

any attempt to prove that he did must necessarily fail.

I said a moment ago that England herself had laid before us in an official way her contentions with regard to defence; I would like to refer to what occurred in this country more than half a century ago at the time of the American war. At that time the Duke of Newcastle proposed to the Canadian government—it was during the union of the two Canadas—that we should do three things. He proposed that we should organize in Canada a force of 50,000 men, that we should place it under imperial direction and vote the necessary supplies for five years. Let me point out how that proposition was received by the Canadian government; and I cannot better do this than by referring to a memorandum prepared by the Canadian cabinet in October, 1862, to be handed to His Excellency the Governor General for transmission to the Duke of Newcastle. This memorandum proves that the men of that day, who are taking part in the conquest of our political liberties, were men who realized better than do those who are now controlling the government of this country, what that demand meant. Let me quote from the memorandum:

Another suggestion embraced in his Grace's despatch is well calculated to excite surprise. Your Excellency's advisers allude to that portion of the despatch in which his great purposes to remove the control of funds required for military purposes from the domain of parliament. His Grace is evidently aware that the proposition wears the aspect of 'an interference with the privileges of the representation of the people,' and it is certain that any measure liable to this construction never will be and ought not to be entertained by a people inheriting the freedom guaranteed by British institutions. The imperial parliament guards with jealous care the means of maintaining the military and naval force of the empire. Its appropriations are annually voted and not the most powerful minister has dared to propose to the House of Commons the abandonment of its controlling power for a period of five years. If the disturbing action of ordinary politics is a reason for removing the final direction of military preparation from parliament, it is in every sense as applicable in England as in Canada. What the House of Commons would not under any circumstances of danger entertain, is not likely to be entertained by the legislature of Canada. Whatever evils are incident to representative institutions, the people of a British province will not forget that they are trivial in comparison with those which are inseparable from arbitrary authority. Popular liberties are only safe when the action of the people restrains and guides the policy of those who are invested with the power of directing the affairs of the country. They are safe against military despotism wielded by a corrupt government, only when they have in their hands the means of controlling the supplies required for the maintenance of the military organization.

Mr. MONK.

'A union for defence' is proposed by His Grace the Secretary of State for the colonies. A union of the British North America provinces for the formation and maintenance of one uniform system of military organization and training, having a common defensive fund, and approved by Her Majesty's government; a union whose details would emanate from the Secretary of State, and whose management would be entirely independent of the several local legislatures. Your Excellency's advisers have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that any alliance of this character cannot at present be entertained.

Your Excellency's advisers now turn to the general principle which underlies the argument of His Grace. That the right of self-government has for a co-relative duty the maintenance of provision for the defence is a proposition which, in the abstract, is indisputable; but it is only indisputable in the case of government of states which are sovereign in themselves, as between a colony and the parent state it cannot be said to exist in the same sense.

The whole memorandum is pregnant with protest against any application of the principle that the military or naval forces of this country should be controlled by any other power than the legislature which established them.

Let me now refer to a memorandum prepared not so very long ago—not by any conference, but by a special committee of the Imperial Privy Council itself. That council itself took this matter into consideration in 1896, and made a report regarding the defences of the empire, to which the Duke of Devonshire alluded when he spoke at the meeting of the British Empire League on the 3rd of December, 1896. This is what the Duke of Devonshire said:

I have found with very great satisfaction on my return to office, after an absence from official life of a good many years, the large progress which has been made in the consideration of the great question of imperial defence. A body is now in existence, and has been for many years called the Colonial Defence Committee, composed of representatives of the admiralty, the war office and the colonial office. That body has made a complete study of the question of colonial defence as it affects every colony of the British empire. It has studied the question from the point of view of each colony, and every colony, whether it be a Crown colony or a self-governing colony, is now in possession of the views of Her Majesty's government as to the nature of the attack—the possible attack—to which any of them may be exposed, and as to the means of defence which it is possible to oppose to such attacks. Every colonial government now knows what the imperial government is prepared to undertake in their defence, and what must be left to themselves to undertake. Now, although the instructions to this committee, and the plans which this committee has prepared, are, and must be, to a very great extent, of a confidential character, yet I am permitted to make a public announcement of the principles upon which