

strength. But whether Mr. Churchill said so or not, the effect of such an excuse is to deepen the impression that the Bill is a cut-and-dried arrangement between Mr. Borden and Mr. Churchill.

Hard things are often said in English party controversy which leave no trace behind. Unfortunately, this controversy is going to leave its mark on Canadian parliamentary procedure, for the closure is to be introduced for the first time. We cannot but recall Mr. Churchill's own description in the biography of his father of the effects of Irish obstruction on the British Parliament. 'Ever since then obstruction and closure have struggled against each other in a warfare which has respected no neutral boundaries and recognized no public law. Scarcely any parliamentary custom or privilege has escaped their joint deprivations. Every device or formality designed in the careful wisdom of former ages to safeguard the rights of a minority has been recklessly squandered by the one faction and ruthlessly demolished by the other.' It is not pleasant to think that a contribution of ships to the British navy should be about to leave permanent marks on Canadian parliamentary liberties like those left on the English Parliament by the long struggle for Irish liberties. The best thing to hope for if the Bill is persisted in is that the Opposition should carry its point and force the Government.

I wish to call the attention of the committee especially to those words:

The best thing to hope for if the Bill is persisted in is that the Opposition should carry its point and force the Government to appeal to the electors, and if our Government has any influence with the Canadian Government it should exert it to this end. In any case, the lesson is clear. We have seen how difficult Mr. Churchill's position must have been in advising on a Canadian party question without taking sides with the one party against the other. But this is precisely the difficulty which the proposed plan of giving Canada representation on the Cabinet Committee of Defence, against which we have so often protested, would make a permanent and regular feature of the constitution. It will remove one of the keystones of Imperial unity, and it must at all costs be abandoned. Better far have no ships at all from Canada than have them with this dangerous condition attached.

There are many considerations in this article from the Manchester Guardian which deserve the attention of hon. members of this House and of the people of Canada. I listened with interest to the hon. member for Vancouver (Mr. Stevens) this afternoon, and after six months' discussion, he was not sure what the proposed contribution meant. He did not know whether it was to be a gift of ships to Great Britain or merely a loan, and he pleaded that it should be a gift. If I were to have my choice between a loan and a gift I would join my hon. friend from Vancouver and make it a gift. It was as a gift that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister proposed to provide those ships

when he introduced this Bill on 5th December, 1912. They were to be the best battleships that human ingenuity could devise and money could buy. They were to be placed in the North sea with their noses turned towards Germany, and they were to be in the fighting line. That idea appealed to the British spirit of many Canadians. My hon. friend from Sunbury and Queens (Mr. McLean) for instance, wanted to see the best ships which Canada could provide in the fighting line in the North sea. But since my hon. friend delivered his speech in this House, the First Lord of the Admiralty has informed us that the North sea has no need for those ships and that they are to be placed at the foot of the Rock of Gibraltar to form, not a Canadian navy, but a flying squadron which will be able to reach within twenty-three days the shores of the province of my hon. friend from Vancouver. They are not to be in the fighting line, they are simply to be a visiting squadron. On March 29, 1909, the right hon. the leader of the Government eloquently advocated a Canadian navy for the protection of our coast and trade, a navy which would take part of the burden of the maintenance of the Empire from the shoulders of Great Britain. If he is going to compare the position which he has left with the position in which he is to-day, advantageously to the latter, he certainly must acknowledge that his present attitude is contrary to the principle enunciated by the Manchester Guardian, because the Manchester Guardian objects to the principle of contribution. No contribution without representation! A contribution would necessitate representation later on and representation would mean a further contribution. In the position which I have occupied in the province of New Brunswick, and in the appeals which I have made to my fellow countrymen, I have always stood for the British Empire and the British flag and at the same time I have always stood for Canadian autonomy. That is the only principle that will secure the continuance of the Empire for centuries to come. Now, when the Conservative Government propose to enter into a policy which involves a sacrifice by Canada of her autonomy they propose a policy which is beset with danger. When we view it from all quarters we see that it is a dangerous policy, that it is a policy that will not last and, therefore, I say that any British subject, whether in Canada, or in Australia, or in any other of the British dominions, who has at heart the maintenance and integrity of the Empire must, above all things, insist upon the maintenance of the autonomy of these dominions. The great dominion of Australia has won the admiration and respect of all