

speeches ever delivered in Canada. Referring to the previous speaker's criticism of the Government's attitude towards imperial defence, Sir Wilfrid said:

"It would be a most suicidal policy for the Canadian people to go into any scheme of that nature. It would be the most suicidal policy that could be devised for Canada to enter into the vortex in which the nations of Europe, England included, are engaged at the present time, and which compels them to maintain great military armaments. Sir, what is the relative position of Great Britain and Canada. Great Britain is one of the foremost nations of the world in many ways, perhaps, the foremost nation, certainly the greatest Empire which exists to-day, or perhaps which has existed since the supremacy of Rome.

Great Britain, by reason of her situation, has to maintain a large and permanent army. Hon. gentlemen are aware how repugnant to the British people is the necessity of maintaining a standing army. Hon. gentlemen are aware how the British people have constantly fought against that idea. But they have been forced by events, forced by the position which the Empire occupies in the world to maintain a standing army, and to-day the principal items in the British budget are the expenditures for naval and land armaments. Now, my hon. friend says that Canada should follow in the same course, that we should take part in a scheme of military imperial defence. Sir, Canada is in a different position. Canada is a nation with an immense territory, but with a sparse population of five and a third millions of souls, scattered over an area 3,000 miles in extent from east to west. The principal items in the budget of Canada are what?—public works the development of the country needs, the construction of railways and harbors, the opening up of ways of transportation; that is the work to which we have to devote our energies, and I would look upon it as a crime to devote any part of that necessary expenditure to the supply of guns, cannons and military armament generally."

The Opposition probably agreed with this proclamation of a partial "Canadian Monroe Doctrine", for no resolution condemnatory of it was moved. (And see an extract from Mr. R. L. Borden's speech in reply to Sir Wilfrid, *infra*).

MR. R. L. BORDEN, K. C.

As leader of the Opposition, and following Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the occasion just referred to, Mr. Borden said:

"I, for one, shall always maintain that, so far as Canada is concerned, Canada must herself deal with the subject of imperial defence. I say that this country must deal with that subject and must control that subject, but I do not agree with the Right Honorable gentleman that it is out of the question altogether to discuss it when we are invited in a courteous way to do so."

Speaking at Vancouver (24 September, 1907) upon the delicate question of exclusion of the Japanese—the United Kingdom's war-partners in the east, Mr. Borden said:

"While recognizing our duty to the Empire, we respectfully maintain that Canada in all essential details must be accorded freedom of judgment, as free and unfettered as that exercised by any other portion of the Empire—even by Great Britain herself."

Speaking in the House of Commons, 18 April, 1906, Mr. Borden said:

"It has been truly observed by more than one recent constitutional writer that the Crown is to-day the strongest bond between the motherland and the dominions of the British Empire beyond the seas. That has come about through a curious process of constitutional development. As the various portions of the Empire have gradually attained greater powers in respect to their internal affairs, the parliament of Great Britain and Ireland has to a certain extent lost that influence as a central body which it formerly possessed. The Crown at the present time represents more truly the dignity and the greatness of the Empire to all those who live in the dominions beyond the seas than does the parliament of the United Kingdom. This is the natural course of constitutional development; it has been proceeding for years and it undoubtedly will continue in the future."