

paper. My hon. friend should blush before declaring war on the government, as he is doing in the province of Quebec, when he himself was here and agreed to that resolution. My hon. friend says and his friends in the province of Quebec contend that we should submit this question to a plebiscite. Sir, I have only one answer to make to my hon. friend, and it is the answer of the knight-errant of whom he spoke a moment ago. When there is arising in this country a question of duty, not only towards the Crown, but towards the native land, there is no need of a plebiscite. A knight-errant is impelled by a deep sentiment of loyalty and chivalry to accomplish his duty, and has not to consult the country, because he knows fully well that the country is at heart with him, just as the city of Ottawa was at heart with the government on Saturday last.

Mr. SPROULE. Was not the argument the hon. gentleman advanced some time ago, when he read some remarks of Lord Camden, to the effect that nothing should be taken from the individual without his consent and that representation went with taxation, contrary to the argument he is presenting now?

Mr. LEMIEUX. My hon. friend is generally fair, and I must pay him this compliment, that he is sincere and honest. There is no discrepancy between the two statements. A moment ago, in answer to the reproach which is being hurled at us in the province of Quebec, that the navy was at the beck and mercy and fancy of the imperial authorities, I said that it was not—that we were British subjects, possessed of rights and privileges; that we had a parliament, and that parliament would say whether our navy would serve the imperial ends or not. Then I quoted Lord Camden as my authority, and I believe that the principles laid down by him are at the very foundation of the British constitution.

Mr. SPROULE. Might I ask the hon. gentleman this? Provided we go on and carry out this policy, and are prepared to take part in all the controversies of Great Britain from year to year, shall we not be doing it in violation of the very principle the hon. gentleman lays down, because we have no representation in the British House of Commons, to say whether the wars are proper or improper according to our judgment, though we contribute to them?

Mr. LEMIEUX. I will answer that question in a moment. But we are told by some of our hon. friends that our navy is not worthy of that name. It is the laughing-

stock of the Conservative press in the country. Do you believe, Sir, that Dreadnoughts or battleships alone are required by the British Admiralty? I do not claim to be an expert; far from it. But since this question has been before the country, I have taken the trouble to read a little of what has been said in this country and abroad by experts. What is the opinion of Sir Wm. White, who, as we all know was the chief naval instructor of the Admiralty of Great Britain until very lately. He made a speech not very long ago before the Royal Society of Arts in London, and what did he say? He said:

'Showing the flag even in small vessels' has been and is no empty or merely ceremonial custom. It has done much to maintain British prestige, to promote and protect British commerce, and to make more real the recognition of British sea-power all over the world; while the small vessels employed on these services have furnished excellent schools of training and opportunities for gaining experience and lessons in direct responsibility by younger officers. There has been a tendency in recent years to minimise these results, and to treat as 'worse than useless' the smaller classes of vessels which from time immemorial have been so engaged. It is satisfactory to note that wiser counsels are again prevailing, and the necessity for employing vessels of many classes in an imperial navy is recognized.

This is the opinion, not of a humble parliamentarian like my hon. friend from East Grey or myself, but of an expert. He would not characterize the Canadian navy, with its eleven ships, as a tin-pot navy. He would say that it is a necessary adjunct to the British navy and a great helper in time of war.

Mr. SPROULE. He says they are useful for training ships.

Mr. LEMIEUX. And also for the protection of British commerce I will quote further:

Every care ought to be taken to avoid inferiority in types and numbers of ships, and to provide all classes required to make up modern battle fleets,—ships fit for the fighting line, cruisers, torpedo craft, submarines and special vessels used as colliers, store ships, repair ships, and for other subsidiary but important duties. Battle-fleets are essential to the maintenance of supremacy at sea, but it is necessary also to provide for the protection of British commerce and communications.

In addition to regularly built cruisers, lightly armed mercantile vessels possessing high speed and large coal supplies will certainly be used in future for commerce destruction. During the last two years a fresh start has been made in the construction of commerce-protecting cruisers of moderate size, and all who have the interests of the empire at heart must rejoice at this return to a saner policy, which has been justified by long experience.