

but as yet no steps have been taken by the Imperial or Dominion authorities in the direction indicated by my questions. We also find in leading English journals the note of warning sounded by the highest military authorities. The Under Secretary of State for War, at a recent banquet in London, while alluding to the arming and preparations for war by European powers, spoke of the war cloud hanging over Europe, and expressed the opinion that no one could tell when the peace of the great nations might be disturbed. At a public meeting held afterwards at Birmingham we find Wolseley speaking in the same strain, and using almost the same language as the Under Secretary, but with more emphasis. We also notice meetings held by Lord Brassey, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and a number of distinguished naval and military officers and eminent civilians, pointing out England's danger from being unprepared to meet other nations; and immediately on the heels of those warnings we see accounts of the great activity in English dockyards and arsenals, preparing for emergencies. Her Majesty's Speech at the opening of Parliament, a few days ago, alludes to the uncertainty of maintaining peace, and advises being prepared to face eventualities. Looking at all these surroundings, it would not, therefore, be unwise on the part of the Dominion to gird up its loins, look to its weak spots and take steps to have them strengthened. I trust that the hon. gentleman who is to reply to me will tell us that the Government have not lost sight of the question, and that before long something will be done in the direction to which I have alluded.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—My hon. friend, I think, is quite right in saying that no apology was needed for putting these questions. They are on a subject of vital importance, not only to Canada but to the Empire. I have to inform him, in reply to his questions:

1st. A large number of Imperial despatches and Orders-in-Council in relation to this subject have been received in the Department of Militia and Defence, and the correspondence is still proceeding. These papers are, in the main, of a confidential character. Such of them as are not of a confidential nature can be pro-

duced at any time, should the House desire their production, but the papers which might be brought down at present, without prejudice to the public interest, would not suffice to place the position of the question fully before the House.

2nd. It has not been decided definitely whether the erection of batteries in the neighborhood of Esquimalt will be begun this year. The matter is still under consideration.

3rd. The negotiations between the Imperial and Canadian Governments respecting the preparation of armaments are of a confidential nature. They are proceeding satisfactorily, but the papers cannot properly be brought down at present.

HON. MR. MCINNES (B.C.)—I would like to draw the attention of the leader of the Government to the fact that there are other points, if the fortifying of the ports of British Columbia is to be taken into consideration, that should not be overlooked. There are the termini of the Canadian Pacific Railway—New Westminster and Vancouver—which, of all places in the Province, ought to be protected, inasmuch as the absence of defences there might interfere with the transportation of troops across the continent. There is also Nanaimo, the great coaling station of the Province. These are points that require as much protection, possibly, as Esquimalt itself. I think it is very desirable that the defences of these places should be put in the best possible shape at as early a date as possible.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—If my hon. friend will give notice of the question, on which I am not informed at present, I will ascertain, as far as possible, and give my hon. friend an answer on the subject.

HON. MR. MCINNES (B.C.)—I merely make a suggestion.

The Senate adjourned at 3:40 p.m.