

impairing our feeling of loyalty towards Great Britain, would on the contrary increase it.

I may add, Sir, that the interests of our country will be safeguarded by our representatives at that international conference. Last year, in the course of the negotiations which had for their object to prevent the enforcement against us of the United States maximum tariff, a Montreal manufacturer, and a conservative in politics, made in my hearing the following statement which I quote word for word: 'As long as Fielding is there, I do not fear.' I am confident that our business men have to-day as much confidence and realize that their interests will be well looked after.

The carrying on of these negotiations with the United States are a further manifestation of Canadian autonomy. Already, in connection with the negotiation of the French treaty, it could be said that Canada had received its diplomatic baptism. To-day we are in a position to say that we enjoy the most important attributes of a nation, while retaining at the same time all privileges and prerogatives as citizens of the greatest empire in the world. But, Sir, if we are proud to exercise such rights, if we are happy to enjoy such prerogatives, we should on the other hand show our readiness to assume the responsibilities and discharge the duties which are inseparable from them.

We should bear in mind that the ill-usage of power is not yet entirely a thing of the past in this world of ours. International conflicts are not even nowadays settled in accordance with the principles of ethics and by means of peaceful negotiations, and it is the imperious duty of a country to make the necessary sacrifices towards protecting itself and safeguarding its interests.

Sir, in starting at once to carry out the provisions of the Canadian Naval Service Act, the government have shown that they realize the present greatness of our country and of the part it is called upon to play in the world.

That is not party legislation, it is not a makeshift with an eye on elections, or based on selfish motives: it is a constructive measure. In defending it vigorously and carrying it out energetically, the government have shown sentiments of patriotism which the country will appreciate. That act has been bitterly criticised. Every means have been resorted to in order to discredit it; even appeals to race prejudices have been made, a tactic so odious and despicable that even those who resort to it emphatically deny that they do so.

Sir, I confide in the common sense of the people at large; they will see to it that they are not carried away by sophistry and reckless statements. The people will realize that the legislation which ensures their

safety and their very existence and at the same time exerts a far reaching influence on national unity and solidarity, cannot be framed or decided upon in the course of tumultuous meetings and by the use of strong language. They will continue to confide in the moderate, wise and far-seeing statesman who, for fourteen years, so faithfully watched over and safeguarded the most sacred interests of our country, and who yesterday reached the sixty-ninth year of a life devoted to promoting the welfare, unity and progress of the Dominion.

To those of my fellow-citizens who sincerely believe that the Dominion government should not have the power to help under any circumstances in defending the empire, I say that they misconceive the actual status of the country. They forget what are the distinctive features of our existence as a nation. Our dearest interests, our religious and political rights are closely linked with the maintenance of the empire and the upholding of its supremacy.

Why should we refuse to lend a hand in upholding that power, especially when the means suggested are in perfect harmony with the dignity and autonomy of Canada? We have no right to allow ourselves to be turned away from the fulfilment of our duty and the assuming of our responsibilities by fantastical suppositions or the ghosts of imaginary dangers.

Sir, let me say in closing that in connection with this great issue which has to do with Canadian honour in its most sacred precincts, the government may rely on the sincere and unstinted support of all representatives of a party who have accomplished so much towards securing to this country union, harmony and prosperity.

We are conscious of our duties and responsibilities as representatives of the people, and we are intent on devoting all our energy and endeavours in this House, and outside of it, to bringing about the full recognition of the country's cardinal ideas, aspirations and interests.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Halifax). Mr. Speaker, let me, in the first place congratulate the hon. gentlemen who have moved and seconded this address to His Excellency upon the very creditable way in which they have discharged that duty from their standpoint. I do not think they left anything unsaid that ought to have been said from that standpoint.

I desire to extend my congratulations to the country upon having had the services of His Excellency, Earl Grey, for another year. We know that in these days of rapid growth and development in this country there are many of us who are very enthusiastic Canadians, but I do not think among all of us there has been one more truly enthusiastic or more thoroughly Canadian than His Excel-