

the French edition, Mr. R. L. Borden is thus made to speak:

Reference has been made, in the proceedings of the colonial conference, to a proposal by the Canadian government to establish a local naval force.

And the hon. Prime Minister, at page 51, is credited with the following utterances:

I confess that we owe it to ourselves as a nation—as we claim to be—to assume our own defence. And so far as that goes, if we have to spend more money upon military and naval service, I am sure that parliament and the Canadian people will not grudge any sum demanded for that purpose.

Then the hon. member for Jacques Cartier at page 64:

Sir, I listened attentively to the right hon. leader of this House when he spoke in regard to the colonial conference.

One could not possibly acknowledge receipt of notice in more explicit terms.

With such statements before us, there is not much ground for contending that the question is an entirely new one. On the other hand, it would be a matter of surprise were a matter of such importance to be threshed out without developing a new departure of some kind.

Men who are interested in throwing cold water on propositions of all kinds, contend that the proposed navy cannot possibly be autonomous. Notwithstanding which, I take the responsibility of stating that the principle of leaving the management of the various navies to the various governments building them is inserted in the Bill, in the same way that it prevailed at the London conference in August last and in this House on March 29, 1909.

True, that settlement of the question is not an ideal one. Of course, merchantmen are preferable to men of war, and such ideal settlement of the question could be brought about only through an international conference which would put an end to warfare for all time. Unfortunately, mankind has not reached as yet that degree of perfection and the settlement proposed is to my mind for the time being that which is best in accord with our political status and present conditions.

However, the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), and the government should not expect us to-day, any more than when the matter was brought up for the first time, to welcome this proposal of an expenditure for military purposes with as much enthusiasm and earnestness as if it were destined to promote agriculture which supplies, or manufacturing which transforms, raw materials and adapts them to the uses of man, or else trade which acts as an intermediary between the two. It stands to reason that means of destruction

should not be viewed in such favourable light as those things which minister to our sustenance and our comforts. So it is not to be wondered at if members of this House or citizens of this country feel like approving of proposals of this kind only under circumstances when such expenditure cannot be dispensed with, and pending the adoption by the various powers of some more equitable means of settling their differences, than sheer force or luck, through the clashing of fleets or the hurling of explosives of all kinds.

We might, on the other hand, postpone action, as suggested by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier and others. We have not been attacked for a long time past. There is no danger in sight. A fleet yet in its incipient stage will not enable us to face all emergencies for many years to come. Then our relationship to Great Britain and the neighbourhood of the United States may be considered either in the light of objection to the government proposals or of assurances of security for us. On the other hand, the landlord who has remained several years without feeling the need of carrying any insurance, may not always have the same luck. Then again, it will be acknowledged that there is some remissness in delaying armament until the attack is on. As regards the third objection, if Japan and the United States, whose organization and development were effected in recent years, had taken such a stand as is implied in that objection, fifty or sixty years ago, they would never have evolved into the great powers which they are to-day. Lastly, while recognizing the sterling qualities of the British people, while sympathising, as some of us may do, and as I for one do sympathize, with the neighbouring republic and its institutions, we cannot fail to perceive that neither the inhabitants of Great Britain nor those of the United States will be very prone to tax themselves to defend us as well as themselves. And should they be of any service to us in that respect, should they undertake to defend us at their own expense, we may rest assured that they will be expecting some remuneration for their services. That may take the shape of preferential duties, or may come through the settlement of boundary disputes, or be embodied in the clauses of some treaty, or result in a direct call of funds to meet the cost, the amount of which would be in due proportion, as we may well expect, to the expenditure incurred, to the risk undergone. Or possibly such a kindly ally would not mind retaining for himself something worth while, some fine section lopped off our territory. That is exactly what Uncle Sam has done in retaining Porto Rico as compensation for having helped Cuba to fight Spain ten years ago. That is also