

side of the House until the whole place is belittered and bestrewn with party bombs and party shells and javelins and missiles of every calibre, with the result—I cannot help thinking, with the intended result—that the Prime Minister's little toy navy is almost buried out of sight in the debris. To exhibit that toy in all its childish proportions, to bring it once more into public view we, on this side of the House, must first exhume it; we must first remove this political debris. Disinterment is always a disagreeable task; it is doubly so when the material to be removed, foul from the first, is covered, as in this case, with all the must and mould of ages. But the task is ours, and it must be faced, and although the last speaker thinks he has found a reason why the Minister of Inland Revenue was defeated in Victoria, he will pardon me if I turn first to the missiles of the Prime Minister. As first in eloquence and office, if not in accuracy of aim, the first favour is perhaps his due. First Jove, then the satellites of Jove. Let us turn then to the speech of the Prime Minister. In it the party gong is sounded and the party whip is cracked, and at once the faithful followers chant: There is leadership, there is statesmanship, at the same time they mutter: But no battleship or any other ship fitted or intended to add to the fighting strength of the imperial navy, or fitted to be a credit or of service to Canada. Leadership in that speech? Yes, there is leadership, I grant you; a leadership, consistent, absolutely consistent with the record of the right hon. gentleman's attitude towards British connection as leader of the Liberal party in Canada for the past twenty years, a leadership towards what he himself has so often described, both in and out of this House, as the goal of his aspirations—the independence of Canada. 'I hold out to my fellow countrymen the idea of independence,' the right honourable gentleman has actually declared on the floor of this House, an independence to be achieved, of course, by means of an independent navy as 'naturally as the severing of the ripe fruit from the parent tree.' Let me epitomize the history of that parent tree and its fruit. In 1852 Great Britain was without a colony. Prior to that date she had acquired possessions beyond the seas, but her sea-power had not been great enough to hold them. Since that date, that parent tree has gathered within her ample foliage no less than 70 clustering British colonies, and by the command of the sea she has held them—with one or two exceptions—and sheltered them from every withering blast. Many of these possessions she has peopled with her own breed and get, has this mother and nurse of our public and our private virtues, until to-day her territory covers more than one-fifth of the

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earth's surface, and her liege subjects number more than one-fifth of the earth's population. To these peoples she has given the freest constitutions and the most absolute guarantee of their sacred rights and privileges, and in good faith she has executed that guarantee, has this home of splendid models, this classic land of liberty, until to-day these clustering dominions beyond the seas are as firmly attached in affection, in sentiment, and in loyalty to the motherland as are the people of Great Britain themselves attached to the sea-girt isles that are their home. Within these clustering dominions no renegade abuse of Britain or Britain's diplomacy can breed disaffection; no insect of independence, no woolly aphid, can blight that fruit or sever it from the parent stalk. There it is, and there it will remain. 'Down through the grooves of change' it will be and remain, let us hope, for ever unhurt. Amidst the wars of prejudice within her borders, or the crash of worlds without. But, the right hon. gentleman holds out to his fellow countryman the idea of independence with the King of England as suzerain. This language, Mr. Speaker, cannot be explained as the mere flourishings of rhetoric. On whatever occasion uttered, it is not to be lightly brushed aside as mere words 'full of sound and fury signifying nothing.' It is language fitted to estrange and alienate the hearts and minds of His Majesty's subjects from their dutiful obedience; it is language fitted to create in Canada a great national movement for independence; a movement conceived without grievance, originated by wrong, a movement which for the last twenty years has been instilled into the hearts and minds of the people of Canada in many headed form—and which in one of these forms in 1891, as we have been told in this House, drove the Hon. Edward Blake, and many another loyal subject, out of the ranks of the Liberal party—a movement which it is now sought to have consecrated in this Bill in its ugliest shape. Here we have the leadership of a great man whose brilliant qualities and charm of manner disarm suspicion and invite good will, but whose fixed purpose in this matter has ever steered a straight course towards a definite goal and has raised for the first time in this House and in this country a straight issue between independence and British connection. Let us then turn to the Bill; and, in turning to the Bill, let us remember that it is introduced as the strong and consistent policy of the man who 'in thoughts that breathe and words that burn,' has declared that the independence of Canada is the goal of his aspirations.

Our deeds still travel with us from afar,
And what we have been makes us what we are.

We will turn, then, to the Bill. That Bill