

British people by the course which she has pursued in regard to this question during the last five or six years. At the Conference which was held in London, in 1911, she entered into an agreement with the different sister-nations in the Empire, who were represented on that occasion, and she has done her part to carry out the contract. Then we had an example of that unanimity among all the sister dominions and the British Government which is so essential to secure the unity of the Empire and yet the underlying principle of that agreement was the maintenance of the autonomy of the several parties to it. In relieving the burden resting upon the shoulders of Great Britain is it not well that each of the sister-nations should look after herself, should guard her own shores, so that the sister nations would all be in a position to protect their own trade against any possible enemy? Great Britain will be able to protect the British Isles, mainly by the maintenance of her fleet in the North sea, against European attack and while she is thus engaged she will not be under the obligation of maintaining hundreds of vessels along the shores of the many nations that compose the Empire. It is for this idea that the Manchester Guardian makes its appeal to-day. It expresses the hope that a change will take place in the ideas of the leaders of this great Parliament and that such a public opinion will be developed as that both parties will agree to say: Let us go to the country and let the people decide whether we shall change our position in respect to this great question.

As this paper states the principle involved in this measure is a dangerous one. It is not the principle which my right hon. friend the Prime Minister advocated in 1909, it is not the principle which the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Foster) so eloquently advocated during that same year and if we are to judge by some of the remarks that fell from the lips of my right hon. friend himself some days ago, when he said that if later on the Canadian people wanted these ships back they could get them and establish a Canadian navy, we are justified in coming to the conclusion that he desired to lead this Parliament as well as the people, to believe that he would like to go back to his first love. Unfortunately, jealousies have come between; he should never have wandered away from her. When my right hon. friend came back from England, last September, he attended a great banquet, the first annual thanksgiving for the restoration of the Conservative party to power; it may be the last for some time but it was the first at that time. On that occasion he said:

Mr. TURGEON.

I said it would be our plain duty. . . to find whether the naval issues were grave. That if we were in power we would find this, and get an unvarnished answer, and if the answer to that question by the government of the Mother Country, and the reports of the Admiralty experts were such as to demand immediate action, then we would appeal to Parliament for immediate effective aid, and if Parliament did not give that aid that I would appeal from Parliament to the people of Canada.

'Loud cheers' by the Conservatives who heard him. If the Prime Minister would show the same virility that he displayed on that day he would certainly rise to the occasion and ask the people to pronounce upon the policy which he has submitted for the consideration of Parliament. We have a declaration from Mr. Churchill with respect to the suggestion that the measure which the Prime Minister has placed before the House was the result of an arrangement between himself and the right hon. gentleman, Mr. Churchill, on March 26, in answer to remarks made by Mr. Philip Morrell, Liberal member for Burnley, made the following statement:

I never asked for a particular scheme when Mr. Borden left this country. I had no idea what he intended to propose to the Canadian Parliament.

By this statement we see that when he left the First Lord of the Admiralty and Mr. Asquith, the right hon. gentleman was at perfect liberty to adopt any policy which he desired to adopt and that he would have had the sympathy of the First Lord of the Admiralty and of the British Government had he adopted the same policy as that which he advocated on the 29th of March, 1909, of a Canadian navy, built of our own material and by the skill of Canadian artisans and manned by Canadians. Therefore, I have not been inclined very much to blame the first Lord of the Admiralty for anything that has been done.

The Prime Minister asked for information along a certain line, and naturally the First Lord of the Admiralty gave the information along that line. My hon. friend from Vancouver (Mr. Stevens) told us to-night that it was useless to speak of building battle-ships in Canada in the near future. I was surprised to hear a member from the Pacific coast speak so pessimistically of the enterprise, energy and ability of Canadians. Does he not know that in this second decade of the twentieth century, which is Canada's century, commercial activity, commercial enterprise, and inventive genius, march fast? Are we in this twentieth century to neglect the ship-building industry of Canada whilst Japan, and Italy, and France, and other civilized nations make progress in it? Are we in Canada with the vast resources of iron, ore and