

# THE DAILY NEWS

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## EDITORIALS

A year ago the Provincial government appointed a commission to investigate how best to develop agriculture in the province. This commission was composed of ordinary politicians, and traveled all over the civilized world in search of data notwithstanding the fact that a commission of experts had done that work already for Ontario and that a copy could be had for the asking. The amount paid for this work was \$48,000. That is bad enough; but one of the first remarks of that report is to the effect that for "financial and other reasons" the problem of getting the land back from the speculators to the people "did not come under the scope of this commission." In other words, the very first principle in agriculture—getting land—was not to be considered by this commission that was paid \$48,000.

The "financial and other reasons" are very evident. A high government official is a director in the Dominion Stock & Bond Company, which holds some four hundred thousand acres of land at Fort George. If the commission had done their duty they would have advised that those large land owners be compelled to pay their tax of 4 per cent or improve their property. This was a very good "financial" reason why the commission could not interfere. The time must come, however, when this subject will be faced in its true light, and the earlier, the better for the province.

The problem of getting this land back to the people is a complicated one. If only the speculator was to be considered, quick work could be made of it. In many cases, however, this land has been turned over to innocent parties—many of them trustees for widows and children. The government was a party to the swindle and is practically as guilty as the speculator. Any settlement that is made must therefore take cognizance of this. Mr. H. C. Brewster, the leader of the Liberal party in this province, seems to have hit on the right idea in his recent speech in Vancouver. He said that his policy was to increase the tax on wild land so as to make it prohibitive and on the other hand render government assistance to the man who would get in and develop it.

The manner in which government assistance will be ren-

dered has yet to be worked out in detail. The principle in itself is perfectly sound for it has worked admirably in other countries, notably New Zealand. There are always weak sides to the practical carrying out of a government scheme in a country with the low political morals that have been developed in British Columbia. Perhaps it would be better for the government to guarantee the bonds of a private company which would take this matter up. While government assistance is urgently necessary, the element of private ownership might secure better efficiency. Such a company would of course have to be under government control and supervision.

### ABOUT ART NOBLE.

The Peterborough Examiner has a photograph of Art Noble in a recent issue and has the following to say about him:

"Private Noble, who is a son of Mr. I. Noble, corner of George and Brock Streets, was a well known athlete in Peterborough before his departure for the West, having been a star soccer and Rugby player. He enlisted in Prince Rupert, B. C., and was here for a few hours yesterday on his way East. His battalion was inspected in Ottawa by the Duke of Connaught. Private Noble saw service in the Spanish-American war."

A Scotch registrar, gifted with a strong sense of humor, says that he was one day taking the notice of a marriage between a couple in middle life. "Have you ever been married before?" he asked the man. "No, sir." "Have you?" to the woman. "Well, yes, I have," was the laconic reply; "but it was twenty years ago, and he fell off a house and killed himself when we'd been married only a week, so it really ain't worth mentionin'."

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### GERMAN-AMERICAN NEUTRALITY LEAGUE

Formed Recently in United States  
—Expected to Take Part in Politics.

With the entry of the German-American Neutrality League into the arena of politics, it is being asked how important and how successful a political factor it will be. German-American correspondents to the New York papers tell of large groups banded together to vote against Wilson in 1916, and of a coming political union of the millions of Americans of German descent and Americans of Irish descent against the "British influence" in this country. One writer even goes so far as to say that "if the polls do not bring the result, civil war is sure to come." There seems to be going on a more or less systematic organization of Germans in various places throughout the country. One association in Passaic, N. J., has issued a call to common action in the interests of "Deutschum" and to an "effective participation" in the city campaign this coming spring. Though in view of the large amount of newspaper criticism this notification has evoked, it is but fair to say that one of its promulgators explains that the action is quite innocent and patriotic, there being no desire to influence government policies at Washington or to change anybody's present political affiliations, but only to secure the nomination of "candidates of the highest caliber." German papers in the Fatherland give somewhat exultant expression to their belief that the new league will exert a real, perhaps eventually controlling, power in American politics. In London, we find a writer in the Daily Chronicle affirming that "the war has united the German race in America and brought into prominence a serious problem for American politics"; though The Times is confident that "Americans, whose loyalty is only to America, will know how to take care of this menacing piece of effrontery." As for our own press, it should be noted that while many are indignant at the "effrontery," hardly any find it a serious "menace."

The formation of the German-American Neutrality League was fully discussed in our last issue, and the opinions quoted of critics like the Boston Transcript and New York Times, Sun, World, and Globe, and of well-wishers like the New York Staats-Zeitung and Fatherland, and St. Louis Westliche Post and Mississippi Blatter. But the political plank in the organization's platform is still calling forth comment. There are two viewpoints as to the origin and meaning of this new departure. It seems simple though reprehensible to the Springfield Republican, which thinks it very likely that "that part of the press in the United States which has sympathized with the Allies has been guilty of frequent lapses from the correct position, and much of the hysterical passion shown by German-Americans is a natural reaction against a point of view more British than American in its character and effect." So The Republican considers it only fair to say that the German alienism it so deprecates "is the more extreme and dangerous to our national life today than it would have been if the pro-British sentiment had been more moderate and reasonable and less alien in its manifestation."

But other editors do not pause at this point. They see a deep-laid scheme "Made in Germany," and conjure up the formidable, if now familiar, names of General Von Bernhardi, Professor Von Treitschke, and Prince Henry of Prussia. The Brooklyn Eagle, New York Tribune, and New York Herald are all mindful of the Prussian cavalry general in commenting on the formation of the Neutrality League in Washington. Says The Herald: "That gathering of GERMAN-AMERICAN leaders could not more clearly have followed Von Bernhardi's dictation if it had been presided over by the general himself instead of by Mr. Richard Bartholdt." And turning to a translation of "Germany and the Next War," we find this paragraph: "The further duty of supporting the Germans in foreign countries in their struggle for existence and of thus keeping them loyal to their nationality is one from which, in our direct interests, we can not withdraw. The isolated groups of Germans abroad greatly benefit our trade, since by preference they obtain their goods from Germany; but they may also be useful to us politically, as we discover in America. The American Germans have formed a political alliance with the Irish, and thus united, constitute a power in the State with which the government must reckon."—Literary Digest.

## SCANDINAVIA, FURIOUS, CALLS FOR REVENGE ON GERMANY

NORWAY PAPER DECLARES THE NORTHERN POWERS WILL NOT ALLOW DESTRUCTION OF VESSELS—Dwindling FEELING FOR THE ENEMY.

The indignation of Norway and Denmark over the sinking of the Norwegian tank steamer Belridge by a German submarine has done much to alienate the sympathies of the small pro-German section of the public.

"We will not conceal the fact," says The Trade and Marine News of Christiania, "that the repetition of the occurrence will produce an extremely serious position between the three Scandinavian countries and Germany."

The paper adds that Norway will not stand for German interference with shipping on the high seas. The Morgenbladet, a daily paper of Christiania, Norway, says Germany must make a prompt report stating whether

character and effect." So The Republican considers it only fair to say that the German alienism it so deprecates "is the more extreme and dangerous to our national life today than it would have been if the pro-British sentiment had been more moderate and reasonable and less alien in its manifestation."

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Conflicts between sick and dying Britons, Germans, and Russians who are patients in Norwegian mountain sanitariums have been frequent lately, the weapons used being crutches, pillows and medicine bottles. As a result many of these health institutions are announcing they will refuse to admit patients from belligerent nations.

### BISHOP HONORED.

In a recent issue of The Daily Colonist there is a photograph of the dignitaries of the Anglican Church who attended the recent consecration of the Bishop of Kootenay. Among them is Bishop Du Vernet, who has been honored by the appointment of Metropolitan of British Columbia.

the torpedoing of the Belridge was an accident. If it was an accident, Germany must indemnify the owners handsomely, and if not an accident the paper suggests that Norway seize a German ship from the many now taking refuge in its ports for each Norwegian merchantman destroyed. The paper remarks that the incident cannot but lessen the dwindling sympathy among neutral nations for Germany.

The articles continues: "Neutral countries are not to be frightened by piratical German submarines."

The Aftenposten, another evening paper of Christiania, says Germany is evidently becoming desperate and warns that power that though neutral countries are relatively weak they will not stand the cynical brushing aside of their rights. Not a single newspaper in Norway regards the Belridge sinking as an accident, and expressions of indignation from civilians and even uniformed army officers in the cafes, the hotels, and street cars are considerably more than heated.

Indication of British confidence in the power of the North Sea fleet to prevent a blockade is given by the ease of the insurance of an Englishman, who a few days before the fateful 18th left Newcastle for a three weeks' stay in Norway. He informs me that Lloyds offered him a special blockade policy providing for the payment of \$10,000 to his widow should he die by drowning, explosion, or gunfire for \$100 if his voyage was aboard a British vessel. He traveled on a neutral ship and got a similar policy for \$50.

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