

Since 1909, I say, there has been no naval scare. There never has been an emergency. And if anyone will read the debates in the British parliament for the present year, he will be convinced that there is neither scare nor emergency now.

It will be remembered that in 1909, Mr. Balfour although satisfied with the then present situation, expressed anxiety for the future. Three years afterwards (10 June, 1912) Mr. Churchill in answer to a question as to the number of ships actually in commission on a certain day, said:

"Germany had 9 'Dreadnoughts' and 'Dreadnought' cruisers on 31st March. We had 15, a sixteenth. . . . having commissioned on 6th April."

In reply to another question as to the danger from delays in completing other ships, Mr. Churchill said:

"The country will not be involved in any danger" (a).

In his speech on the naval estimates, Mr. Churchill, after describing the recent changes in the German navy under three principal headings (new construction, large additions to *personnel*, and permanency of commission) indicated that he proposed to increase his programme for new ships, for the next five years, respectively, from 3, 4, 3, 4, 3 to 5, 4, 4, 4, 4. He added that:

"The Admiralty are able to announce that they are satisfied with the margin proposed, so far as the next two or two and a half years are concerned."

Deprecating pressure, for the present, of announcement of still further arrangements, Mr. Churchill added:

I hope it will be sufficient for me to say that the arrangements proposed will, in the opinion of the Admiralty, be adequate for the needs of 1914 and 1915."

Referring to his proposed increase in men, he said:

"There is no lack of good and healthy boys and youths in these islands to man the navy."

And recognizing the necessity, in naval matters, particularly, for preparation in advance of peril, he added:

"Well, do we understand the truth of Mr. Borden's words: 'The day of peril is too late for preparation'."

(a) Hans. 523.