

firm in his advocacy of Canadian autonomy. In 1901, as Prime Minister of the Dominion he impressed upon Chamberlain that the existing relations between Canada and the Mother country were entirely satisfactory and that no general plan of military defence was applicable to all. From that time forward as he still is to-day, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was unremitting in his defence of Canadian national ideals and in his championship of absolute autonomy for the Dominion. On the floor of the Canadian Parliament and at every one of the Imperial Conferences, which he attended, he boldly asserted Canadian ideals and strongly opposed the centralizing tendencies of the Imperialistic school. "At Imperial Conferences" to quote the words of another, "Sir Wilfrid maintained himself splendidly, and Canada has not yet sufficiently recognized the great merit of his defence against Chamberlain Imperialism."*

The Laurier naval policy, as we were reminded by Mr. D. D. Mackenzie, M.P., in the inspiring address which we had the pleasure of hearing here last Saturday, was designed on strictly national lines, in keeping with the national status intended for the Dominion. What a magnificent thing it would have been — and had the Laurier policy been carried out we should undoubtedly have seen it—had Canada had a warship of its own, built in its own shipyards, manned by its own sons and under its own control, similar to the warships of Australia, to play a part along with the heroic British tars, in the exploit at Zeebrugge or to stand on guard in the North Sea with the invincible British fleet, to which the whole world to-day owes so much.

At the Conference of 1911, when Sir Joseph Ward, Premier of New-Zealand, proposed the creation of an Imperial Parliament, Sir Wilfrid Laurier successfully opposed the proposal on the sound constitutional ground that such a body would interfere with one of the most cherished and precious powers of the Canadian Parliament — the

* John S. Ewart, "Imperial Projects," p. 308.