

that these same gentlemen who have been quoted in this House gave voice to similar expressions in the British parliament when they were reducing the estimates for naval expenditure, but who a few months thereafter had to confess that they were in error, that later and more reliable information had come to them, that they had no idea of what extensive preparations were going on in Germany, and practically admitted that those preparations were designed to challenge British supremacy on the seas. Let any one read the statements as to the unpreparedness for war of the British fleet, let any one read the statements of Lord Charles Beresford, who declares that it will require millions of dollars to be spent on the British navy in order to bring her into a state to enable her to cope with Germany; read the statements of leading statesmen of Great Britain on both sides of politics made not during the heat and excitement, all sounding a note of alarm, consider that the thoughtful press of that country has admitted that there is grave danger, read the reports of level-headed business men of England, not politicians, who have visited Germany and who have seen for themselves the extensive preparations that are being carried on, who have sounded German public opinion, and who, on their return, have expressed their conviction that the crisis was imminent. Is it for us who are so far removed from the scene of operations lightly to brush aside those expressions of opinion as idle words? Are we to ignore them? Is it not much better, if we are to err, that we should err on the side of safety, that we should put our House in order to meet the expected attack? For it cannot be denied that in the undoubted supremacy of the British fleet lies, not only the salvation of England, but the salvation of Canada and the salvation of the whole British empire. Should the war cloud pass over without any international complications of a serious danger arising, let us not feel that in giving this contribution proposed by the leader of the opposition we shall have wasted so much money, for that contribution would represent a permanent means of defence and of protection upon which we could rely for all time to come. But I am confident that probably such a contribution might be the means of calling a halt in the enemy's plans.

At six o'clock, House took recess.

After Recess.

House resumed at eight o'clock.

SECOND READING.

Bill (No. 142) to incorporate the Congressional Union of Canada.—Mr. A. Haggart.

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NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA.

House resumed the adjourned debate on the motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the second reading of Bill (No. 95) respecting the naval service of Canada, the proposed amendment of Mr. Borden thereto, and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Monk.

Mr. ROCHE. Mr. Speaker, I was about, at six o'clock, to refer to the statement made by the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) that Germany, up to eight years ago, had been purchasing her ships in Great Britain, and that she had not previously engaged in steel ship-building. If the hon. gentleman's statements in other portions of his speech are no more reliable than that, the hon. members of this House will know just exactly how much stock to take in them. If the hon. gentleman had refreshed his mind by looking at Brassey's Naval Annual for 1905 he would have found a list of over 100 vessels, armoured and unarmoured, on the effective list of the Germany navy. In every case the place where the vessel was built is mentioned. Every one of these vessels was built in the German yards, some of them as early as 1876. The first German ironclad which originated in Germany was built in 1869, while the last naval vessels built for Germany in England, instead of being launched in 1902, as the hon. member for Pictou stated, were launched in 1874. As a matter of fact, German built liners won the blue ribbon of the Atlantic about eight years ago. I quote that to show how very inaccurate the hon. member for Pictou was in his statement in that regard. The German method is, and always has been to effectually, quietly and very secretly prepare for war, while at the same time professing peace. That has been her history in the past, as evidence her treatment of France and Austria. That is, according to the present indications at least, just what she is doing to-day. See the immense scale that these preparations are being conducted on. What is the particular object in view? Can anybody seriously contend that it is purely for defensive purposes? Notwithstanding the fact that the hon. Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) quoted some authority to that effect the other day, I do not really believe that he would seriously express his own opinion to the same effect. I cannot think that the Minister of Militia, after having visited Great Britain during last summer, after coming in touch with members of the admiralty with members of both political parties, and after having become acquainted with public opinion in that country, is taking his present position in regard to this Bill from conscientious conviction, for I believe that were he to follow his own feelings in the matter, instead of for party pur-