

"Prior to the outbreak of the war in South Africa, so far as any general scheme for the defence of the Empire as a whole had been considered, it was assumed that the military responsibilities of our great self-governing colonies were limited to local defence, and that the entire burden of furnishing reinforcements to any portion of the Empire against which a hostile attack in force might be directed must fall on the regular army. There may possibly have been some pious hope that in time of need the colonies might rally to the mother country, but no definite arrangements were made, nor were inquiries even on foot as to whether such aid might be expected, and if so, in what strength. Indeed, the necessity for it was by no means realized, and its reliability was doubted" (a).

At the Conference Mr. Chamberlain endeavored, in various ways, to fasten obligation upon us. He was disappointed. The efforts were not repeated at the Conference of 1907—Mr. Campbell-Bannerman was then in power. But in 1909 (March) came the German scare, and, with it, the commencement of the consideration of our attitude. From that time on, war has always been a probability. In 1911 occurred the Morocco incident (Agadir); followed by the Mansion House challenge of Mr. Lloyd George. In 1912 and 1913, the Turks and the Balkan nations fought for Balkan territory. The treaty of Bucharest was a makeshift; and the constitution of Albania a mere postponement. The day of Canada's decision was rapidly approaching. And everybody knew that among her people was sharp and fundamental division of opinion as to her course of action.

### THREE VIEWS.

**SIR ROBERT BORDEN'S VIEW.**—Three views existed as to what Canada ought to do in the event of war. Sir Robert Borden's opinion may be gathered from his opposition to the clause in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's naval bill reserving to the Canadian Government a discretion as to the inactivity of Canadian ships in time of war. Sir Robert moved in the House (February 3, 1910) as follows:

"The proposals of the Government do not follow the suggestions and recommendations of the Admiralty, and, in so far as they empower the Government to withhold the naval forces of Canada from those of the Empire in time of war, are ill-advised and dangerous" (b).

(a) *Quoted in Kingdom Papers, vol. 1, p. 254.*

(b) *Hansard, p. 2,991.*