

Germany, it would come within the next three or four years. I have not been able to get any satisfactory answer to this query: what is the reason for supposing that war from Germany is to come within the next three or four years? Germany commenced to build a fleet in 1900; but, as my hon. friend rightly said, no European nation, commencing with nothing, as Germany has done, can create a fleet inside of fifteen or twenty years. If that be so, it is not to be expected that Germany will be in a position to attack England within the next three or four years. What will be the position of things in 1912? The figures of comparison between the German and British navies will be as follows: The total tonnage of displacement of the British navy will be 20,000,000 tons, and that of the German navy 890,000 tons, a difference of 1,100,000 tons. Under such circumstances danger is not to be apprehended within three or four years. Moreover, I call attention to this fact. No one knows exactly what is in the minds of the German government, but everybody knows that between the people of England and the people of Germany there is no cause of war. They have always been fast friends so far back as contemporary history goes. In the Seven Years' war England and Prussia were fast allies; in the Napoleonic wars Germany and England were fast allies. And there is another feature; democracy is coming to the front in all the countries of the world, and all the democracy of the world is opposed to war, because it is well known that war falls upon the masses of the people. War may come, I do not say it will not come, but I was impressed by a statement made the other day by my hon. friend opposite. He stated that England had subsidized the nations of Europe time and again to enable them to defend their liberty or their independence, or their autonomy against foreign aggression. England subsidized Prussia under Frederick the Great, when Prussia was engaged against France and Austria in the Seven Years' war. England subsidized all the nations of Europe during the Napoleonic war when all the nations of Europe were defending their autonomy, their independence, against the Colossus. She was able to do so, why? Because, of all the nations of Europe, England was the nation which had spent least upon armaments. She had never spent any of her resources as the other nations did, purely upon her armies. She had extended her trade and her commerce, she had developed her resources, and in time of war she was able to assist other nations with money, which, as we know, is the nerve and sinew of war. Napoleon, in a fit of anger, called England a nation of shop-keepers. No higher compliment was ever paid to England than this, if it were meant as an insult, because it was

these same shopkeepers who grappled with the Colossus and were able to bring him down and make him bite the dust. For Canada, for my country, I would desire no better title than also to be called a nation of shop-keepers—and to be able to supply the sinews of war.

Sir, up to this moment I have endeavoured to meet the arguments of those who in this controversy say that our policy is wanting in the duty which we, as part of the British empire, owe to England. But, Sir, there are also on the other side of the House those who arraign our policy because, as they say, we sacrifice by it the interests of our native land to the interests of the empire. There are the two extremes, they are there, sitting together, side by side, cheek by jowl, blowing hot and cold. I have endeavoured up to the present time to deal with those who blow hot; let me try a word now with those who blow cold. Need I say that this applies chiefly to the hon. member for Jacques Cartier and to those who think with him upon this question. The policy which they have taken in the province of Quebec is that our attitude at the present time is uncalled for and unnecessary, that it is a surprise upon the country, that we never had a mandate to carry it on. Sir, is it possible that such an argument is heard in this House? Have these men been asleep for eight years? Are they Rip Van Winkles? Must I call their attention to the policy we laid down, which has been communicated to this House and to the people and which for eight years has been before the people of this country? At the conference of 1902 we laid this paper before the conference:

At present Canadian expenditures for defence services are confined to the military side. The Canadian government are prepared to consider the naval side of defence as well.

On the sea coasts of Canada there is a large number of men admirably qualified to form a naval reserve, and it is hoped that at an early day a system may be devised which will lead to the training of those men, and to the making of their services available for defence in time of need.

In conclusion the ministers repeat that while the Canadian government are obliged to dissent from the measures proposed, they fully appreciate the obligation of the Dominion to make expenditures for the purpose of defence in proportion to the increasing population and wealth of the country. They are willing that those expenditures shall be so directed as to relieve the tax-payer of the mother country from some of the burdens which he now bears, and they have the strongest desire to carry out their defence schemes in co-operation with the imperial authorities, and under the advice of experienced imperial officers, so far as is consistent with the principle of local self-government which has proved so great a factor in the promotion of imperial unity.