

cast-iron rule or enactment. Such assistance must be voluntary—not compulsory—but with the approval of the parliament of Canada. I would not give to any government the power to involve us in such wars without parliamentary authority, unless as in the case of South Africa, the empire was wrongfully attacked, and placed on the defensive, when it should be incumbent on any Canadian government to do its duty. I think the empire would gain by leaving this subject to the voluntary action of the people of Canada, whose loyalty and patriotism are above suspicion, and who, I am satisfied, would give their last man and their last dollar in defence of the integrity of the empire, when unjustly assailed or endangered.

With regard to the question of naval defence, and the duty of Canada to contribute to the support of the imperial navy, there should not be any difference of opinion among the inhabitants of this great dependency of the empire. The navy of England is, and always will be, the bulwark of England's imperial strength and greatness, and her supremacy on the sea is indispensable to her prestige and influence among the nations of the world. It is equally indispensable to the protection of the immense commerce of the empire in every quarter of the globe, alike in times of peace as in times of war, wherever the rights of British subjects require to be upheld, and insult or injustice met with condign punishment. Canada is to-day one of the great maritime powers of the world, her tonnage ranking sixth or seventh in the list of nations. Our ships traverse every sea, and are found in every port, under the ægis of the flag of England, which we proudly float at our peaks and mastheads, with the emblem of Canada modestly emblazoned on it, although we do not contribute a dollar towards its support. Our colonial vanity must appear ludicrous to the rest of the empire, but it presents a very serious aspect to the eyes of the British tax-payers who have to foot the bills. Is it any wonder that eminent men in Great Britain taunt us with niggardliness and want of patriotism under such circumstances?

In addition to an annual cash payment towards the support of the imperial navy, the Dominion should call into existence a powerful naval reserve, on the lines so suc-

Hon. Mr. MILLER.

cessfully adopted in connection with our oldest colony, Newfoundland. We have the finest sea-faring population in the world on our Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as well as on the waters of our great lakes. Here is an object to which the navy league might usefully devote its time and attention, instead of aiming at the creation of a lilliputian Canadian navy, which would count for nothing in the affairs of the world. There is only one way, in addition to a strong naval reserve, in which Canada can discharge her duty as an integral portion of the empire, in relation to naval defence, and that is by a yearly payment from the public chest of a fixed sum of money in proportion to our ability and resources, towards the support of the imperial navy.

It must be admitted that the colonies of Australasia, although not so populous or prosperous as the provinces of the Dominion, have to some extent at least recognized their duty to the empire in regard to naval defence, but still their action has been more of a local character than on broad imperial lines. The creation of small colonial navies will not meet the requirements of this epoch in our history—nothing will do so short of a fair and reasonable yearly appropriation by all the great self-governing colonies to the support of the imperial navy. However, Australia has made a very good beginning, which Canada has not yet done. As far back as 1865 an Act was passed by the imperial parliament, entitled the Colonial Naval Defence Act, empowering the legislative authority of any colony, with the approval of Her Majesty in Council, to make laws for providing and maintaining vessels of war, and for raising and maintaining seamen for the naval defence of the colony, and for enforcing order and discipline among men and officers within the limits of the colony.

After several conferences between the imperial authorities and the governments of the Australasian colonies, a provisional agreement was arrived at as to the contributions to be made by the latter, which was embodied in an Act of the imperial parliament in 1887, and afterwards ratified by Acts of the colonial legislatures. I quote from a work entitled the Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth, page 562.