

THE FARCE AND THE COST

OF THE

LIBERAL NAVAL POLICY

In 1909 the Canadian Parliament passed a resolution in favor of Canadian assistance towards the Naval Defence of the Empire. Let us see how the Liberal leaders gave effect to the resolution and how they have handled this vital question both in and out of office. As early as 1902 Australia undertook an outlay of \$1,250,000 on Imperial defence at sea. New Zealand gave \$2,00,000, while Natal and other smaller parts of the Empire contributed their quota to the common defence of the British Flag the world over. At the Colonial Conference in 1902, Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused to take any action. Five years later, in 1907, he again refused aid and even went so far as to prevent the adoption by the Imperial Conference of that year of a resolution favoring concerted action by the oversea Dominions.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER LAURIER REFUSED TO ACCEPT SUGGESTION OF ADMIRALTY.

In 1909 the Liberal Government of Great Britain notified the Dominions that the supremacy of the British navy was threatened and a wave of Imperial feeling swept Canada and all other parts of the Empire. At the Defence Conference in London that year the British Admiralty declared that Great Britain could take care of the Atlantic, if Canada, Australia and New Zealand would unite with her in the creation of an Imperial fleet for the Pacific, consisting of four fleet units each led by a battle-cruiser. Canada was asked to furnish one of these units, but the Liberal Government wrecked the plan by refusing to build a battle-cruiser and by insisting on the creation of two useless fragmentary forces, one on the Atlantic and the other on the Pacific.