

ment has been tried as between Australia and the Mother Country, and it has not worked satisfactorily in any respect. In Great Britain, the contribution has perhaps been regarded as rather unsatisfactory; in Australia, it failed, in the end, to meet with the approval of the people, for the reason that Great Britain felt constrained to ask Australia that the field of operations of the squadron should be extended to the China and Indian seas; and when the operation of that squadron was so extended, the Australians felt that the contribution which they had been making for some years past was not really being used to give that protection to Australia that her interests demanded.

So that the policy of Australia at the present time is to build up a flotilla of submarines and torpedo-boats which, in case of war, would co-operate with the armed cruisers and battleships of the British navy. It was pointed out in discussing this question, that Australia, in providing a force of that kind would provide a force which it would be very difficult if not impossible for Great Britain to send across the seas, and that in thus protecting themselves, they were providing the best possible force for the protection of the Empire.

So I am at one with the Prime Minister, in so far as this is concerned. I am at one with him in this respect also that I think an expenditure of money designed for that purpose ought, in the main at least, to be under the control of our own Parliament; and that by making an appropriation of that kind, and attending to the defence, co-ordination with the Imperial navy forces, we would be rendering a real service in the defence of the Empire, and we would be doing our duty not only to Canada but to the Empire as a whole.

Further on he said:

I do not think that I am making any statement in breach of confidence when I say I am aware that the late Raymond Préfontaine thoroughly intended to establish a Canadian naval militia or naval force of some kind. He told me so about a year before his death. Mr. Préfontaine was a man of large views and of great courage, and it may be—I am not intending to cast any reflection upon my hon. friend the present Minister of Marine and Fisheries—that a policy which would have been carried out otherwise has not been carried out owing to the present head of that department finding it necessary to devote his attention to other matters. I suggest to my right hon. friend that we should put something in this resolution which would point to prompt action. In 1902 we told the Imperial Government that we intended to do something; but up to the present time, seven years afterwards, we have done nothing. If the resolution of my right hon. friend were so amended I think it would commend itself to the unanimous approval of the members of this House.

I do not desire to say anything more on this subject. I believe that the defence of our own shores and the protection of our own commerce is due to the self-respect which should fill the heart of every man in this country. You say that we may rest contented to depend for our naval defence on Great Britain. Well, if we have assumed the status of a nation in one respect, shall we adhere to the status of a

Mr. TOBIN.

Crown colony in other and still more important respects?

What was the issue in the province of Quebec in the election of 1911? Nobody knows better than yourself, Mr. Chairman, and all the members from the province of Quebec know that the trade agreement with the United States was not the question at issue. That question was dealt with only for a few minutes at any meeting in the province. The whole election was fought by the Conservative party on the school question of Manitoba and on the naval question. Sir Wilfrid Laurier who now leads the Opposition had propounded a Canadian naval policy in this House, but he dissolved Parliament and went before the electors on the question of the trade agreement with the United States. The Conservatives were supported by their Nationalist allies, including Mr. Monk, who stated at that time in the province of Quebec that the policy of the present leader of the Government was no better or worse than the policy of the present leader of the Opposition. During the elections of 1911, young men were sent to all parts of the Eastern townships by that gentleman who represents St. Antoine division in Montreal (Mr. Ames). They did not discuss the trade agreement with the United States. The whole question was the naval question, and they said that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a traitor to his province and to his people. Seventy-five per cent of the population of the county which I represent are French-speaking people. I must say that the largest majorities I got were from the French-Canadian people who stood by Sir Wilfrid's policy. They said: We are willing to support a Canadian navy. The policy of the Conservative party with their allies the Nationalists, was: We owe nothing to England. When I see so many hon. gentlemen opposite, who were here in 1909 and who accept the principle of a Canadian navy, and when I look at those who were not here at that time but who were elected on the 21st of September, 1911, to oppose any contribution or any naval policy, I cannot understand them supporting the naval policy of this Government. Those gentlemen, when a vote is being taken, leave the Chamber so as not to compromise themselves. When the people of the province of Quebec have a chance to decide which policy shall be accepted, they will approve of the policy of a Canadian navy as propounded by the Liberal party. The Liberal party stands for a Canadian navy, manned and maintained by Canada and for the defence of Canada and for the defence of England if she needs our aid. That is the policy the Liberal party stands for, and that is the policy which I believe, if it were submitted to the electors of the Dominion, would be overwhelmingly ap-