

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE, Minister of Marine has taken the trouble to condemn as untrue a yarn published by the *Toronto World* alleging friction in the Union Cabinet at Ottawa. There have been no dissensions in the Government, Mr. BALLANTYNE remarks, no differences of any kind, and no talk or thought of a general election at present, as was also alleged by the *World*.

To those who know what is going on in Ottawa, Mr. BALLANTYNE's statement was not necessary, but perhaps it is well that one of the Ministers has made it, in view of the possibility that those who are not in a position to know anything of the harmonious working of the present Union Government of Canada may be influenced by the carping which not only is rife among its interested enemies, but among a good many well-meaning people friendly enough in principle to Union Government, but of the kind who get excited easily whenever occasion for criticism of any government seems to arise, and who neither make much allowance at any time for administrative difficulties, nor stop to ask themselves what they are likely to get in the way of alternative Government if the existing one happens to be upset.

For instance, what is the choice of administrations which the Canadian people have today, if a general election were to take place? The alternatives so far as we can see are Union Government versus LAURIER. What else is possible? The western farmers, or a body claiming to represent them, have formulated a political platform based on free trade, but is such a party or such a platform likely to win enough support in a general election to be able to form a Government? All of us know there is no chance of that. Again, some people talk of a Labor party. Perhaps that will come and in time prove strong, but all of us know that the idea has no practical force at present.

Thus the political issue in Canada is simply a choice between the LAURIERITES and the existing party of Union Government. The Union party is by far the strongest party in the country, if it chooses to be so. The only hope of success the LAURIERITES have is either that Liberals who have supported the Union Government may return to the LAURIER fold, or that the western free traders may for their own purposes turn in behind LAURIER in a general election, calculating thereby to defeat a Government which would otherwise be too strong for them, and hoping to upset LAURIER easily afterwards. For the same reason, the Quebec Nationalists would eagerly join the LAURIERITES in an election, and similarly all the other factions in the country. But except in some such way, a LAURIERITE triumph is not likely.

The cue therefore of all factions, Laurierites, free traders, Nationalists, pacifists, aliens, Bolshevika, is to assail Union Government. This explains much of the grouching which is heard in the country, but not all. Some of it comes, as we have suggested, from perfectly well-meaning non-partisans who undoubtedly would prefer to see Union Government continue than to see Sir WILFRED LAURIER back in power, but who get off their balance easily in political respects and if they are told or think they see that public service somewhere or somehow falls short of perfection are apt to holler against a government without pause for either reasonable examination or to ask themselves where they are likely to land if they upset the administration of the day.

The Union Government of Canada has done splendid work. By its formation, and only by that, our army was enabled to carry through to a splendid end its great action in Europe. Under Union Government the administration of the army has been so well handled that practically never a complaint has been heard. The finances of the country have been equally admirably managed. Having regard to her wealth available for investment, Canada holds the world's record for the success of her war loans; and that success has been a matter not merely of national patriotism but of able Government methods. With the co-operation of the Government, our munition manufacturing reached a summit of success; and our ship-building programme came to a remarkable scale. The Government preparations for repatriation of our soldiers, for care of the wounded and convalescent and for re-establishment in civil life, whether in public service, in industry or in agriculture, have been very painstaking and we believe excellent. The railway situation in Canada has been well handled, and this country is coming safely, we think, to the consummation of what THE JOURNAL believes to be the best and at all events the necessary solution of the whole railway problem, namely, national ownership. The food problem and the fuel problem have been as troublesome in Canada as everywhere in the world owing to the war, and the Government has lessened the distress by placing honest and able men in control as dictators, and supporting them in their suggestions.

In short, in all important respects we can think of, Union Government has proved worthy of Canada. And assuredly the men who compose it are working cordially together. This is still as vital to Canada as it was in the war. The emergency of war is over, but the emergency of reconstruction will be as great for some time to come, and the strength and patriotism of Union Government just as much needed. Let the people keep this in mind.