

or is not a compromise. It is a compromise. If the hon. gentleman had looked at the newspapers—whether the correspondence discloses it or not—he would have seen that under the provisional line which we have established in the Porcupine district we have mining camps which were claimed by the American miners before that provisional line was established. I agree with the hon. gentleman that the longer this matter is deferred the greater will become the difficulty of settling it. I agree with him that the longer the settlement is deferred the more difficult it will be to recover possession of whatever Canadian territory may be occupied by American settlers. I have to say to my hon. friend that we have pressed as much as we could; nay more I may say that we have pressed in season and out of season, on the Imperial authorities to bring that matter to a close. Nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the condition in which this question is to-day, and nothing could be more dangerous even, than to leave it in this unsatisfactory condition. We hope to bring the question to a close at a convenient season, and I am sorry that I am not in a position now to give to my hon. friend (Mr. Borden) as positive an assurance in this respect as I would like to give him.

My hon. friend spoke of the Fast Atlantic service, and he said that five years has elapsed since we have taken office, and yet the Fast Atlantic service has not been established. He complained a little of the delay and he indulged in perhaps, well deserved banter. This is my answer to him. If three years more elapse and we have not then brought this matter to a satisfactory conclusion, then we will stand in exactly the same position as the Conservative party, who brought the matter forward in 1887, and had not concluded it when they went out of office in 1896.

My hon. friend (Mr. Borden) also said that there was no mention in the Speech from the Throne of the volunteers who have lately gone to South Africa to serve their Sovereign. It ought not to be any surprise to my hon. friend that a reference to this matter was omitted from the speech. He should know the reason very well. I am afraid from some things which I have observed, this amongst others, that the very arduous duties which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Borden) undertook last year are telling upon him, and that he has not as good a memory now as he had at one time. I have not had a very long acquaintance with the hon. gentleman, but I had always understood that he was blessed with a good memory, which, however, now appears to have become treacherous and defective. He has only to remember what took place last session to understand why there was no mention of this matter in the Speech from the Throne. There really was nothing to mention about it. Last session

there was a motion brought forward by my hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) which concluded in this way:

This House further declares that there is no necessity for sending any more Canadian troops to South Africa, and that the enlistment of recruits for the South Africa constabulary should not be allowed to take place in Canada.

It was my duty as leader of the House to answer that motion, and in the course of my remarks I then said:

As to the first conclusion of this proposition, that there is no necessity of sending Canadian troops to South Africa, I must say I altogether agree with my hon. friend—not for the same reasons that have prompted him, but for the reason that the war is at an end. There may be still some guerilla warfare, there may still be some brigandage under the name of war, but the war is no longer at issue. Though my hon. friend pretends to be very much in doubt as to the issue of the war, for my part I am ready to leave the issue in the hands of the men who have it in hand now, and to say, with my hon. friend, that there is no necessity for sending Canadian troops to South Africa. As to the other portion of the conclusion that enlistment of recruits for the South Africa constabulary should not be allowed to take place in Canada, I ask my hon. friend what reason can there be why the enlistment of men for this force should be put to an end in Canada? If there are men in Canada who—I care not for what motive, whether high or low, whether dignified or undignified, whether because they desire to get a living, or from a spirit of adventure, or from the nobler impulse of fighting for their sovereign—wish to take service in the South Africa constabulary, on what principle should a Canadian government interfere to prevent their liberty being so exercised? My hon. friend has spoken well and eloquently upon the cause of liberty on which he has constituted himself the champion in this House, and almost alone; but I must ask him, what kind of liberty is it which will not permit a British subject, if he so chooses, to offer his King to serve him, no matter in what capacity.

My hon. friend (Mr. Borden) has now the explanation of this matter. Later on in the same debate the hon. gentleman himself spoke and he took no issue on anything I had said. On the contrary, he rather approved the course I had taken. Under such circumstances my hon. friend is aware that we could not send a contingent to South Africa, for the reason that we had no appropriation for it. In 1896, under the circumstances which then existed, we could send a contingent without any parliament appropriation, because the war was sudden, because it took us by surprise, because there was an outburst of popular feeling in favour of the course which we took, and our action was afterwards approved by parliament without any dissent. However, in this instance when the war had been lasting for two years, the government of Canada had no excuse whatever for taking any money from the Treasury to send a contingent to South Africa. But, Sir, if there were, as it turned out to be;