

or of peace, and that Canada did not propose to be merely an adjunct of even the British Empire."

This attitude he doubtless maintained in all his interviews with the British Ministers. In other words, he gave the Home Government, and in particular the Admiralty, to understand that until the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was prepared to abandon the doctrine of ministerial responsibility and to allow to Canada the right of helping to determine the foreign policy of England, Canada would absolutely refrain from adopting any permanent policy in the matter of Imperial Naval defence.

Is it any wonder that the British Ministry were somewhat surprised at this extraordinary demand? They had looked forward expectantly to the visit of Mr. Borden and his Ministers, anticipating a hearty co-operation in some permanent plan of Imperial naval defence. They were summarily told that nothing of the kind could be considered until Great Britain was prepared to make a radical change in constitutional practice, and to concede further rights to the Dominion. They had expected an acknowledgment of past obligations; they did not expect a demand for further privileges.

Under the circumstances, the British Admiralty and the British Government seem to have exhibited wonderful forbearance.

What Mr. Borden was told by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Colonies in England with respect to obtaining a voice in foreign policy has become public in an official despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to H.R.H. the Governor-General, dated London, January 6th, and made public by Mr. Borden himself. Here are the words of the despatch:—

"Mr. Asquith and I had several conversations with him (Premier Borden) at which he expressed the desire that the Canadian and other Dominion Ministers who might be in London as members of the Committee of Imperial Defence, should receive in confidence knowledge of the policy and proceedings of the Imperial Government in foreign and other affairs. We pointed out to him that the Committee of Imperial Defence is a purely advisory body and is not, and cannot, under any circumstances, become a body to decide on policy, which is, and must remain the sole prerogative of the Cabinet, subject to the support of the House of Commons."

All consideration of anything in the nature of a permanent policy having been thus swept completely to one side, what was left? Section 10 gives us the answer:—

"The Prime Minister of the Dominion having enquired in what form any immediate aid that Canada might give would be most effective, we have no hesitation in answering that, after a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances, that it is desirable that such aid should include a provision for a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war which science can build to money supply."