

naval defence, and which is in the following language:

Two members of my government attended the imperial conference called by His Majesty's government, on the question of defence. A plan was adopted after consultation with the admiralty, for the organization of a Canadian Naval Service, on the lines of the resolution of the House of Commons, of the 29th of March last. The papers will be immediately brought down and a Bill introduced accordingly.

I was a little in doubt during some portion of the remarks of my hon. friend from Richmond (Mr. Kyte) as to whether Canada was still a portion of the British empire, but I trust nothing has occurred since we entered the House of Commons to-day to lead us to the conclusion that we are not still a part of that great empire. I am glad to believe that Canada still floats the British flag. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Kyte) rather adopted a tone which would lead one to think that he was speaking of four or five absolutely independent nations who for convenience might see fit to enter into a joint alliance for purposes of defence. I shall not discuss the naval question this afternoon; it will be time enough to do that when the government proposals are brought down. I do not propose even to allude to some rather remarkable speeches which have been made by members of the cabinet, if the public press is to be trusted. I do not yet know whether the gentlemen in question have been properly reported, but I have heard that at least in one case the minister disclaims the language attributed to him. All I have to say is that if those eminent Liberal journalists who have been proclaiming that I am entirely in favour of the government proposals, imagine that any such proposals as those which have been outlined in at least one of these speeches will meet the approval of hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, they are labouring under an entire misconception. I neither oppose nor denounce these proposals because I do not know what they are. We are very happy indeed to say to His Excellency the Governor General, that we thank him very much for his gracious speech, but in doing so we do not concede for one moment that we are restricting our right of action in any way in respect to whatever proposals the government may see fit to make. Like the other proposals of the government, reasonable and fair consideration will be given to them, and the sooner they are brought down the better. In fact, the sooner we get to work the better, because I entirely agree with my hon. friend from Richmond that we should all endeavour to expedite the work of parliament this session, as at every session. We are ready to begin work as soon as possible. Let the government get their committees

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

appointed, let them bring down their measures, let them come on with their work and we will work as hard as they to expedite the public business.

In the brevity of my speech I am at least giving an earnest of my desire to expedite the business of the House, but I cannot conclude without congratulating the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackenzie King) upon his elevation to the cabinet. Might I remind the House that this is the sixth occasion on which the Prime Minister has gone outside of the House of Commons for a cabinet minister, and it is the fifth occasion on which he has gone outside of parliament altogether to make a selection. We on the opposition benches had nothing to say about that. Indeed the Prime Minister explained the situation to us two years ago when he said that he always endeavoured to select the best man, and inasmuch as he could not find the best man, or a sufficiently good man within the ranks of his supporters in the Commons, he was naturally obliged to go outside. But, these hon. gentlemen who have been passed over need not imagine that their usefulness is gone for they will still be required to vote for the Newmarket canal and things of that kind. In that way they will be able to contribute to the fighting strength of the Liberal party, if not from the treasury benches, from the benches immediately behind. I trust the Prime Minister will be good enough to furnish the House with information on the matters to which I have alluded so that we may get down to business and begin the actual work of the session as early as possible.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). Mr. Speaker, when in the month of May last this House was prorogued, it was understood that the government would endeavour to so shape its course that the session of parliament would be called to meet for the despatch of business in the early part of November. Parliament has been called at the appointed time according to that programme, and in this\*as in all other instances the government has faithfully discharged its duty. Of course, for this we have received very little credit but with this government virtue is its own reward, and its ambitions no other. Meeting thus early in the season I agree with my hon. friend from Richmond (Mr. Kyte) that we should see the blessing of a prorogation early next spring. Indeed there is no reason why parliament should not be prorogued long before the melted snows have passed over the Chaudière Falls. And if I may be permitted to recall a recent utterance of my hon. friend the member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) on this subject he stated, if I am correctly informed, that if the government brought