

Sir Robert evidently held the same view as that expressed by Mr. Fielding (April 19, 1910)—

"I say that whenever the British nation shall become involved in a war with a great power, I do not stop to consider whether it is a just or an unjust war—so long as we are part of the British Empire, I care not what Government is in power in Canada, it will be its duty instantly to join and help the mother-country" (a).

VIEW OF THE NATIONALISTS.—The view of the Quebec Nationalist party was embodied in a resolution adopted at a demonstration in Montreal (November 9, 1910) by a meeting which

"declares itself ready to approve of all necessary and efficient measures to make sure the defence of Canadian territory; but it considers as contrary to the principle of Canadian autonomy and to the real unity of the Empire any policy tending to impose upon Canada, that has no voice in the government of the Empire, any share in the external responsibilities or in the military defence of the Empire, outside of Canadian territory—the only portion of the Empire upon which the Canadian people may exercise any political or constitutional action" (b).

There is no hesitation and no compromise in that resolution. It is a clear, sharp renunciation of any duty to

"share in the external responsibilities or in the military defence of the Empire outside of Canadian territory."

This Nationalist view may, speaking generally, be said to be the French Canadian view. And for its hold upon Quebec opinion, Sir Robert and his friends are very largely responsible.

SIR WILFRID'S VIEW.—Between those two fundamentally opposite views, Sir Wilfrid occupied intermediate ground. He took the usual, and the only safe course. He declared his principle and left its application to circumstances as they might arise. On various occasions he used language such as the following:

"I hope the day will never come when we will be drawn into the conflicts of Europe. But I have no hesitation in saying that the supremacy of the British Empire is absolutely essential, not only to the maintenance of that Empire but to the civilization of the world. I have no hesitation in saying that the supremacy of the British Empire on the seas must be maintained in the highest degree of efficiency it has

(a) *Hansard*, p. 7,469.

(b) *Kingdom Papers*, vol. 1, p. 283.