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LONDON, THURSDAY, JUNE 13.

SEELY REPUDIATES CONSCRIPTION.

Col. Seely, the British war secretary,

has put himself on record as a cham-

pion of Lord Haldane's Territorials and

an opponent of the national military

service or conscription advocated by

Lord Roberts. For some time British

Radical papers have been expressing

suspicion of Seely's Liberalism. He

has been depicted as sitting on the

fence in the question of compulsory

military service. But he has now

clearly repudiated the policy of the

panic-mongers.

It is very satisfactory to lovers of

peace everywhere that the War Minis-

ter should take his stand for a free

England unentangled in the hostilities

threatened between foreign powers.

Conscription in Great Britain means

the end of a merely defensive attitude,

for which a commanding fleet suffices.

Competent military judges have figured

that England cannot be exposed to at-

tack at any time, under present cir-

cumstances, by an invading force of

more than 70,000. Even Lord Roberts

in his wildest imaginings has not put

the number of possible invaders at

more than 200,000 men. Against such

a force, if it were foolish enough to

venture in, and unlikely enough to get

in, the voluntary Territorials, backed

by every advantage, could not fail to

be successful. Conscription is not

wanted for any such small business,

whatever Lord Roberts and his friends

may have persuaded themselves into

thinking. It is wanted for a military

alliance with France, to renew the

Rhineland wars and Walcherens of the

eighteenth century.

Nelson said that one volunteer was

worth ten pressed men. One of the

explicit conditions of Territorial ser-

vice is that those enrolled shall not

be used except for the defence of the

country against invasion. A pretence

is also made that the same condition

will be attached to the proposed com-

pulsory service, but the point is that

such a service is not needed except for

foreign warfare. Compulsion, in fact,

essentially does away with conditions.

It is the purely voluntary character

of the Territorial service that has

made it popular and efficient in spite

of constant attacks by the militarists.

There is only one contingency that

may justify a resort to conscription

in Great Britain. Should airships be-

come so capacious and safe that jour-

neys by water would be superseded,

Great Britain would be rendered very

much less an island. But that is a

long way off, and even when the time

comes, it is probable that the danger

of invasion will be better met by an

adequate aerial fleet than by conscrip-

tion.

Already, it is pointed out, Great Brit-

ain, without a mile of land frontier,

has 750 airmen to France's 1,174, the

French leading the nations in this

respect. And the efficiency of British

airmen and their crafts is shown by

the small number of accidents. Ger-

many has lost 27 lives, France 17,

Great Britain 8, and the United States,

with one-eighth of the air fleet pos-

sessed by Great Britain, 5.

A compulsory service must weaken

the financial strength of any nation. It

also keeps up a constant international

ill-feeling, if it does not actually in-

duce war. It is a travesty of Chris-

tianity.

TRAINING OF IMMIGRANTS.

A more important matter for both

Great Britain and the colonies than

even naval defence is the scientific

direction of immigration. The proposal

lately made by the London Morning

Post, that training farms be estab-

lished for young Englishmen intend-

ing to emigrate, ought not to be let drop.

And more than this could be done.

If this country wants to help Great

Britain and do something really im-

perial, why not go in for a proper

perhaps upon the British rural labor-

ers, more upon the floating crowd of

the city poor, and certainly benefiting

the colonies themselves.

Already a certain amount of such

preliminary training is done on Eng-

lish farms, but it needs improvement

and extension. Sir Thomas Robinson,

agent-general in England for Queens-

land, says that good results come from

the present small beginnings. He says:

"Although many, if not most, of

these youths come from 'blind-alley'

occupations, the farm training they

get before embarkation renders them

so thoroughly eligible for work on

the land in Queensland that the

farmers' demands are far in excess

of the supply."

More than farm workers can be thus

trained. The colonies need a great deal

of female labor, especially capable of

domestic work. At present it is almost

impossible to secure British-born domes-

tics of experience fitting them for their

work. Preliminary training is needed

here also and in many other lines. Get

the girls over here ready for their work

and England will be lightened of a

feminine surplus, while the colonial

gain needs no pointing out.

If there is to be a subsidiary Im-

perial Conference in Canada next fall,

this is a subject well worth the atten-

tion of mother country and Domin-

ions.

TWO PICTURES.

"We'll yell our heads off for the

Union Jack, we'll sing 'Rule Britannia'

till we die, but not a Canadian will set

foot ever on a war vessel to fight!"—

sentiment of certain political meetings.

While the contributionists are thus

enjoying themselves in their own way,

the new big battle cruiser Australia

is getting ready to sail from Ports-

mouth, not to Gibraltar, but to her

own country. There she and her mates

will replace the ships of the Royal

Navy in the waters of the Common-

wealth. Australians will fight if neces-

sary, not merely yell and sing.

THE LIBERALS AND THE NORTH LAND.

Mr. Hearst, the Ontario Minister of

Mines, painted a very brilliant picture

of the north land before the Canadian

Club the other day. His audience was

very much pleased as they listened to

his glowing description of New Ontario,

with its vast extent of territory, its

wide areas of agricultural lands, its

rich mineral deposits, and its bound-

less forests, calling upon us to enter

and take possession. But while the

minister's speech was remarkable for

what it told, it was no less remark-

able for some things left unsaid.

We were not told that a Liberal

Government was the pioneer in ex-

ploring and opening up the terra in-

cognita north of us. We did not hear

that a Liberal Government commenced

the construction of the Ontario and

Temiskaming Railroad, the first

colonization road by which settlers

might have access to the new land of

promise. Nor did we hear that there

was no encouragement in this pioneer

work from the Conservative Opposi-

tion.

Mr. Hearst did not tell his audience

that the Liberal Government sent no

less than ten exploring parties through

Northern Ontario, covering the entire

country from east to west, and that

the voluminous reports of the govern-

ment surveyors, mineralogists and

scientists are on file in his office, sup-

plying him with much of the informa-

tion which he in turn handed over to

his audience. From all he did say,

we would have been justified in draw-

ing the inference that the Whitney

Government had explored the north,

and that prior to Mr. Hearst's advent

no one knew anything about it.

We were told something of the ad-

vantages of the Grand Trunk Pacific

Railway in opening up the fertile clay

belt that stretches for many miles

north of the height of land. Of course,

it was not necessary to say that when

the transcontinental railway bill was

before the Dominion Parliament, and

the Liberal Premier and his Minister

of Railways were telling of the valu-

able land to be opened up for settle-

ment, the Conservative Opposition

were fighting the measure, and paint-

ing the most gloomy pictures of a sec-

tion which they declared to be utterly

worthless—a land of moss and

muskges and "stunted poplar." (The

"stunted poplar" was the favorite sar-

casm of Sir James.)

Mr. Hearst comes from Sault Ste.

Marie, and seemed to be very proud

of its steel works and other industrial

enterprises, and of the value of the

Albion Central Railway, as it pushed

its way eastward to open up the coun-

try. But we heard no reference to the

fact that not many years ago, the

Clugre steel works, employing nearly

1,000 men, and its dependent railway,

were in dire distress, and on the verge

of bankruptcy, and that a Liberal

Government came to the rescue, backed

them up with financial aid, and saved

them for the benefit of Ontario in

general, and Mr. Hearst's constituency

in particular. Neither were we told

that Mr. Whitney and his colleagues

vigorously opposed all Government

aid to these schemes. Surely the violent

denunciations of the Government for

its reckless extravagance on this

occasion are not forgotten?

It was George Brown and the Lib-

erals of a past generation who first

advocated the turning over to the Do-

minion of the Hudson Bay Company's

claim to the sole ownership of the

northwest country, and made possible

the opening up of the great granary of

Canada, made possible the growing

and prosperous provinces of the West.

It was George Ross and the Liberals

of Ontario, who went out into the

north lands of this province, explored

the territory, and built the railroads

which made possible the realization of

Mr. Hearst's sanguine hopes for the

future of that section. It was Sir Wil-

frid Laurier and the Liberals who

sent the new transcontinental across

the clay belt of Northern Ontario and

made it available for settlement. The

Liberals labored, and the Conserva-

tives entered into the fruit of their

labors. That was their good fortune.

But Canadians in their pride and

gratification over the brilliant possi-