

prosperity of the constituent parts of the empire.' Whatever is to be the future status of the colonies, the cost of naval defence must be borne. 'If,' says Prof. Nicholson, 'each colony aims in the first place at securing only its own local defence, or the trade routes in which it is most concerned, if it insists that its own contributions shall be spent entirely under its own control, there will be a loss of economy and a loss of efficiency.'

Now, Sir, I want to point out that that is the position taken by the admiralty and by the Minister of Defence for Australia. Here is what the Minister of Defence for Australia said, and it appears to be exactly the position taken by Professor Nicholson. I quote from the report of the conference of 1902, page 13:

I cannot think that for Canada and Australia to each have a few war ships, and the Cape and New Zealand a few also, each independent of the other, is a plan suited to empire; such a plan would seem to be in accord with the actions and sentiments of a number of petty states rather than in accord with the necessities and aspirations of a great free united people.

Again he said:

If the British nation is at war, so are we; if it gains victories or suffers disasters, so do we; and therefore it is of the same vital interest to us as to the rest of the empire that our supremacy on the ocean shall be maintained. There is only one sea to be supreme over, and we want one fleet to be mistress over that sea.

Again we find that Lord Selborne, at that time the First Lord of the Admiralty, took exactly the same view. Here is what he said:

The first point on which I would lay the greatest possible stress is the reason why we have eliminated from this memorandum any allusion to the word defence. There was a time in this country, not so very long ago either, when naval strategists regarded the naval problem mainly from the point of view of defence. That, I submit, is altogether heretical. The real problem which the empire has to face in the case of a naval war is simply and absolutely to find out where the ships of the enemy are, to concentrate the greatest possible force where those ships are, and to destroy those ships. That is the only possible method of protecting this empire from the efforts which other navies may make to damage her commerce or her territories. It follows from this that there can be no localization of naval forces in the straight sense of the word. There can be no location of ships to protect the mouth of the Thames, to protect Liverpool, to protect Sydney, to protect Halifax. If we make any such attempt of the kind we should only be inviting disaster.

I would call the attention of my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) to that quotation. Lord Selborne was very clear and distinct in stating that that was the

Mr. GOODEVE.

most important point he had to bring before the conference. The hon. member for Pictou says that the British admiralty had removed its ships from the Pacific ocean. That is true, but the conditions of naval warfare are not those which existed some ten years or even five years ago. They are rapidly changing all over the world.

It has also been said that if we should make a grant of some Dreadnoughts, it would only be a few years when they would be relegated to the scrap heap. Well, should that be so, we would at least be in the same position as the other nations. Great Britain would stand, as she has always stood, ahead of them. I have read very carefully and with a great deal of interest the debate in the English House of Commons on the Naval Bill, and I regret to say that, according to that debate, England has lost forever the two-power standard, and it is now only the question of a one-power standard. My hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. Clark) I have always looked upon as a very logical man, particularly careful in his premises, but I find, in an argument he used in this House, that he drew exactly the opposite deduction which the premises warranted. Speaking with regard to the fact that Mr. McKenna had changed his opinion from that which he had held a few months previous, my hon. friend said that the reasons he changed was because England had laid down more warships and that consequently there was no danger to the supremacy of the British empire. Why, the reverse was the case. Mr. McKenna was pointing out how necessary it had become for him to change the opinion he had held a few months before. There was a similar change of opinion in the case of Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Asquith was perfectly honest and frank in admitting it. He said frankly and freely that when he spoke twelve months previous, he had looked on the German question merely as a paper programme, but now he regretted having to take another view. He said:

I am obliged to tell the House these matters in order to let them understand why we economists have presented these estimates to the House. There has been such an enormous development in Germany, not only in the provision of shipyards and slips on which the hulk and fabric of a ship can be built and repaired but what is still more serious—in the provision for gun-mounting and armaments of those great monsters, these Dreadnoughts which are now the dominating type of ship—such an enormous development—and I will venture to say this without attempting to exercise anything in this nature of unnecessary alarm in this country—such an enormous development as to be so serious a development from our national point of view, that we could no longer take to ourselves, as we could a year ago with reason, the consoling and comforting reflection that we have the advantage in the speed and the rate at which ships can be constructed.