

speedy organization of a Canadian naval service.

In conformity with the terms of this resolution we introduced, the following session, after consulting with the Admiralty, a measure, which measure was not satisfactory to the opposition of the day. This was not because our policy was wrong but because it did not go far enough. And I cannot do better than quote the resolution moved upon the Bill by my hon. friend (Mr. Borden) then leader of the opposition. He moved the following amendment:—

The proposals of the government do not follow the suggestions and recommendations of the admiralty and, in so far as they empower the government to withhold the naval forces of Canada from those of the empire in time of war, are ill-advised and dangerous.

That no such proposals can safely be accepted unless they thoroughly ensure unity of organization and of action without which there can be no effective co-operation in any common scheme of empire defence.

That the said proposals while necessitating heavy outlay for construction and maintenance will give no immediate or effective aid to the empire and no adequate or satisfactory results to Canada.

That no permanent policy should be entered upon involving large future expenditures of this character until it has been submitted to the people and has received their approval.

That in the meantime the immediate duty of Canada and the impending necessities of the empire can best be discharged and met by placing without delay at the disposal of the imperial authorities as a free and loyal contribution from the people of Canada, such an amount as may be sufficient to purchase or construct two battleships or armoured cruisers of the latest Dreadnought type, giving to the admiralty full discretion to expend the said sum at such time and for such purposes of naval defence as in their judgment may best serve to increase the united strength of the empire and thus assure its peace and security.

In this amendment was laid down the policy of the present administration. They found fault with our proposal because there was in the Bill introduced by the government of that day too much autonomy and too little imperialism. Upon the present occasion one would have expected, seeing that the government are now meeting parliament for the first time and exposing their policy, to hear an announcement of the course they intended to follow upon such an important question as that. Yet the administration is silent, not a word have we heard about it. What is the reason? Before we proceed further, perhaps it would not be out of place, on the contrary it would be conducive to a better understanding of the present situation, if we asked ourselves what is the character of the administration we see before us. If I am to judge of the character of the pre-

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

sent administration by that resolution I have just quoted, and by the speeches which were made during the election, by solemn declarations by party leaders, I would judge that the present administration is a True Blue Tory administration, tinctured and saturated with sound imperialism, as they understand imperialism. I could quote sentence after sentence, speech after speech to this effect, delivered during the contest by my hon. friends opposite. It will be sufficient for the present to recall the words my hon. friend the Prime Minister spoke at Toronto, when he said that the voice of Toronto should be the voice of Canada. Well, we know what the voice of Toronto is with regard to the navy. The voice of Toronto has always been that the navy Bill we introduced was not sufficiently imperialistic, and was too autonomous. That is the only criticism that was ever made. But, Sir, on the present occasion I have to say that the voice of Toronto has been endorsed; and no one will dispute that the victory gained by my hon. friends on the treasury benches on the 21st of September last was a triumph of imperialism. All over the country the triumph of the conservative party was greeted with pæans of triumph, with shouts of victory for the cause of imperialism. Indeed, on the very next day, the 22nd of September, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, himself the apostle of imperialism, cabled his congratulations and his blessings to my hon. friend, stating that he saw in the victory the dawn of the day he had long been looking for, and that he hoped soon to see the realization of his imperialistic dreams.

So, under the circumstances, therefore, there is perhaps no occasion to ask what is the character of this administration. Is there any doubt? If I were to listen to my own reasoning, my own judgment, if I were to attach importance to the deliverances of my hon. friends opposite, I would conclude that this is a true imperialistic administration. That is what my reason would tell me, but my eyes tell me a different story. When I look about me I cannot see what is in the hearts of hon. gentlemen; that they have refused to tell us; but I see before me a very composite galaxy. I see men sitting on the treasury benches opposite, one, two, three, perhaps four, upon whom the blessing of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain would preduce the same contortions as the sprinkling of holy water upon the head of Satan. They cannot have come together without something extraordinary having taken place. This government, like another Joseph, wears a coat of many colours. The other Joseph was betrayed by his friends and sold into bondage. I have no hesitation in saying, with a full sense of the responsibility attaching to my words, that the hon. gentlemen now on the treasury