

ference in London, Sir Wilfrid Laurier courteously but absolutely refused to discuss the question of imperial defence, feeling that the policy of direct contributions to the British, or an imperial, navy would "drag the Dominion into the whirlpool of militarism, that plague of Europe." No less an imperialist than Viscount Milner, in addressing the Canadian Club in Toronto in October, 1908, declared that he had no sympathy whatever with the statement that colonial navies and armies would tend towards separation. He argued that the development by the colonies of their own defence resources would in the end be to the best interests of the Empire.

Canada to-day enjoys, practically, although not theoretically, legislative and administrative independence. She makes her own tariffs; she taxes the products of Great Britain and her sister colonies as she pleases. Canada negotiates with foreign states for reciprocity arrangements; and she took a long step towards the management of her own foreign affairs by sending Mr. Lemieux, in 1907, to Japan, relative to the question of immigration. The virtual independence of Canada and her sister dominions has been acknowledged by the British government. The colonial secretary, at the Colonial Conference of 1907, concurred in the principle laid down by the British prime minister that "the essence of the imperial connexion" is to be found in "the freedom and independence of the different governments which are a part of the British Empire." By severing the tie with Great Britain, Canada would secure to herself few privileges and powers not already hers. On the other hand, she would forfeit the prestige, now enjoyed, arising from a membership in the largest empire in the history of the world; and she would be forced to take her place among the nations as an independent unit relying upon her own resources. This would necessitate enormous financial expenditures in the establishment and maintenance of naval and military forces, a diplomatic service, and many lesser accompaniments of sovereignty. Therefore, since the exist-