

much fear of the ultimate result. Of course, the great difficulty of Great Britain would be to obtain food supplies for her people. At present the time Great Britain does not raise, within herself, sufficient food supplies for her population, although possibly if some day or other the people should go back to the land she might be able to place herself in that enviable position. However, with the naval force that Canada could supply, under this proposal of the government, the ships carrying supplies to the old country would be well protected. As was pointed out by my hon. friend from Queens-Sunbury (Mr. H. M. McLean) the Canadian naval force could very well defend the approaches to the harbours of this country and the ships carrying food would reach the open sea unmolested, and when, once ships are at sea it is very difficult to find them. It is possible that an odd ship might be captured, but one thing that surprises a man more than anything else when he crosses the Atlantic for the first time is the small number of vessels his ship falls in with. I had the experience, now becoming rare, of having crossed the Atlantic twice in sailing ships besides a number of times in steamships, and my experience has been that the appearance of a sail, during the voyage is so rare as to become almost a curiosity. Once you get your supply ships in the open sea they are practically safe and, the Canadian navy which it is proposed by the government to build would be amply sufficient to protect British commerce to that extent. As has been pointed out by my hon. friend, the vessels which are being built are no tin pot vessels. They are vessels with a formidable armament of six-inch guns, and are swift vessels, which are quite a match for any vessels that may attempt to prey on our commerce. I suppose it is not necessary to assert that neither Germany nor any other power in Europe, if at war with Great Britain, would send their Indomitables or Dreadnoughts out to sea to try to prey on the commerce of the enemy; that would be an absurdity. They would send out smaller vessels, and these would be well taken care of by vessels such as those of the Bristol type. They could not afford to send out those powerful ships to patrol the Atlantic ocean to intercept our trade and commerce, because they would be needed at home. Moreover, these vessels are built with a small coal-carrying capacity—a fact which has been put forward as an evidence that they are intended for use against Great Britain in the North sea—and therefore they could not keep out at sea for any great length of time.

Mr EDWARDS. How does the coal-carrying capacity of one of those German Dreadnoughts compare with the coal-carrying capacity of one of the German cruisers?

Mr. WARBURTON. I believe it is from four to six days. The powerful German

Mr. WARBURTON.

cruisers could not be spared from the North sea in case of war with England. The lighter cruisers no doubt could be spared, and they would have sufficient coal-carrying capacity.

With regard to these small cruisers, I wish to quote a very distinguished authority. My hon. friend from North Grey, in discussing this matter the other evening, referred to Lord Charles Beresford as the greatest naval authority in England today. While I am not prepared to go quite as far as that, because I believe there are greater naval authorities in England today than Lord Charles Beresford, yet he is a great authority, and his words are worthy of our attention. I have not a copy of the speech he delivered ten or twelve years ago, on the occasion of the gift of a battleship to Great Britain by the Cape of Good Hope, but I have a distinct recollection of what he said. He expressed his warm appreciation of the gift, but he intimated clearly, without wishing to lessen his appreciation, that it would have been very much better if the people of the Cape of Good Hope had devoted the money which they had spent on that battleship to fortifying their local ports and providing for their local defence. We have heard it asserted repeatedly that a great many of the ships in the British navy at present are fit for the scrap heap. Lord Charles Beresford evidently does not think so, because he has criticised the present government for having sent a great many ships to the scrap heap. In a speech delivered in September last at Pembroke, he said:

This government scrapped 150 ships and dismantled the repairing stations. This imperilled the safety of our trade routes. It cut, as it were, the arteries, and with the nation as with a man, if they cut the arteries of trade it would expire. Small cruisers were invaluable because they stopped armed tramps on our trade routes interrupting our commerce, and therefore the scrapping of them was a great mistake. Other nations saw this, and our colonies recognized it. He held that 18 small cruisers should have been built this year and 18 next year.

This quotation ought to go a long way to disabuse the minds of gentlemen both in this House and outside of this House of the idea that these smaller cruisers are not of much value. Great Britain herself does not seem to think that cruisers of the Bristol type are so worthless as some people represent them to be, because she is building more of them. My hon. friend from North Grey told us that it was not always the tonnage that counted, that although the tonnage and the numbers of an enemy's fleet might be much smaller, they might be much more powerful, and therefore would be likely to be victorious in case of a conflict. Again, I find it stated in a paper published in Montreal, the 'Cen-