

BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZATION OF A CANADIAN NAVAL SERVICE UNDER LIBERAL ADMINISTRATION.

It has become a part of the tactics of the Borden Administration to seek to belittle the work of the Laurier Administration in putting into effect the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of March 29, 1909, approving of the speedy organization of a Canadian Naval Service. An examination of what was actually accomplished will show that, having regard to the magnitude of the undertaking, the necessary conferences with the British Admiralty, the time required for the enactment of legislation and obtaining appropriations from Parliament, as well as the time required for the preparation and consideration of tenders for the construction of ships, both by Government and firms tendering, the record of the Laurier Government in this, as in all other matters of administration, was both progressive and expeditious.

The resolution was passed at the session of 1908-09. Before the session had ended, the Minister of Marine and the Minister of Naval Defence left for England to attend a subsidiary Conference of the Imperial Conference called for the express purpose of considering the Canadian Resolution and a similar resolution by Australia. An agreement was reached at this Conference as to what Canada and Australia should do, viz.: to each enter upon the organization of a naval service of their own. The Ministers returned and immediately a bill was drafted, with the aid and advice of Naval experts loaned to the Canadian Government by the Admiralty. It was introduced at the session immediately ensuing—the session of 1909-10—and passed by Parliament on March 4, 1910. **This measure could not have been enacted earlier, and until it was enacted and the necessary appropriation for giving its provisions effect voted by Parliament, the Administration could go no farther. That was March 4, 1910. Parliament was dissolved on July 29th, 1911, just a year and a little over four months later. The following brief outline will show what was accomplished in these sixteen months.** Having regard to the circumstance that the whole work was concerned with bringing into existence an entirely new branch of Administration, and that interests, both Canadian and Imperial, of vast importance were involved, it will be generally conceded that to have attempted to do more in the time would have rendered the Government liable to censure on the ground of undue consideration and immoderate haste.

1910.

March 4th—The Naval Service Act passed. Steps immediately taken to organize a Department of Naval Service under five branches: (1) Naval, (2) Fishery Protection, (3) Tidal and Current Survey, (4) Hydrographic Survey, (5) Wireless Telegraph.

March 5th—G. J. Desbarats appointed Deputy Minister of Department of Naval Service.

Rear Admiral C. E. Kingsmill appointed Director of the Naval Service.