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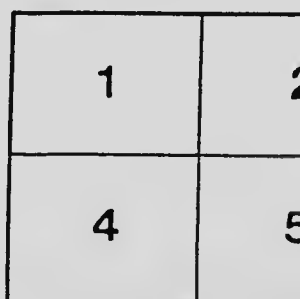
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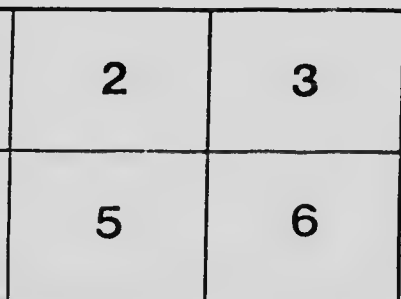
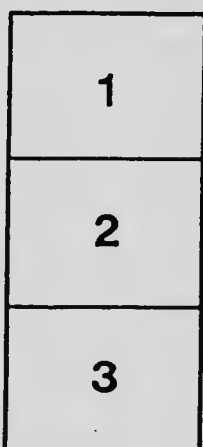
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No. XX.

WHAT THE NAVY LEAGUE MEANS TO CANADA

BY

VEN. ARCHDEACON H. J. CODY, D.D., LL.D.

Many thought that the work of the Navy League would come to an end when the war was over. This is not so. The war demonstrated and was the occasion for realizing the value of the aims of the Navy League. These aims are still the aims of the Navy League, and await fuller achievement.

Nearly every advance in public policy under democratic government has been made on private initiative. One of the real disabilities that beset a democracy is that elected representatives have scarcely time enough to think out broad policies. We make great demands on our Cabinet representatives, and sometimes forget that they are human, and are generally overburdened with administrative detail. Therefore, it is part of the duty of private persons in a democracy to assist the Government to make decisions on points of policy on which it is unable to reach definite conclusions.

Germany before the war did not build up its Navy without a Navy League. The authorities realized the value of such an organization and formed it. They were wise enough to see that their Government could not adopt an aggressive naval policy unless it was supported by a substantial public opinion.

In determining a Naval Policy for Canada, the Government will necessarily have the deciding voice. But the Government will be able more wisely and easily to make this decision when the subject has been fully discussed by the public and when public opinion has been thoroughly informed.

In order that the public may know the aims of the Navy League, education is vital. If naval information cannot be given by the official heads of the country, then it may be given by a league such as this. Cabinet Ministers for the most part are overworked. Therefore this league is not presuming on its rights when it takes up the work of naval education throughout the country.

(1) For years to come the one aim of this organization will be to pay the debt we owe to the dependents of the seamen who died in the war. When we used to cross the ocean before the war we felt how much our safety depended upon the captain and his men, and we willingly contributed to the collections which were taken up on board ship in aid of the Seamen's Orphanage Fund. We realized this debt to the Merchant Marine infinitely more fully during the war.

(2) A second aim of the Navy League is to provide for the moral and physical welfare of our seamen when ashore, through Seamen's Homes. We can never forget that life on the sea can never be as comfortable as life on land. Those who go to sea make certain sacrifices; and any country whose citizens will not make the necessary

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sacrifice to serve at sea need not hope to wield any great degree of power on the seas. We are doing a splendid work, therefore, in providing the comforts and moral supports of home for the gallant lads when they come ashore. We want to make Canadian ports safe for our Sailor Boys.

(3) A third aim of the league is the training of boys and men for the Merchant Marine and for the Navy. The training of men for the Merchant Marine in almost every country has been a matter of private enterprise, although in time of war the Merchant Marine becomes part of the Navy. The Navy League is thus virtually training the personnel for the Navy in time of war, whether the immediate destination of the boys is the Merchant Marine or the Naval Service.

When all is said and done, it is the personnel of the fleet that makes the fleet. Not the ships, but the men, are primary. A nation is apparently trying to build a Navy greater than the British by adding millions of tons of steel warships, but I think its most serious difficulty will be the finding of the personnel for this fleet. It is in personnel that the British fleet is so splendidly supreme. The call of the sea is in our blood. Our forefathers came from the Old Land, where life for a thousand years has been spent on or near the seas. The lure of the sea is still in the blood, and calls them and us back to the water. It is upon the training of the PERSONNEL that this organization is concentrating its efforts. The work of the Naval Brigades is well known. I might add an illustration of the need of such training. It may not be generally known that the crews of most of the vessels doing business on the Pacific are made up of Chinese or Japanese. If there should be a war in which Japan or China was interested, very likely these men would be called home, and our Merchant Service on the Pacific Coast would be held up. From what source of supply could these crews be replaced? We must look ahead. We cannot be sure that there will never be another war. Let us not make the mistake of believing too easily and without evidence such happy prophecies. There may be no European war for a long time; but if war springs up in any part of the world, other parts may be involved. In the event of war, the Naval Brigades would be a source of supply for all merchant ships in need of crews. This training of the boys is a wise precaution we may take in time of peace.

(4) In the educational work, which the Navy League is carrying on among the people of Canada, the importance of a strong Merchant Service should be emphasized. We know we are now in business competition with the world. All political economists hold that the development of a sound export trade is necessary to stabilize industry. Bad times are never dominant throughout the whole world at one time. The best way in which the industry of any country can be stabilized is by developing an export trade. We have vast stores of raw material in Canada, which, when manufactured, are more than enough for ourselves. We must, therefore, develop export trade, and to do this must develop our own shipping. We now rank eighth in the world in point of personnel and tonnage of ships.

The other department of the League's educational programme covers the development of a sound Naval Policy. Canada has been discussing this matter for the past eighteen years, since 1902. It is, of course, a good thing to discuss matters thoroughly, but at some time we must reach decisions. Surely the time has now come when Canada can determine its Naval Policy.

The war demonstrated that sea power is absolutely vital to victory. I do not mean that by sea power alone wars can be won, but sea power is vital nevertheless. You cannot deliver your soldiers and their supplies and ammunition unless the ways of sea communication are open.

Long ago the seas were regarded as separating countries; now we have a different conception. Seas unite. It is the sea that binds together all the parts of the British Commonwealth. We Britons are in a unique position. Nearly all the other empires of the world are more or less compact, but the British Empire is essentially bound together by the sea. Therefore, no country has a right to demand that the British Empire dispense with the Navy. For sea power is the very breath and life of our Imperial Commonwealth.

No cry against "Navalism" as being as dangerous as "Militarism" must be allowed to alter our aims. Sea power has never been associated with autocracy or oppression, but always with democracy and freedom. In modern history we find that all the tyrants who tried to dominate Europe were beaten by sea power. There is no reason why we should forget the right, which we certainly have, to protect the lines of communication which link together our far-flung Empire.

Canada now takes a new position in the world. (a) Canada was represented on the Imperial War Cabinet during the war. Some permanent organ of common deliberation and action will have to take its place. I have no doubt that the political genius of our people will devise the necessary body, without interfering with the local freedom of the constituent members of the Empire. (b) Canada was recognized as possessing a national status, through our Representatives signing the Treaty of Peace. The full significance of this and its consequent responsibilities our citizens scarcely yet realize. Equality of privilege involves equality of responsibility and sacrifice.

Even before the war Canadians felt that they were not bearing their fair share of the burden of maintaining the Navy, whose protection is enjoyed by every part of the Empire. Now the war has brought this fact before us with increased force. We cannot claim privileges as a nation without also accepting responsibilities. If we are going to accept the status that has been given us, we must be prepared to do our share of the general work in the Imperial family.

You no doubt remember what His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales said in Massey Hall: "The loyalty of the Dominions is a national loyalty. Their loyalty is not merely to Great Britain, but to the British system of living and of government. Their loyalty is to the British Empire as a whole, of which Great Britain is only one part." These words are true, but would no doubt have been considered radical if said by anyone else.

We are no longer "Daughters" in the mother's family, as Kipling has said, but "sisters in the one great family." That is absolutely consistent with our unity and loyalty. No body of Canadians would for one moment propose to go outside the Empire—which is the most glorious League of Nations that has ever been known. We are an Empire one and indissoluble. If so, we must pull our share of the load. We cannot maintain our self-respect unless we discharge our share of duty.

You cannot improvise a Navy in six months, as you may possibly improvise an army. We must start with the training of boys for our merchant marine and thus become prepared to bear our burden of local and general defence.

I believe that the only one of Lord Jellicoe's plans that will appeal to the Canadian people is the one which provides not only for our own defence, but also for our part in the general scheme of Imperial naval strategy.

It fell to my lot to see the Grand Fleet in the month of October, 1918, about a month before "The Day," November 20th, when the German High Sea Fleet surrendered. In the Firth of Forth I went up and down those twenty miles of mighty steel ships—battleships of the Queen Elizabeth type, dreadnoughts, battle cruisers, swift cruisers, mother ships, torpedo boats, submarines and many others. It was the very embodiment of power. In that northern harbor was the force that was really throttling Germany. There was the power that made it possible to carry every man and every ton of supplies that went to the battle front. There I saw the "New Zealand," which had been paid for and contributed by the people of New Zealand. I saw the "Malaya" which had been contributed by the people of Malaya. I also saw the "Canada," but I felt sorry to think that it had not been donated by the Canadian people. In spite of the superb contribution we made on land in the Great War, I regretted that we were not represented by a contribution to the Grand Fleet of even one ship.

As the waters of the world are one, so must the naval strategy of the Empire be one. In that unity Canada will have its share. To help people to realize how essential the Navy is and how honourable a part Canada must take in the Naval Defence of the Empire, and in the maintenance of world peace and world freedom, is the aim of the Navy League.

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Educational Committee, Navy League of Canada**

President of League:
Æmilias Jarvis, B.S.D.
103 Bay St., Toronto.

Chairman of Committee:
J. Castell Hopkins, F.S.S., F.R.G.S.
2 College St., Toronto.



