

the imperial navy will be absolutely useless, and worse than useless—I would go further and say dangerous—unless it is expressly stipulated that in time of war there shall be but one navy under one central command and direction. We might repeat in the British navy the history of the 'Invincible Armada,' which was composed of five or six different Armadas of distinct organization, different training, different equipment; and we know what the result was in that case. My right hon. friend referred, for some reason that I could not comprehend, to the adventures and crusades of Peter the Hermit. I could not see the exact line of argument by which he introduced Peter the Hermit, or a great many other things, into his speech; but he could not have given a more apt illustration of the argument I am making. What was the cause of the failure of that crusade? The fact that it was composed of a heterogeneous assemblage of men of different countries, without any unity of organization, without any unity of training, without any unity of command; and the same result which befell the crusade of Peter the Hermit would be likely to befall the navies of the empire if they should be organized on any such basis as that which my right hon. friend has proposed to the House.

What further does the right hon. gentleman propose? He proposes that we should build a certain number of cruisers of the Bristol type and of some other type. What will these cruisers amount to as an effective fighting force in time of war? At the highest you might say they will be commerce protectors. I do not know that you could say that. They might be useful as scouts, or be of some advantage to this country in protecting our fisheries. But what would be the result in time of war? I will tell my right hon. friend what the result would be. An Australian or New Zealand Dreadnought would be called on to protect these Canadian cruisers from attack by the enemy. Surely that would not be a very proud position for the people of Canada to occupy in the day of stress and trial.

As far as any effective fighting force is concerned, it is not supplied by any proposals of the government. I believe the empire is confronted with a serious situation. I gave my reasons for that belief a few days ago, and I will not repeat them to-day. I believe that the duty of Canada is not to be occupied in shaping its policy to meet conditions which are largely the creation of my right hon. friend, but rather to do something immediate and effective in order that we may at least stand side by side with the other great dominions of the empire in the day of trial.

Sir, I have another observation to make.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

We all did agree, at least I did agree, to the resolution of March, 1909, but every man in this House who since that time has given the slightest consideration to this question will realize that when we talked about the speedy organization of a Canadian naval unit of the imperial navy—because that is the way I prefer to express it—we are speaking of something that cannot be brought about in ten, fifteen or twenty years. Why, my right hon. friend to-day has even a vaguer idea of what he proposes to do than he had in respect of the National Transcontinental railway. I did not like to interrupt him; he was being interrupted a good deal; but there was one question which I would like to have put to him, and I shall take the liberty of putting it now. He says these vessels are to be built in Canada. I would like to know whether they are to be built in a private shipyard or in a government shipyard? Has the government come to any conclusion in regard to that?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. In a private shipyard.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Then I will venture to say that when my right hon. friend intimates that a private shipyard capable of constructing these ships and of providing the guns, armament and all the equipment which are the most essential parts of such war ships, can be established in this country in one year, he convinces me that he has not given very much consideration to the subject. I venture to suggest to the right hon. gentleman that at the very earliest possible moment he should revise his estimate in order that he may not incur criticisms of the character which have been justly made in this House with respect to his predictions concerning the National Transcontinental railway, to which I have just alluded.

I was referring to the resolution of 1909. We spoke about a speedy organization of a Canadian naval force. I do not believe that that force or that service can be brought about, can be effectively organized, in less than 15 or 20 years, probably it will take longer. I say to my hon. friend that inasmuch as he cannot do that in less than the time I have mentioned, there is another consideration which I would like to bring to his attention. My hon. friend has some recollection of the attitude he took in 1899 with respect to the participation of this country in the South African war. In the 'Globe' of October 4, 1899, he expressed himself in this way:

As I understand the Militia Act, and I may say that I have given it some study of late, our volunteers are enrolled to be used in the defence of the Dominion. They are Canadian troops, to be used to fight for Canada's defence. There is no menace to Canada, and