

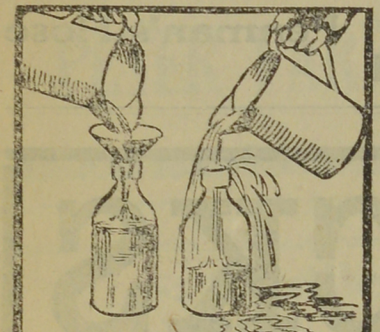
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253—June 17.

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# MR. GADSBY DISCUSSES REFORM OF THE SENATE

Says That Wheeze is as Old as Venerable Methuselah—Premier Borden's Toronto Bluff Does Not Teeze the Red Chamber—Difficulties in the Way of Reform

Ottawa, May 21—When the Naval Bill comes up for its second reading in the Red Chamber tomorrow or the day after it will find the Senate angry and contemptuous. When the Senate is not saying "Poon" it will be saying "Bah."

Premier Borden has himself to blame. He said two things at his Toronto meeting that the Senate doesn't like and when the Senate doesn't like something that Premier Borden says it expresses its feelings by a vote of 54 Liberal and 29 Conservative. It would seem to be a good play at this stage of the game to keep the senate in good temper but Premier Borden has proved that however great a statesman he may be he isn't much of a politician.

The immediate result of Premier Borden's Toronto remarks was a caucus of Liberal Senators, aided and abetted by the Opposition in the House of Commons which decided that the proper course for the Government was an appeal to the people before the Naval Bill came into operation. Whether this means the Senate's assent to the Bill with an amendment to that effect or whether it means sudden death to the bill makes little difference because it all comes to the same thing in the end—a general election or no Dreadnoughts. The opinion prevails in Ottawa that Premier Borden's Toronto meeting was the rallying signal and a cabinet minister is quoted as saying that if the Senate kills the Naval Bill, there will be an election within eight weeks from prorogation.

### DIFFICULTIES OF REFORM

Amidst these rumors and conjectures the Senate approaches the Naval Bill, and in no mild frame of mind at that. What rankles most in the breasts of fifty-four Liberal Senators is Premier Borden's hints at Senate reform. What Premier Borden said along this line was, to tell the truth, very moderate in tone. When Premier Borden talks about what he might do to the Senate if the Senate did anything to him he is as careful as the oracle at Delphi who always prophesied so that it read both ways. Premier Borden has to be careful about reforming the Senate because he would not only have to reform a lot of Conservative Senators out of their present jobs but also a lot of other Conservative friends who have promises in their pockets. What makes it even harder for Premier Borden is that he would have to do this with the consent of all the Provinces, likewise with the consent of the British parliament, and, what is most important of all, with the Senate itself. Such are the difficulties the B. N. A. Act puts in the way of reforming the Senate and Premier Borden knows them quite as well as the Senate. Indeed that's what makes the Senate so angry. That Premier Borden should try to scare them with this tin thunder is, so they say, an insult to their intelligence. The Senate has been fed up on that sort of talk ever since 1867. When the Senate began. The people have always been going to reform it but the politicians have never done anything worth remembering. Every Premier of Canada, has, in some moments of pique or expediency or honest intention, announced that he would reform the Senate and has then turned round and let the Grim Reaper make a long job of it for him. Premiers come and premiers go but the Senate goes on forever. The Senate isn't throwing fits because some poor little moving shadow shape speaking with a party purpose under pressure of great temporary excitement, throws out a bluff or two about the slap on the wrist he is going to give the Senate. The Senate got used to that long ago. You can't get a twitch out of it along that line. I myself have had the Senate under direct observation for fourteen years and I never saw it more fearless. What Premier Borden said at Toronto doesn't feaze the Senate a bit but it does annoy them to make them tired. Reforming the Senate! Why, that wheeze is as old as Methuselah!

### Sick Headaches

are not caused by anything wrong in the head, but by constipation, biliousness and indigestion. Headache powders or tablets may deaden, but cannot cure them. Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills do cure sick headache in the sensible way by removing the constipation or sick stomach which caused them. Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills are purely vegetable, free from any harmful drug, safe and sure. When you feel the headache coming take

Dr. Morse's

Indian Root Pills

About as tactful as Premier Borden's remarks in Toronto is the clever way in which some of the Conservative newspapers, notably those right here in Ottawa, are getting in wrong with the Senate. In case soft words, about the staunch Imperialism of Sir George Ross should butter no parsnips these newspapers go on to point out how easy it would be to get up an agitation in the country for Senate reform. Naturally the Senators have looked into this matter too and they see very little in it. Nearly all the Senators I have interviewed remain, so to speak, besotted in the belief that Canada, will not want to do much reforming to the men who saved the country from spending \$35,000,000 on three Dreadnoughts that had to choke their way through the House of Commons. They may be wrong, but that's their idea of it. Another point that is being urged against the Senate is that it makes divorce hard because there are so many Catholic Senators. It will please the Senate reformers to learn that the Senate is quite willing to be reformed in this respect. The judging of divorce cases is not a function that the Senate yearns to keep. Threatening to hand the divorce cases over to a court of law leaves the Senate absolutely unruffled. Hearing divorce evidence is nasty work. What's more it is hard work and it gets harder as the applications for divorce increase. Depriving the Senate of its divorce powers would be no punishment. On the contrary it will be a great relief and it cannot happen any too soon.

### JUST "DIRTY POLITICS"

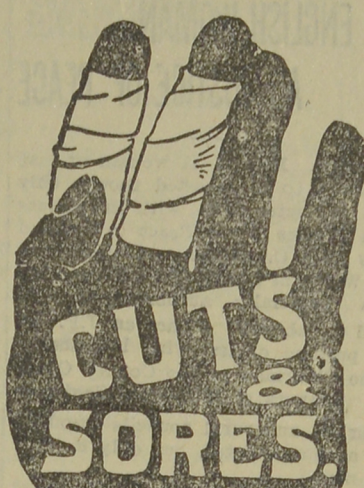
Another thing a Liberal Senate has against Premier Borden is his statement that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's naval policy means separation from the British Empire. Premier Borden will find as many staunch upholders of the British Empire on the Liberal side of politics as on the Conservative and the Senate considers that going behind Sir Wilfrid Laurier's record as an Imperial statesman to blacken him with separatist motives is nothing short of "dirty politics." It is so opposed to Premier Borden's usual courtesy and high sense of honor that it looks as if somebody in Toronto gave him bad advice. Meanwhile his injudicious remark is not helping the three Dreadnoughts through the Senate any more than his circulated statement that the opposition to the Naval Bill in the Senate would be led by a Quebec Senator. Liberal opposition to the Naval Bill in the Senate will be led by no province more than another, the opposition being well distributed all over Canada. If Senator Raoul Dandurand puts out in the discussion it will be because he is a man of great force and a brilliant debater.

### THEY ARE STURDY FIGHTERS

The Senate, as I have said before, is going to show Premier Borden how moderate it can be. It is not going to kill all his bills. The Agricultural Aid Bill will go through. The Highways bill will be amended in exactly the same spot as last session—the Government can take it or leave it. One bill out of two for the Government—pretty good shooting. The Naval Bill? Well what the Senate does with that just depends. The Liberals in the Senate are sturdy fighters. The story goes that they put a lot of pluck into the fighting in the Commons. But they don't want their fighting wasted. What they want is a general election and anything they do to the Naval Bill in the Senate has that end in view. Whether they kill the Naval Bill outright or alter it in such a way as to give it a lingering death depends entirely on the vigor and earnestness with which the comrades-in-arms in the Commons conduct themselves. The Senate doesn't want anybody to lie down on the job. While they are reddening their hands with the Naval Bill in the Senate they want their friends in the Commons to be justifying them by their works. For example, General election being the point aimed at the Opposition in the Commons should help the Senate along by auxiliary movements as it were. There should be some hammering of supply. Not enough to hold the baggage wagon up for any length of time but enough to bring Closure down on their heads.

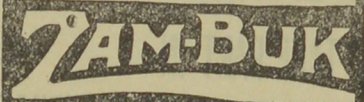
### WILL SET THE PACE

The members of Parliament will hardly get away from Ottawa before the end of the second week in June. The Senate's Naval Bill tactics take time. Not that the Senate cannot do things quickly when it has something to do but because slow march is the right pace under the circumstances. If the Commons took a day to put the Bank Act in the vault in the



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hope of a glorious resurrection ten years from now it was because there was no rush. There will be plenty of time to discuss the Budget, the main and supplementary estimates, the subsidy to the C. N. R. and all the other tag ends involving a couple of hundred millions of dollars that have to be trimmed up before the session is finished. From now on the Senate sets the pace.

H. F. GADSBY.

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## PASSING OF THE OLD ASTOR HOUSE

New York, May 29—The historic Astor House in lower Broadway, for three-quarters of a century one of the best known hotels in America, ended its career today with a mournful procession of patrons passing in and out of the high-vaulted lobby. Many a sentimental toast was offered as some of the "old-timers" lined up at the bar and took a farewell drink beneath the great glass dome of the rotunda. Within a few days the old building will be turned over to the wreckers. A tall office building is to be erected on a portion of the site and it is expected the remainder will be bought by the city and used in connection with the new subway. The property is owned jointly by William Waldorf Astor and Vincent Astor.

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