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GERMAN NAVAL ESTIMATES.

IT is announced that Germany's naval estimates this year will amount to \$115,000,000 or \$5,000,000 more than last year and that they include provision for a naval attaché at Vienna. It must not be hastily assumed that the increase is entirely due to the commencement of the Canadian Navy, but it is well to bear in mind that, in the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, "when England is at war, Canada is at war." This is the practical reply to the appeal for partial disarmament. No man of average intelligence can have any doubt as to the purpose of Germany's persistent policy of naval development. It has one definite, obvious object and that is the crushing of England's naval and commercial supremacy. Some British statesmen may affect to be blind to the situation. The British people are not blind to it; and they will force those right honourable gentlemen to take action for the defence of the Empire, or they will show them to the door. The attitude of Canada on this question has not been worthy of Canada. We are face to face with a national crisis that should impel all Canadians to stand shoulder to shoulder and to consider, not how little they must do, but how much they can do, for the defence of the flag which protects their lives, their homes, their property and their interests.

BISHOP STREET FIRE.

THE Council of the Montreal Board of Trade has formally declared that the fire which destroyed the Bishop Street flats points to some serious deficiency either in the building laws or in their enforcement. In our judgment it points to both, but especially to the latter. The Building Inspection Department is ludicrously inadequate to its duties. There is a great amount of building going on in Montreal and the Department has not nearly enough experts to examine the plans, to say nothing about seeing that they are faithfully adhered to in actual construction. The fate of the Bishop Street flats seems to have been anticipated almost from the commencement of the building. All the neighbours realized the danger of the structure and before the fire happened public and private protests were made. From the first the flats were a menace to all the valuable surrounding property. The Fire Brigade is entitled to the greatest credit for averting a con-

flagration of gigantic dimensions. Why should Montreal be exposed to such hazards? The Fire Commissioners have commenced their enquiry into the cause of the fire; there should be something more; there should be a rigorous investigation by the Board of Control into all the circumstances connected with the granting of the building permit, the examination of the plans and the subsequent inspection of the building operations. There should also be a thorough investigation by the City Council into the condition of the Building Inspection Department and its system of work.

STREET RAILWAY AND CANADIAN POWER.

THE changes in the Montreal Street Railway administration anticipated in the last issue of THE CHRONICLE have taken place. At the annual meeting of shareholders which took place on Wednesday none of the old directors were re-elected. The Robert Syndicate, which owns the Canadian Power Company, had secured the control of the Street Railway Company and elected its own ticket without opposition. The new board consists of Mr. Edmund Arthur Robert, president; Mr. J. W. McConnell, vice-president; and Messrs. D. Lorne McGibbon, F. Howard Wilson, W. C. Finley and George G. Foster, K.C. Only one ticket was nominated and only one ballot cast. The question of an actual merger of the two companies is still in the future and as THE CHRONICLE has repeatedly stated, it is difficult to imagine any basis of union between two such dissimilar enterprises.

RECIPROCITY NEGOTIATIONS. M R. Henry M. Hoyt, counsellor, and Mr. Charles M. Pepper, commercial adviser of the State Department at Washington, left yesterday for Ottawa to commence negotiations with the Dominion Government regarding reciprocity between the United States and Canada. They will be joined shortly by Secretary of State Knox. The Washington people seem to be very hopeful of the result; in fact seem to regard Ottawa as a negligible quantity in the negotiations, their only doubts being as to whether Congress will ratify the treaty, which is regarded as a foregone conclusion. There seems to be considerable ignorance at Washington, how-