has but