

this is a loan, and if we are simply handing over these mighty ships to Great Britain, and he puts it forward as something to be favourably commented upon that we retain the ownership of them and can get them back, has he in mind the construction of a Canadian navy as a part of his permanent policy? The Government must have in their minds some idea of what that permanent policy is; if these ships are still to be owned by us and we are simply passing them over to Great Britain for a time and are to get them back, if we have not a navy then for what purpose will we get them back? What good is to be accomplished by that course? In one breath it is a gift in which Canadians shall take pride and in another breath he appeals to the materialistic side of the Canadian people and says that it is merely a loan, that we are still to retain the ownership; we loan them to Great Britain for a time and we are to get them back. I appeal to you for an answer to the question. The Government, before proceeding with this Bill, should enlighten the people of this country and of England as to what is in their inner consciousness with respect to their policy in the future. I think it is an insult to the Canadian people to ask them to vote \$35,000,000 to send to Great Britain without at the same time telling the Canadians and telling the British Empire what our course is to be with respect to a Canadian navy. It must not be forgotten that Canada solemnly entered into an agreement with the Admiralty but a few years ago to provide a Canadian fleet for the defence of the waters around Canada. She entered into that agreement in unison with Australia, which entered into the same agreement and now we hear whisperings that complaints are coming from Australia because Canada has not lived up to her agreement in any respect. Where is the agreement? What has the Government done with it? These are pertinent questions. They have not repealed the Laurier Naval Service Bill, they have not announced their policy as to it. Do they intend to do it, is it part of the price that they will pay for the support of the Nationalists of the province of Quebec, and if they do not intend to do that, if they do not intend to repeal that Naval Bill of a former Government, then what do they intend to do about it? Will they continue it on the statute-books? Will it be operative or will it be considered a dead letter? These are questions which any self-respecting government should answer. In the interests not merely of Canada but of the Empire at large, they should set at rest now and forever doubt as to the course they propose to take in the future. The Government charge their opponents with doing nothing, they charge the Can-

Mr. EMMERSON.

adian people with doing nothing, and yet they themselves are unwilling to declare that they purpose doing anything beyond the gift of this money. It is not surprising that this matter should be left in doubt. The whole course of the right hon. leader of the Government—and I say it with all respect—has been vacillating and indecisive. In 1909 he declared for a navy built, manned and owned in Canada. That was the Laurier proposal. In 1910 he said 'a contribution equalling the cost of two dreadnoughts leaving the expenditure to the discretion of the Admiralty.' In November 1909, he declared against a contribution of any kind without first consulting the people; in 1911, he made common cause in the province of Quebec with the Nationalists who opposed alike a contribution or a navy; and in 1912, he spent his time chiefly in hunting up some expedient which would satisfy the jingoes without antagonizing the Nationalists; in December, 1912, he came forward with the proposal of a gift and in 1913 he comes forward and says: No, I beg your pardon; it is not a gift, it is only a loan. He presents this kaleidoscopic policy. I think my right hon. friend should bear in mind these words of Scripture: 'Unstable as water thou shalt not excel.' He will find, when he consults the people, that he should have planted himself upon the solid rock of Canadianism with a Canadian navy, manned and operated in Canada and by Canadians. He will find when he consults the people of the country on this question, that that is the rock upon which he should plant himself and that all other ground is but shifting sands. My hon. friend from Calgary delighted in quoting from Scripture. He mentioned incidentally, after referring several times to a celebrated journey to Damascus that some one went to Jericho as well. We have heard and read that a certain man went from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was not an uncertain one and it could not have been my right hon. friend who made that journey because in the matter of this subject he has been uncertain, indefinite, halting and faltering. There has been no proposal made by him that has remained continuous for any period of time. It is changed and altered and presented in a new aspect. We have our hon. friends opposite holding out different views in this regard. One says that it is to be a contribution for the moment to be followed by the permanent policy of a navy. The hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen) propounded that view. The hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Foster) said the same thing. The hon. Postmaster General (Mr. Pelletier) said: Why, it is a contribution, we have done with the whole subject, our lives are safe, our sons will not have to go forth to do battle, we are paying for it, it is cheaper to do it in that way and we in Quebec are not paying the larger proportion of the money.