

AUSTRALIA'S CONSCRIPTION REFERENDUM.

We quote herewith the referendum for reinforcements which is signed by the Prime Minister of Australia and is the basis of the appeal made by that Commonwealth to the people.

The recent reverses in Russia and Italy have created a situation so grave as to threaten the very existence of Australia and the Empire, and have imposed tremendous added responsibilities upon the English speaking peoples.

Until America has marshalled her great resources, the chief burdens of the war rest upon the British Empire. Every part must do its share; Australia must maintain her Five Divisions in Europe and her forces in Palestine and elsewhere at their full strength. To do this 7000 men a month are necessary.

Voluntary recruiting, though given every opportunity, has proved itself quite inadequate to raise this number.

National safety imperatively demands that Australia should do her duty. The Government therefore asks the electors to give it power to raise 7000 men per month in the terms of the following proposal:—

1. Voluntary enlistment is to continue.
2. The number of reinforcements required is 7000 per month.
3. Compulsory reinforcements will be called up by ballot to the extent to which voluntary enlistment fails to supply this number.
4. The ballot will be from among single men only, between the ages of 20 and 44 years (including widowers and divorcees without children dependent upon them).
5. The following will be exempt:—
 - a. Married men.
 - b. Persons who are physically unfit for service.
 - c. Judges of Federal and State Courts, and Police, Special, and Stipendiary Magistrates.
 - d. Ministers of Religion.
 - e. Persons whose employment in any particular industry is declared by the prescribed authority to be necessary for the supply of food and material essential for the war.
 - f. Persons whose religious belief does not allow them to bear arms; but this objection will only exempt them from combatant service.
 - g. Persons, the calling up of whom for military service would because of their domestic circumstances, cause undue hardship to those dependent upon them.
6. The Government will prescribe the industries essential to the prosecution of the war and the national welfare of Australia, and a special tribunal will determine the amount of labor necessary for their effective operation.
7. Where a family is or has been represented in the Australian Imperial Force by the father or a son, or by a brother, one eligible son or brother (as the case may be) shall be exempt.
8. Eligible males of families which are now or have been represented at the front shall not be balloted for until after eligible males of families not so represented have been called up.
9. All ballots shall be so conducted that families will contribute as nearly as practicable pro rata, and that in no case shall the sole remaining eligible member of a family which is or has been so represented be called up for service. Males under the age of 20 will be exempt in addition to the one eligible male over that age.
10. In determining the pro rata contribution, regard shall be had to all members of the family who have joined the Australian Imperial Force, irrespective of age.
11. Ballots will be taken by States, on the basis of the proportional number of eligible persons in each State.
12. The tribunals for deciding exemptions will be constituted by Magistrates specially appointed; and an appeal will lie to a Supreme Court Judge.

This is the proposal of the Government, upon which the electors are asked to vote on December 20th. The

power asked for is definite and limited; IT APPLIES ONLY TO SINGLE MEN AND WIDOWERS AND DIVORCEES WITHOUT DEPENDENTS BETWEEN 20 AND 44 YEARS.

W. M. HUGHES,
Prime Minister.

THE LIQUOR QUESTION—MORE PROTECTION.

The Winnipeg Telegram apologizes to those who do not favor prohibitory legislation for the Order-in-Council passed by the Union Government supposedly enacting Dominion prohibition. Seeing that the Order-in-Council only enacts that foreign whiskey shall not hereafter be imported into Canada to interfere with business of the Canadian distillers, the apology hardly seems to be necessary.

In this connection it might be well to note that according to the report of the Department of Inland Revenue for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 1917, the quantity of spirits produced in Canada during the fiscal year from March 31st, 1916, to March 31st, 1917, was 6,400,119 proof gallons as compared with 3,450,012 proof gallons for the previous fiscal year, namely, March 31st, 1915, to March 31st, 1916.

According to the same report page XI, the figures given for the total quantities of spirits imported into Canada upon which duty was collected for the year 1916-17 was 4,246,367 proof gallons and for the year previous, namely 1915-16, the total quantity of spirits imported into Canada upon which duty was collected was 3,719,346 proof gallons.

It is significant that in the order-in-council dated December 22nd, number 3473, and contained in an Extra of the Canada Gazette of that date, provides regulations for the stopping of all importations of intoxicating liquors into Canada except wine for use in divine service, intoxicating liquors for medicinal purposes, and intoxicating liquors for manufacturing, but these regulations do not contain one word with reference to the stopping of the manufacture of liquors in Canada, although the statement issued by the Government and given to the Press contains a paragraph that it was the intention of the Government to stop the manufacture in Canada shortly. As the matter now stands the only change made is that the Canadian manufacturers of intoxicating liquors have no competition from British or foreign countries. The order-in-council above referred to and the regulations embodied therein makes no reference whatever to the transportation of liquor from one province to another, in Canada.

WINNING THE ELECTIONS.

In the polling division of Oxville in the Battle River, Alberta, constituency, there were 113 names of voters on the list and in addition a large number were to be added on polling day.

The returning officer and all the officials connected with this polling division knew these facts, yet when the provision was made for the votes to be taken, only 75 ballots were sent to Oxville.