

House agreed by a unanimous resolution upon the line of our policy of 1902, and in order that there may be no misgivings or misunderstandings upon that, in view of the cheers from the other side a moment ago, I shall once again read this motion:

This House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada, as they increase in numbers and wealth, to assume in larger measure the responsibilities of national defence.

The House is of opinion that under the present constitutional relations between the mother country and the self-governing dominions, the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence.

The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the speedy organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation with and in close relation to the imperial navy, along the lines suggested by the admiralty at the last imperial conference, and in full sympathy with the view that the naval supremacy of Britain is essential to the security of commerce, the safety of the empire and the peace of the world.

The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give to the imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty co-operation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and honour of the empire.

When this resolution was moved, and accepted by a unanimous vote, we believed that it would be binding upon the other side of the House as it is binding upon this side, but in this we made a mistake. We supposed when this resolution had been solemnly adopted, gentlemen on the other side of the House who had given their assent would at least have the small merit of consistency, but in this we were deceived. It never entered our minds that men on the other side of the House would go back on the opinion they had solemnly recorded. In this again we made a mistake. We paid them too great a compliment. The session had hardly closed when the terms of this resolution were attacked, and challenged by gentlemen who had voted for it, attacked in the press, attacked in conversation with reporters, attacked on the public platform. Thus the summer went on, everybody, almost, on the other side spoke upon this resolution, discussed it and controverted it. The leader spoke, his first lieutenant spoke, the rank and file spoke, and they all spoke together and all spoke differently, their fiddles were singularly out of tune.

This was the condition of things when this House met on the eleventh of November and we were the witnesses of a curious spectacle. The men who had been so loquacious during the recess suddenly be-

came dumb, the men who had discussed and debated this resolution, the moment they passed that bar yonder, the moment they came into this House at the time and place appointed for debate, became as mute as oysters. With a demure face and without a smile they told us they could not debate or discuss this question until they knew what had taken place at the conference at London, until they had all the papers, although during the recess, without knowing what had taken place at the conference, without having the papers, their nimble tongues had been wagging, wagging, wagging, in all the tones of the gamut, and in resonant cacophony. This sudden prudence and caution after so much extravagance of language did not deceive anybody; it was very transparent, although a somewhat clumsy attempt to hide the difficulty which, it had been apparent to all observers, would meet them as soon as they came together. When they were talking among themselves, one here and one there, one in Alberta, the other in Winnipeg, one in Toronto and one in Quebec, they could all speak differently, each one trying to appeal to the passions and feelings of his immediate audience; but when they came here they had to try to speak to the country, and speaking to the country, they had to speak something at all events like unanimous language. There was the difficulty. Hence the silence, hence the demand for papers, and in the meantime they met and deliberated. They deliberated in the morning, they met in the evening and again deliberated and the result of their meetings and their deliberations, if we are to credit the reports in opposition newspapers, although they are not always the most reliable, was the appointment of a committee with the object of trying to frame a policy, trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, trying to find a platform or something on which the bold lion from East Grey and the gentle lamb from Jacques Cartier could roar and bleat in unison. The task was rather a difficult one and how far the committee succeeded we know by what took place within three weeks, when this Bill was introduced for the first time. Three members of the opposition then spoke and all three spoke differently. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden), if I understood his speech aright and I think I did, agreed to the principle of this Bill, but thought it did not go far enough. My hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk)—there was no hesitation as to what he meant, he is opposed to this Bill and to everything of that kind. My hon. friend from Digby (Mr. Jameson) also spoke; I do not know that I exactly apprehend his meaning, but