

of the most powerful battleships known in the British service, apparently without considering that such ships, no matter how powerful, would be of no use unless fully manned. Under the Laurier Act of 1910 provision was made for the training of men on board training ships, and in Naval schools and colleges, so that the ships, as soon as constructed, would be prepared to go to sea and fill their place in the naval defence of Canada and the Empire as the case might be. Moreover, provision was also made for the establishment of a Naval service, the establishment of naval forces, dockyards, naval yards, factories, rifle and gun ranges, that is, as fully an equipment for a Canadian Navy on a smaller scale of course, as the Admiralty provides for the British Navy. Was there ever a policy conceived so short-sighted and so ineffective as that contained in the Borden Naval Bill?

Nothing to Offer.

In a case of an emergency, the Borden Bill has nothing to offer for the defence of the Empire except the empty shells which may be constructed in British Navy yards. In the Act of 1910 Canada could offer the full fighting force of her navy. Section 23 provides as follows:

"In case of emergency the Governor-in-Council may place at the disposal of His Majesty for general service in the Royal Navy, the naval service or any part thereof, any ship or vessel of the naval service and the officers and seamen serving in such ships or vessels or any officer or ship belonging to the naval service."

In the one case you place ships only and in the other case what do you place? You place at the general service of the Royal Navy the officers and seamen serving in such ships or vessels, or any officers or seamen belonging to the naval service. In the one case you send three empty shells clad in steel for the defence of the empire. What would they accomplish? In the other case you send your battleships, manned with the best blood, and muscle, and courage and seamanship that Canada can produce? That is what you do. There is the great difference. What would these empty shells accomplish floating like the froth of the sea—a prey to the enemy, useless for all practical purposes, unless the ship by some instinct of its own, without a man on deck, could rush to the firing line and discharge its guns, and I do not think it will do that.

It has been said that under the Laurier Act of 1910 it would be necessary to call parliament together to place the Canadian navy at the disposal of the Admiralty, and that even in an emergency, the Laurier navy had a string to it by which its use for the common defence of the empire could be restrained. This is a palpable misrepresentation of the Laurier Act. Under the clause I have read, the Governor-in-Council may place at the disposal of His Majesty the whole Canadian navy in a case of an emergency. That could be done in 24 hours, but by the next section of the Laurier Act if the Canadian navy was placed at the disposal of His Majesty, parliament was to be called within fifteen days. For what purpose? To provide the necessary supplies, of course. Before parliament was called the navy could be two weeks in active service, but its maintenance in active service would be dependent upon the later action of parliament.

Section 24 reads: