

BRITISH PROTECTION

(In order to draw attention to the purpose for which quotations are employed, italics not appearing in the original, are sometimes made use of.)

Speaking to his motion for leave to bring in his navy bill (5th December, 1912) Mr. Borden used the following language:

"So far as official estimates are available, the expenditure of Great Britain in naval and military defence for the provinces which now constitute Canada, during the nineteenth century, was not less than \$400,000,000. Ever since the inception of our confederation, and since Canada has attained the status of a great Dominion, the amount so expended by Great Britain for the naval and military defence of Canada vastly exceeds the sum which we are now asking parliament to appropriate. From 1870 to 1890 the proportionate cost of North Atlantic squadrons which guarded our coasts was from \$125,000,000 to \$150,000,000. From 1853 to 1903 Great Britain's expenditure on military defence in Canada runs closely up to one hundred million dollars (a)".

If that is true let us repay the money—not thirty-five millions of it, but every dollar of it. And do not let us say, with Mr. Borden, that we do so

"in token of our determination to protect and ensure the safety and integrity of this Empire" (b).

On the contrary, let our conscience money be accompanied with our regrets that we have only thus tardily determined to acknowledge our obligations.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, not to be outdone, attacked some of Mr. Borden's supporters on the ground that—

"During the last contest in the Province of Quebec, the Conservative party, as a rule—with some exceptions which I could count upon the fingers of one hand, or at most upon the finger- of two hands—contended upon hundreds of platforms that Canada owed nothing to England" (c).

If Sir Wilfrid is right, let us make instant inquiry as to how much we owe, and when we know it let us hand it over with such apologies for delay as we can think of.

That neither of these gentlemen proposed to make full payment of our alleged indebtedness is perhaps the very best of evidence that neither of them meant exactly what he said. And the pur-

(a) *Honour* (Unrevised) p. 710.

(b) *Ibid.*, p. 715.

(c) *Ibid.*, p. 1050.