

Halifax and Esquimalt are to be controlled in future by the Dominion of Canada. I have very grave doubts, as I said last session when discussing this question, of the propriety of the policy adopted by the government. My own impression is that it would have been much better, from an economic standpoint and from every other standpoint, that these garrisons should have remained under the control and management and at the expense of the imperial government, and that Canada should contribute one or two millions annually in aid of the British Navy, which is our navy as much as it is the navy of the British Islands, and let the imperial government continue to garrison and manage Halifax and Esquimalt. Very few who have not given some study and attention to military expenditure have the slightest conception of what it will cost this country to maintain those fortifications. Let us consider Esquimalt, examine the fortifications there and see what is necessary in order to maintain them and keep a force sufficient to be of any use, and then go down to Halifax and make the same examination there, and I think you will find ultimately that the expense to the country will far exceed any sum that the most sanguine of us have contemplated. I regret it for this reason; I think that the maintenance of these two military points in this country was a bond of union between the older portion of the empire and the outlying portions, stronger than can exist under any other circumstances. When I gave utterance to these views last year my honourable friend the Secretary of State cried out 'nonsense.' When we consider the views that have been expressed by the Premier of this country, leading the great party that he does, that he looks forward to the time at no distant date, when Canada will fall from the parent tree—meaning the older country—as a ripe apple falls from the stem—that you can look upon it that this is one of the first steps to prepare the Dominion for the separation from the mother country. Honourable gentlemen may say that is all nonsense—that we have all the autonomy and self-government under our system that we would have under the other, and that that will not affect us in the least. It is not at all likely that I shall live to see it, but my views are on record on that point, and I shall be very

much mistaken if events do not verify the prediction I make on this point. I notice in a speech made by the mayor of Toronto, an active supporter of this government, when Prince Battenberg visited that city, he expressed strong views in favour of Canada making contributions to the navy. The Prince accepted them, coming from so eminent a source as the mayor of a large city of Toronto, as evidence of the will, desire, and opinion of the government of the day, and if you will read his speech you will find that that is indicated in the remarks that he made. I was in hopes when I read that speech that he indicated the intention of the government, but that is not their policy. The policy of the government is to grant no money except what we control ourselves. That is in the main sound enough, but if you grant the money in aid of the navy, the navy is to us what an insurance company is to the merchant who takes out a policy. It is as much our navy, or should be considered as much our navy, being the navy of Britain, as it is of those who live in England.

I do not think any one has any objection to the change in the fiscal year. I remember when my hon. friend, the present Minister of Trade and Commerce, advocated the same policy, that it was changed from the first of January till the last of June.

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—That was a good while ago.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That is true, but the hon. gentleman's memory is sufficiently active I know to remember it as well as mine. His suggestions were accepted at that time. At present our reports are delayed. We have now from June until March—about eight months, and the reports are not yet on the table. Some of them are. If parliament is to meet in November, I should like to know when we will get the reports if the same delay takes place in preparing them as there is at present, and we shall be in a worse position from that standpoint to consider the various questions which will be brought before parliament, with the delay in the reports which must necessarily arise. If they cannot be prepared now in six months after the close of the fiscal year, what delay may we not expect if there is only four months to intervene. However, that is not a matter of very great consequence.