

judgment—that the type of boot used in the French army might, for the purposes of our men going to the front, be worthy of consideration as possessing certain qualities which would make it more useful than the British boot to which my right hon. friend has referred. For many weeks a committee has been considering the best type of boot to be used, and I understand that one has been decided upon which will prove very serviceable.

My hon. friend speaks of illness or disease having been occasioned on Salisbury Plain by the use of the boots which were supplied. I am bound to say that I have no information of that kind, and if my right hon. friend possesses information to that effect I shall be very glad indeed to have him furnish it to the Government. Every one knows that the weather conditions which during the past few months have prevailed throughout the British Isles, and particularly on Salisbury Plain, have been of an unusually severe character, and I doubt very much indeed whether the type of boot supplied to the British army, to the French army, or to any other army, would have withstood the effects of the conditions to which our men were necessarily but unfortunately subjected during their sojourn upon Salisbury Plain. However, as I have said, my right hon. friend is quite within his rights when he desires and insists upon having full information as to the expenditures which we have made and as to any mistakes or errors in judgment, if any such have occurred; and I for one will most heartily concur in any effort which he may direct to that very worthy end.

My right hon. friend and those who have preceded me in this debate have alluded to the appalling war which has raged in Europe for the last six months or more, and it is not necessary or desirable at this moment that I should refer, except in a general way, to the causes which brought it about. Germany has appealed to the civilized world for judgment as to the causes of the war, and the world has already given judgment against her. John Bright said in the British Parliament many years ago that the moral law was not written for men alone in their individual character, but was written as well for nations. The war has been brought about through the violation of that principle by the military autocracy of Prussia, in so far as they desired to impose upon the rest of their world their ideas of militarism,

[Sir Robert Borden.]

their lack of regard for weaker nationalities, and the principle, openly avowed, that treaties are binding only in so far as the necessities of any State may permit, and that the State itself, in exercising its military power, shall be the sole judge of that necessity.

One observation which I desire to make in connection with the causes of the war is this. Germany's ally, Italy, did not join in the war because it was a war not of defence, but of aggression; thus is Germany answered by her own ally. The ex-Prime Minister of Italy not long ago in the Italian Parliament made it very clear not only that Italy regarded the war as a war of aggression, but that the war itself was contemplated and planned by Austria and by Germany as far back as 1913. I desire to place upon the pages of "Hansard" three or four lines which make that to my mind absolutely plain. He said:

I answered Marquis Di San Biuliano thus: 'If Austria goes against Serbia a *'casus foederis'* evidently does not exist. It is an action she accomplishes on her own account. It is not defensive, because nobody thinks of attacking her. It is necessary to declare this to Austria in the most formal manner hoping that Germany will act to dissuade Austria from a very dangerous adventure.

That adventure was not carried out in 1913, but was carried out in 1914, and those of us who have sought to make ourselves acquainted with the trend of events during the six months which preceded this war will have learned, as I certainly have learned, that every indication in financial circles, every indication by which men throughout the world form their judgment as to the stability or otherwise of peaceful conditions, everything that transpired during the six months that preceded this war pointed to the fact that some great event was coming in the immediate future; and the testimony that that event had been planned back as far as July 1, 1913, comes, as I have said, from Italy, the ally of Austria. I know that every hon. gentleman in this House had made himself acquainted with the Yellow Book which has been issued by the French Government and in which is set forth a copy of a most remarkable secret report obtained by the French ambassador at Berlin and transmitted by him to his own Government as far back as November, 1913. Some of the passages of that secret report, very brief passages, may usefully be quoted in order that we may