

Mr. SPROULE. It was started in the House of Commons by the present leader of the Reform party, Mr. Asquith himself.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I will answer my hon. friend by the words of Mr. Asquith and of Mr. McKenna, the present Lord of the Admiralty. I quote, from 'Public Opinion', Mr. McKenna's words:

At this moment, Great Britain has got seven Dreadnoughts in commission, Germany has got two. When Germany has four in commission, Great Britain will have ten; when Germany has five in commission, Great Britain will have twelve; when Germany has nine in commission, Great Britain will have fourteen; and when Germany has eleven in commission, Great Britain will have sixteen; and when Germany has thirteen in commission, Great Britain will have twenty.

And further:

The navy scare has not the slightest foundation in fact.

That is the statement of the first Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna. And what does Mr. Asquith say? He stated, at Birkenhead, on the 21st December last:

With regard to our defensive forces, the navy and the army, I do not hesitate to say that they never were in a more efficient, a better equipped or a more highly organized condition than they are to-day.

Mr. SPROULE. That is not what I was asking. What was this statement in the House of Commons when he was asking for the naval estimates?

Mr. LEMIEUX. I am not aware of that statement, but I take the statement made publicly on the platform by Mr. McKenna, the first Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Asquith, the prime minister, and Sir Edward Grey, the secretary for Foreign Affairs. Sir Edward Grey said:

The British navy is being maintained in a position to protect the country from any probable combination of fleets.

Again, the right hon. Reginald McKenna, first Lord of the Admiralty, said on January 5th last:

This navy scare is absurd and ridiculous. No attempt has been made to argue the question seriously. How can we reason with rumour or reply to shrieks?

Mr. McKenna may have used other language, but I quote his latest statements. I do not deny the statement alluded to by my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule), but we all know that this German scare exists only in the imagination of party politicians. It was started by the party press of Great Britain, controlled by Lord Northcliffe, and was written up during the elections by the well-known socialist, Mr. Blachford, in the pay of a certain party

in Great Britain. But, Sir, who will ever believe that Britons are scared by a 'German terror?' Sir, I am of French descent, but I know something of the history of England, and I say that no country in this world can abate the well-known and well-founded pride of British valour.

We are told that the building of this Canadian navy will give rise to graft, and that we in Canada are too ignorant to build a navy. The charge of graft is beneath contempt. Let the hon. gentleman who believes that Canadians are unable to build a navy go up from the bar of this chamber to the library, and he will see on the wall the following inscription:

In honour of the men by  
Whose enterprise, courage and skill,  
The 'Royal William,'

The first vessel to cross the Atlantic by steam power, was wholly constructed in Canada and navigated to England in 1883.

I claim—and I know that my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule), after all, is too good a Canadian not to say—that if Canadian energy and enterprise in the city of Halifax in 1833 was able to accomplish this, the Canada of 1910 is able to construct the modest—I admit, but very efficient—navy which is in germ in the Bill presented to this House. Sir, I have the pride of my country. I do not belong to the racial majority and may not have the same ideals as they have. But it seems to me there should be in this country common ideals on questions of this nature. If Canada has been able to build a Canadian Pacific railway, and if the enterprise of two men of the province of Ontario, Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann, is duplicating that road in the Canadian Northern to-day; if the Canada of 1903 was able to remove, so to speak, further north, the boundaries of Canada by building another Transcontinental; if we are able to undertake the Hudson Bay railway, and to construct the Georgian Bay canal, it seems to me that it is not beyond our reach to build a Canadian navy. And we have in the maritime provinces, nay, we have in the old section of the province of Quebec, in the county which I have the honour with you, Mr. Speaker, to represent in this House, a thrifty and skilful people whose ancestors were all sailors, who were building ships, and the best ships of the empire, at the time of the ship-building industry in this country. May not we hope and expect that the descendants of these sailors and ship-builders will be able to accomplish to-day what their forefathers were accomplishing sixty or seventy-five years ago?

But the experts of the British navy themselves are in favour of a Canadian-built navy. Sir William White, chief of naval construction of Great Britain, says this: