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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1921

BIG TASK FOR SIR ROBT. HORNE

British Budget Promises to be
Startling.

War Debt Cancellation Proposals at Washington—Some Worry Over Health of Queen Mother—Death of General Humbert.

(From our own Correspondent)
London, Nov. 24.—It is clear that Sir Robert Horne is chiefly concerned with the financial problems of next year, and competent judges are of the opinion that the budget will be the most startling of its kind since the war. The tax-exempt capacity of the country has been about exhausted, and existing duties will show a marked falling off in yield, while new debt charges, not forgetting the £20,000,000 of interest due to the U. S., will pile up the expenditure side of the account.

In a speech the other day, very insufficiently reported, Sir Eric Geddes declared that his committee had to suggest cuts amounting to a least £180,000,000 next year if the country was to avoid bankruptcy, and the rumors of his activities have been reflected in the city by a return of confidence. The fact is that this notion is on the verge of financial disaster, and to avert it there will be a tremendous overhauling of every department of State expenditure, in the course of which vital modifications of policy will be inevitable. Last week the economy committee was at work on official salaries, among others teachers' salaries under the Burnham scale coming under review; and this week whole ministries are being asked to justify their separate existences.

War Debt Proposals at Washington. I heard that the United States is yielding on the question of the proposed discussion of the war debts by the disarmament conference. The British delegates intend to take advantage of this attitude to propose an adjustment before the conclusion of the conference.

On July 1, 1921, the time the last interest payment was due, the total debt owed by European nations to the United States, principal and interest, was \$11,084,844, of which \$4,778,621,942 was owed by Great Britain. Recognizing that in the present financial condition of the world it is impossible to conduct foreign trade, the British proposal will be that the United States and Great Britain should cancel, dollar for dollar, all or part of the continental debts owing to them. The continental nations would in turn cancel a portion of their reparations claims. The net result, it is argued, would be to reduce the debts to a payable basis all around.

Assuming that a total of approximately £2,800,000,000 of allied debts and reparations were cancelled, Germany would be left with an indemnity burden in a capital sum of about £2,400,000,000, an amount which it is figured could with some certainty pay. Of this amount approximately £1,000,000,000 would be due to Great Britain, thus balancing the debt owed by this country to the United



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States. Failing agreement on these lines, a proposal will be made that a five-year moratorium should be declared on loans and indemnities. At the end of the five years the question of the practicability of cancelling or otherwise adjusting the debts would be reconsidered.

Queen Alexandra. I hear privately from Sandringham that the health of Queen Alexandra is causing some anxiety to the royal physicians. It will be recalled that some time ago there was a very remarkable improvement in the trouble that affected the eyesight of the Queen Mother, and hopes were entertained that this might be continued. But the eyes have again proved troublesome, and this joined to persistent insomnia, has very

materially reduced the strength of Her Majesty. She rarely ventures out of doors, and is on the advice of her physicians, resting as much as possible. There was some thought of a visit being paid to the South of France, to escape the cold and damp weather, but this project has been abandoned. It may be noted as a curious fact that Queen Alexandra has never paid a visit to the South of France, although both King Edward and Queen Victoria were very fond of basking in the sunshine there.

General Humbert. The death of the military governor of Strasbourg, General Humbert, is of interest to a great many British ex-service men, as well as of deep concern to France. General Humbert was one of the ablest fighting heads of the French army in 1914. He was one of those typically French figures, a smart and dapper little officer with immense vim and dash who won distinction in the best school of French soldiery. It was in Morocco that he made his name as a commander of sterling qualities, and the celebrated Foreign Legion made almost an idol of him. He fought in Tonkin, Madagascar and Morocco with a convincing success that justified brilliant expectations of him, and when he led the famous Moroccan division of the French army in the great war the reputation won in foreign campaigns was fully maintained.

Fighting force in France at its best, composed of the seasoned legions of Africa, fire-eaters whose veteran courage was equal to anything. General Humbert's troops were the charge of the Light Brigade in the shade of the Somme, by actually charging on foot, and taking several batteries of German machine guns. General Humbert had a tremendous liking for the British army and the English Tommy. He it was who, during the terrible German push of March 1918, rushed his fighters to support of right flank of the hard-pressed British fifth army.

Hamburg's Trade Boom. A shipping friend of mine recently returned from Hamburg tells me that business is booming at that port. All available quay accommodation for steamers is being occupied, many vessels are discharging their cargoes into lighters in the river, while others are waiting from eight to ten days for a discharging berth, and above this a large number of boats have been diverted to Rotterdam. It is estimated that at present 200,000 tons of grain are stored at the port, barges and quays having been used for storage purposes, the ordinary warehouse being full. Part of the congestion in the port is put down to the very low water level of the Elbe during the last summer, which has prevented deeply laden barges passing up the river, and so caused a heavy increase of traffic on the railways. Whatever be the cause of the railway congestion, there seems to be little doubt that the boom of the German shipping men who say that they have now got back eighty per cent of their pre-war trade is amply justified.

"Cripples' Club." I was told last night a delightful little story of two members of the United Services, that remarkably comfortable club in Pall Mall known to the man about town as the "Cripples". It earned this nickname because, during the war, it was practically impossible to obtain admission unless you enjoyed the rank of field officer or something higher. According to the story an admiral of ninety was painfully mounting the steps from Pall Mall when a skittish young general of eighty-nine ran down the steps and bumped into him. The admiral, a peppy old gentleman, rounded on him. "Where the devil are you going," he demanded, "you reckless young calf?" The general, no less peppery, made immediate reply: "Going to dinner," he snorted, "you callous old wreck."

LAND OF CHILDREN.

New York Painter Tells Stories of Life in Spain.

Robert Henri, a New York painter, was telling stories about his life in Spain.

"Spain is, above all things," he said, "the land of spoiled, coterwauling children. Wherever you go—to church, to fashionable restaurants, to the opera—coterwauling children surround you. Spain would have delighted Theodore Roosevelt's heart with its large families. Families of twelve, of fifteen, even of twenty children are nothing there. "One summer day on the beach at San Sebastian a little boy rushed up to a fat man who was trying to soothe a pair of yelling twins.

"Senor, senor, come quick! the boy painted. 'Your son Santiago is drowning!'"

"The fat man, before laying the twins down to go to the rescue, turned doubtfully to his wife:

"Dolores, senor, have we a Santiago?"—Detroit Free Press.

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR ELECT.

At an assembly of St. John DeMolay No. 8, Knights Templar, held last evening in the Masonic hall, the following officers were installed by Rt. Em. Knight W. R. White, provincial grand prior of New Brunswick: President, preceptor, Em. Sir Kt. Roy E. Crawford; constable, Sir Kt. W. Neish; marshal, Sir Kt. Peter Davidson; chaplain, Rt. Em. Kt. H. A. Porter; registrar, Em. Kt. R. Steves; treasurer, Rt. Em. Kt. G. E. Day; sub-marshal, Sir Kt. J. H. Kelley; second standard-bearer, Sir Kt. A. J. Hooper; sword bearer, Sir Kt. A. J. Harris; captain of the guard, Sir Kt. D. D. Betts; guard, Sir Kt. G. T. Hay. After the installation a banquet was held.



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Week-end Cases \$12.35 to \$30.00
Fitted Pads for Bags \$10.00 to \$15.00
Hat Boxes, Square \$14.25
Hat Boxes, Round \$16.50

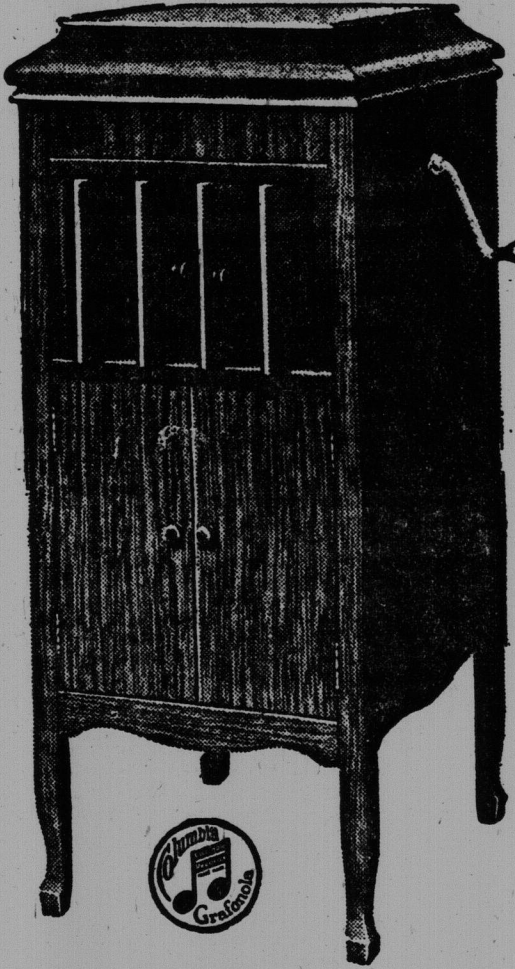
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Military Brush Cases \$1.50 to \$2.00
Military Brushes \$3.25 to \$3.75
Cigar Cases \$1.25
Cigarette Cases 85c. to \$1.25
Tobacco Pouches, snap fasteners \$1.10 to \$4.50
Necktie Cases \$3.50
Soft Collar Cases \$3.00

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Purses (for change) 45c. to \$2.25
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general, no less peppery, made immediate reply: "Going to dinner," he snorted, "you callous old wreck."
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