

Smartt can move it if he chooses, or withdraw it. BUT IF HE PRESSES IT I SHOULD HAVE TO VOTE AGAINST IT.

Dr. Smartt's resolution was withdrawn owing solely to the attitude of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Refused to Co-operate

At the conference of 1909 all of the self-governing dominions, with the exception of the richest and most powerful—Canada—ranged themselves on the side of the Empire. Each undertook a share in the burden of naval defence. **Laurier stood out.** The Admiralty asked for co-operative action in the building of fleet units. **Laurier refused.** He offered instead the miserable proposal of a little Canadian navy of four light cruisers and six destroyers split up, part on the Atlantic and part on the Pacific.

Australia and New Zealand went loyally forward in the building of dreadnoughts and destroyers, and their fleets are now taking a prominent and important part in the war.

The Laurier Government went out of office in the fall of 1911 without having let the contract for a single ship.

The Laurier navy, as described by Laurier, was to be in no sense an Imperial navy. **It was not to fight by order-in-council, and might not fight at all.** Canada, according to Laurier, **might be neutral with the rest of the Empire at war.** This was plainly stated in the House of Commons on April 19 in reply to a series of questions from the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Borden:—

"Mr. R. L. Borden—Would the right hon. gentleman permit me to ask him a question? Suppose a Canadian ship meets a ship of similar armament and power belonging to an enemy, meets her on the high seas, what is she to do? I do not ask now what she will do, if attacked; but WILL SHE ATTACK, WILL SHE FIGHT?"

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier—I DO NOT KNOW THAT SHE WILL FIGHT. I DO NOT KNOW THAT SHE SHOULD FIGHT EITHER. SHE SHOULD NOT FIGHT UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT BY WHICH SHE IS COMMISSIONED HAVE DETERMINED WHETHER SHE SHOULD GO INTO THE WAR. That is the position we take, my hon. friend takes a different position. He says that without any question, under all circumstances, we are bound to send our ships into the war. We take a different position, and we say:—Let the country judge between us."

"Mr. R. L. Borden—Would our ports and harbours be neutral like our fleet until an order-in-council had been passed?"