

press home the lessons of the Great War. But they won't prepare for peace by preparing for war.

However, I was passing on to say that if we must speak in terms of war, I wonder if the Government have taken it into their consideration that some of the wisest men, from the military point of view, are already prophesying that the next war will be in the air? I do not know what the Government's Air Board is doing, but aeroplanes could be used commercially within one's own country. However, my point is, and I want to put it in a sentence, that if the next war will be in the air, it would seem rather a useless way of meeting it by making preparations in the old way for a war on the sea. There are people who have come out with still more modern views. I see my distinguished friend from Skeena (Mr. Peck)—and I suppose everything military is a matter of common observation and study with him,—and I wonder if he has been reading the article stating that the next war will be with chemicals. If that is going to be the case and we are going to sail in the air and kill one another with gas, then what is the use in embarking, within eighteen months of the Imperial Conference, upon a huge naval expenditure? I notice my hon. friend (Mr. Ballantyne) smiles. He will find it is no smiling matter when he tackles the opinion of the farmers and the returned soldiers and the labour men upon this question: Don't let him deceive himself about the returned men—

Mr. BALLANTYNE: If my hon. friend will allow me a moment? I was not smiling at his argument at all, I was smiling at something else which my colleague happened to be telling me.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer): I am very glad to have that explanation. His smile soon left him when I told him it would be taken off him, and taken off good and plenty. If we are going to fight the next war with chemicals, we had better spend money on teaching our people chemistry. If we are going to fight it in the air, we had better make our Air Board a reality instead of a name, and had better establish an air service in Canada which will be useful in the meantime for commercial purposes within our own country.

And I would suggest that if you want to have vessels of war kept floated and run by Canadians, you will have to teach your people to go to sea. If you would only take your minds from war considerations

[Mr. M. Clark.]

and study how great navies have been built up in the world, you would find that you would be doing better service for the defence of Canada at sea in the future by altering your fiscal policy than by all the naval expenditures that this Parliament can be induced to make by the persuasive accents of my hon. friend the Minister of Naval Affairs. What is the use of building navies if your fiscal policy drives you off the ocean? And that is what it has done. It is what it did to America; it is what it has done very largely to Canada. I do not want to enlarge upon what is a somewhat favourite theme with me, but my hon. friend (Mr. Fielding) knows very well, there was a time when Nova Scotia was a great seafaring province, but to-day her great merchant fleets have disappeared off the coast of that province which has honoured itself in honouring him.

Now I want to come to a practical consideration which I would like to impress upon statesmen young and old in this country, and that is that when the Imperial Conference comes about I think it would be a great mistake—and I want to impress this very earnestly upon both sides of this House—I think it would be a great mistake for statesmen from any part of the Empire, and especially from Canada, to go to that conference committed to a view which I understand already dominates the mind of Lord Jellicoe, namely, that we should have a uniform system of naval defence throughout the Empire. Canada's position in this matter is very different from that of Australia. I want to suggest that when the Imperial Conference is held, if the instructions and lessons of the late war are thoroughly kept in mind, we should try if we could not find a system of co-operation between the different parts of the Empire. Australia, in the very nature of things as long as war vessels are built, must have far more importance in sea defence than Canada has. And I want to go a step further in that consideration. What has been the lesson of all wars as to the termination of them? What was the lesson of the last war? What won? I am not sure that I should say the last man in the field; I am not sure that I should say the last vessel on the sea, or the last aeroplane in the air. What won in the last analysis was the last shot in the financial locker. That is what won. What would be the lesson of that, if I am right?—and I hold that I am right. It was won by the tremendous economic resources of the