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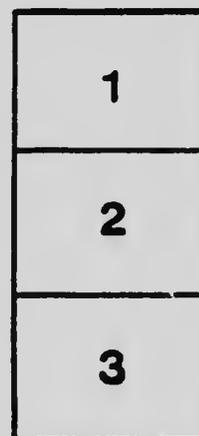
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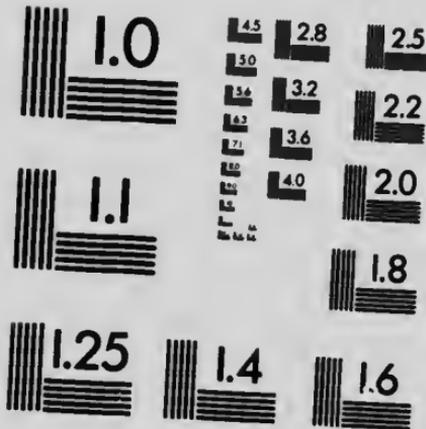
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**CANADA'S POLITICAL
RELATIONS
WITH THE EMPIRE.**

*By
H. C. Cannon*

*20th Jan
1912*

Canada's Political Relations with the Empire

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. C. H. CAHAN, K.C. BEFORE THE
CANADIAN CLUB, AT BOSTON, MASS., ON THE EVENING OF
TUESDAY, JANUARY 30th, 1911

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:

The recent Federal Elections in Canada were decided, in a large measure, upon the issue presented by the late Government in regard to the commercial relations of Canada with the United States; but the decision rendered by the electors of Canada was not altogether due to a careful balancing of the financial advantages or disadvantages of the adoption or rejection of the proposed commercial agreement; it was also, in a measure, the natural result of the development in the minds of the Canadian people of the National idea, of the consciousness that they have become a Canadian Nation, endowed with a distinctive National character, permeated with a vigorous National life, vested with National responsibilities, and, withal, masters of their own National destiny.

It was one of the ironies of fate that the Government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier should have suffered defeat because the National spirit of Canada was aroused over a commercial issue, which he and his colleagues had placed before the country for the very purpose of avoiding the supreme political problem which must sooner or later be solved, the problem of reconciling Canadian Nationalism with Imperial Unity, the problem of moulding the virile National instincts of the Canadian people into harmony with their traditional aspirations to maintain their political connection with the British Empire.

In the opinion of many shrewd political observers there would have been, in 1911, no question of reciprocity in trade with the United States, if the candidate of the late Government had not suffered an unprecedented and overwhelming defeat in the Federal By-Election in the District of Drummond and Arthabasca in November,

1910. That constituency had been the home of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his early manhood, the scene of his earlier professional and political triumphs, always his consistent supporter throughout his active political life, and always proud of the distinction which it had long enjoyed by reason of the fact that the eminent Liberal leader had been its distinguished representative in the Provincial Legislature and in the Federal Parliament and had always maintained his country residence in that district. But despite all this, and despite the personal appeals of their Chieftain, the electors of Drummond and Arthabasca doomed the candidate of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to ignominious defeat.

That defeat was apparently quite unexpected. It filled with consternation the minds of the premier and of his associates, and it inspired with hope the ranks of his political opponents. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's naval policy had been repudiated in a constituency of his own selection, in his own stronghold of Quebec. The old-time bleus or conservatives, led by Monk and Nantel, and the dissentient Liberals, led by Bourassa and Lavergne, all united under the banner of Nationalism, had completely swept the field. It was to avoid the possibility of a general defeat on that same issue, I believe, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier reluctantly espoused the cause of reciprocity with the United States.

Nationalist Tendencies

The Nationalist tendency, which is so marked in the recent development of the British Colonies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and which is frequently referred to as "Colonial Nationalism," may find different methods of expression, owing to geographical, racial or social conditions, but, in the main, it is marked by similar characteristics. The chief of these is the increasing and clearer consciousness of a community of political interests on the part of colonies situated in close proximity, which has stimulated the growth of a sentiment of political unity, and which has resulted in the confederation of the British North American Colonies into the Dominion of Canada in July, 1867, in the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia in January, 1901, and of the Union of South Africa in May, 1910.

The Confederation of the British North American Colonies in 1867, was the foundation of Canadian Nationalism. Sir John A. MacDonald was pre-eminently the leader of the Nationalist political movement in the British North American Colonies.

Upon the organization of the Canadian Confederacy, these Colonies assumed complete responsibility for the raising and expenditure of their own revenues, the administration of their own public services, the development of their own industrial and commercial institutions and the construction of their internal ways of communication; but, by the British North America Act of the Imperial Parliament, which created the Union, their political activities and responsibilities were strictly confined to the geographical limits of Canada, and they were conceded no right or authority to participate in strictly Imperial nor International affairs.

Sir John A. MacDonal'd, throughout the negotiations for a union of the British American Colonies, freely and frequently expressed the belief that the framers of Confederation were, in fact, founding a great Nation, creating a great Nationality. "I believe," said he, during the Confederation Debates in 1865, "that as we grow stronger, that as it is felt in England we have become a people, able from our union, our strength, our population, and the development of our resources, to take our position among the Nations of the World, England would be less willing to part with us than she would be now, when we are broken up into a number of insignificant Colonies."

"Our future progress," he added, "during the next quarter of a century will be vastly greater. And when by means of this rapid increase, we become a nation of eight or nine millions of inhabitants, our alliance will be worthy of being sought by the great nations of the earth. I am proud to believe that our desire for a permanent alliance will be reciprocated in England. The Colonies are now in a transition state. Gradually a different Colonial system is being developed—and it will become, year by year, less a case of dependence on our part, and of over-ruling protection on the part of the Mother Country, and more a case of healthy and cordial alliance So long as that alliance is maintained, we enjoy, under her protection, the privileges of constitutional liberty according to the British system. We will enjoy that which is the great test of constitutional freedom—we will have the rights of the minority respected."

Canadian Nationalism

The earlier years of Confederation were devoted to the organization of the public services, and to promoting internal ways of

communication; and later, in 1878-9, by his tariff policy, which he and his colleagues insisted upon describing as a National policy, Sir John developed in the minds of the Canadian people a consciousness of their common economic existence, a consciousness which has since become the stable basis of Canada's industrial and commercial progress. He advocated and undertook the construction of National works, and he frequently referred to the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway as Canada's greatest National achievement. His aspirations for the development of a vigorous Canadian Nationality, in which the two great races which first settled the Provinces, would have equal rights, responsibilities and privileges,—his fervid Canadian patriotism, at length, permeated the very minds and hearts of the Canadian people.

That National trade and tariff policy, Sir Wilfrid Laurier subsequently, in a large measure, adopted and maintained. He, too, undertook the construction of another National Transcontinental Railway; and he even surpassed, in one respect, all his predecessors, by assuming control of the Imperial fortifications on the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of Canada, and by accepting, on behalf of the Government of Canada, complete responsibility for its military defence.

The direct intervention of successive Canadian Governments, in the negotiation of commercial treaties affecting Canada, has also vitalized the National idea; while both the successes and failures of Canadian representatives in conserving Canadian interests in negotiations with foreign powers, and in asserting her territorial rights before various tribunals of arbitration, have alike served to create a sense of National individuality and National responsibility.

The development of the National ideal has also created a jealous determination in the minds of the people to conserve and maintain the rights of responsible self-government—the political autonomy, which they have hitherto obtained by persistent resistance to the extreme pretensions of Colonial Governors and of the Colonial Office at Downing Street.

The Canadian Nationalism of the past has imbibed the spirit of "What we have we hold;" and that spirit has been strengthened by the belief that the development of Canada's industrial and commercial interests must ever depend upon the fostering care of her own Government, and upon the intelligently directed energy of her own people.

In later years, the minds of the people of Canada have become engrossed with the work of developing their own internal resources, completing internal lines of communication by railways and canals, constructing great harbour improvements, elevators, wharves and docks, for the accommodation of their ever-increasing export and import trade, building cities and towns, factories and work-shops, developing mineral, timber and agricultural resources, and withal organizing their vast Western districts of territory, and creating for these districts the political, social and industrial institutions so necessary to their material prosperity and to their domestic political advancement.

Imperial Relations

The success which has attended the wisely directed efforts of the Canadian people, and their consequent satisfaction with the working of their own political institutions, has only served to increase their fervid patriotism, which has found expression in the determination to maintain their complete direction and control of their own affairs, to preserve their own forms of local self-government, and to permit of no encroachments upon the political autonomy which they have hitherto efficiently exercised. The older schemes of Imperial Federation, which implied an organic Federal Union of the Empire, were no longer even discussed in Canada, except occasionally by a few doctrinaires, who were represented to the people as Bourbons, capable of learning nothing and of forgetting nothing. The people, since the South African War, had concerned themselves but little with Imperial affairs; and the occasional visits of members of the Canadian Government to participate in Imperial Conferences at London, were regarded with a languid and impersonal interest. The British Empire was supreme upon the seas; Canada was safe to pursue her paths of peaceful progress. The English politicians might quarrel, as usual, over poor laws and licensing bills, education and social reform, and incidentally rule the Empire; but so long as the Canadian people were prosperous and content, of what concern to them were the parochial politics of Great Britain, upon which English Parliamentary parties were divided, and by virtue of which English Governments were elected or defeated?

But early in 1909 Canadians were suddenly aroused from their apparent apathy and indifference to Imperial interests by the clouds which suddenly covered the political horizon in the vicinity of the North and Baltic Seas.

The first impulse of the Canadian politicians was to consider and evolve ways and means for the protection of their coasts against possible foreign aggression, and then, as the possibilities were more carefully considered and discussed, it was urgently represented that Canada's connection with the Empire, and in fact the continued existence of the Empire itself, would depend upon ensuring the supremacy of the British Navy upon the high seas. How could that supremacy be best maintained? By Colonial contributions of money or ships for the relief of the English Exchequer, over the expenditures of which Canadians have no responsible direction or control, for the support of a foreign policy, with respect to which Canada has never been consulted, for carrying on a war of defense or of offense, in the making or the ending of which Canada had no voice? And so the discussion was prolonged until the political representatives of the Canadian people, and a large number of the people themselves, began to realize that the issue, incidentally raised by the probability of German aggression, involved a more or less complete solution of the problem of Canada's political relations with the United Kingdom, and with the Empire of which Canada forms a part.

The development of that discussion and the contributions so far made by the chief participants to a possible solution of the problem, I desire to relate, with more or less detail, so far as possible in the words of the participants themselves.

The German Scare

Early in 1909 the public men of Great Britain became suddenly awakened to a knowledge of the unprecedented progress of Germany's Naval construction, and to the possibility of its ultimate naval strength surpassing that of Great Britain.

Mr. Reginald McKenna, First Lord of the Admiralty, in the English House of Commons, on March 16th, referring to the extraordinary growth of the power of constructing ships of the largest size in Germany, said:—"To-day this productive power is a realized fact, and it will tax the resources of our own great firms if we are to retain the supremacy in rapidity and volume of construction."

Mr. A. J. Balfour, Leader of the Opposition, following Mr. McKenna, declared:—"That we are face to face with a situation so new, so dangerous, that it is very difficult for us thoroughly to realize all that it imports. For the first time there is bordering on

“the North Sea, upon the waters bathing our own shores, a great power which has got the capacity, and which looks as if it had the will, to compete with us in point of actual numbers of great battle-ships.”

Prime Minister Asquith also emphatically declared:—“We, whose whole national life and security depend upon our supremacy at sea, cannot afford to go behind, to slacken our efforts, or to put ourselves in such a position that any contingency that might occur could possibly menace that independence and supremacy.”

Later in the month, in opposing, in the English House of Commons, an opposition vote of censure on the Government for a Naval policy which, it was alleged, does not sufficiently secure “the safety of the Empire,” Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary of England, made the deliberate statement that:—“A new situation is for this country created by the German program. Whether that program is carried out quickly or slowly, the fact of its existence makes a new situation When that program is completed, Germany—a country close to our own shores—will have a fleet of thirty-three Dreadnoughts. This fleet will be the most powerful which the world has ever seen.”

By this time the German scare had permeated the whole Empire. Immediate preparations were made by the British Admiralty for laying down four more Dreadnoughts in addition to the four already provided for in the earlier estimates of that year. In the meantime, the public press of Canada, and various public bodies and prominent citizens, gave repeated expressions to the demand that Canada should make an effective contribution, either in money or in ships, to secure and maintain the supremacy of the British navy, though it was made clearly apparent that there were many who did not approve of the idea of contribution, and who favoured the suggestion that Canada should do nothing more than provide adequate protection for her own sea coasts.

The Naval Question in Canada

A discussion arose in the Canadian House of Commons on March 29th, upon a resolution presented by Hon. George E. Foster, one of the Leaders of the Conservative Opposition, to the effect that:—“In view of her great and varied resources, of her geographical position and national environment, and of that spirit of self-help and self-

"respect, which alone befits a strong and growing people, Canada should no longer delay in assuming her proper share of the responsibility and financial burden incident to the suitable protection of her exposed coast line and great seaports." Mr. Foster, in his speech supporting this resolution, objected to a fixed annual contribution in money; and he was followed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Leader of the Government, who declared that the Government stood by its refusal, at the Imperial Conference of 1902, to contribute to the support of the British army or navy.

While this discussion was in progress, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister, and Mr. R. L. Borden, Leader of the Opposition, by private personal discussion, doubtless with a view to creating unanimity of sentiment in Canada, came to an agreement to accept the following resolution, which was adopted by the Canadian House of Commons without division:—

"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 in national defense.

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 defense.

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."

I wish to direct special attention to the declaration, contained in the second clause of this resolution, 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; and to the alternative declaration in favour of the speedy organization of a Canadian naval service in close co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial navy.

It soon became clearly apparent that the compromise, negotiated by the leaders of the two political parties in the House of Commons, was not received with unanimity by the people of Canada.

In the meantime, public alarm was quieted somewhat by a pronouncement of Sir William H. White, late Director of Naval Construction, in the Nineteenth Century for April, 1909, in which he referred to the "exaggerated statements, and hysterical enquiry which had been made in some quarters," and ridiculed "the estimates of politicians, innocent of technical knowledge, like the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, the First Lord, and many others.

Nevertheless, an Imperial Press Conference was convened in London early in June, at which were assembled representatives of the Press from every portion of the self-governing Dominions, to whom the leaders of political opinion in Great Britain made most eloquent appeals that the Colonies should co-operate in providing for the defense of the whole Empire.

"Take this message back with you," said Lord Rosebery to the representatives of the Imperial Press, "that the Old Country is right at heart; that there is no failing or weakness in her; and that she rejoices in renewing her youth in her giant Dominions beyond the Seas. For her own salvation she must look to herself, and that failing her, she must look to you."

Sir Edward Grey declared that:—"The one essential thing is that we should keep the high-road of the sea open, and that is the great Imperial strategic problem which now confronts us. The navy is the common security of the whole Empire. If it ever fails to be that, it will be of no use for us to discuss other subjects."

"Local defense," declared Mr. Balfour, "must be subordinate to Imperial defense. The individual parts of the Empire never can be saved, never can be powerful, never can be strong, if their defense is only local."

Imperial Defense Conference

In the meantime the Imperial Government, in May, made unexpected preparations for calling the representatives of the colonies to London to take part in an Imperial Defense Conference, which met in July, and in which the Canadian Government consented,

rather reluctantly, to participate, by sending two representatives, the Canadian Ministers of Marine and of Militia; but their instructions were based upon the unanimous resolution of the Canadian House of Commons, to which I have referred; and, even at the time that Sir Wilfrid Laurier decided to participate in the Conference, he stated in the House of Commons, on May 18th, that:—"I quite realize that Canada has reached the period in its history when, as a Nation and as a part of the British Empire, we should acknowledge the fact squarely and prepare, as far as we can, for our own defense, and that we should make all adequate preparation to that effect. I am not prepared to say to what extent we should go."

Subsequently, in London, on July 25th, the Canadian Minister of Militia stated to the press that:—"There is in Canada a practical agreement of opinion as to the line we should adopt in regard to Imperial defense. The resolution of the Dominion Parliament disposes of the matter, and it is on this our instructions are based."

The memorandum submitted to this Conference by Mr. McKenna, First Lord of the Admiralty, while admitting that his suggestions were modified by the various circumstances in which the over-seas Dominions were placed, and that "their history and physical environment have given rise to individual national sentiment for the expression of which room must be found," declared that:—"In the opinion of the Admiralty, a Dominion Government, desirous of creating a navy, should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit;" the particulars of which he presented as costing, at British rates, \$17,500,000, at the outset, and \$3,000,000 per year for maintenance; and he urged that the fleet unit maintained by a Dominion Government should be "treated as an integral part of the Imperial forces," inasmuch as "it is a *sine qua non* that successful action in time of war depends upon unity of command and direction." He also added that: "It has been recognized by the Colonial Governments that "in time of war the local naval forces should come under the General Directions of the Admiralty."

The Canadian representatives at this conference were unwilling to accept the Admiralty's recommendation in its entirety; and asked for modified suggestions regarding the composition of the proposed unit on the basis of annual expenditure of \$3,000,000 and \$2,000,000 respectively.

Conflicting Canadian Opinions

In the meantime, the Canadian press was filled with a perfect babel of voices, some approving, others opposing the Laurier naval scheme, others suggesting other schemes, each giving expression to his own preference as to policy and as to details, clearly indicating that there was no real unity of public opinion such as the unanimous resolution of the Canadian Parliament at first seemed to indicate.

Mr. Borden, Leader of the Opposition, consistently adhered to the resolution of the Canadian House of Commons. In London, in July, he declared that "while Canadians would make any and every sacrifice in time of need, regular or periodical contributions to the British Treasury was not the best method;" and later, at Halifax, in October, he urged that:—"One governing principle at least should control, namely, that out of our own materials, by our own labour, and by the instructed skill of our own people, any necessary provision for our naval defense should be made as far as may be reasonably possible, so as to give a stimulus and encouragement to the ship-building industry of Canada which has long been lacking."

Mr. Monk, M.P., the Conservative Leader in the Province of Quebec, at a political banquet held at Lachine early in November, 1909, protested against the proposed policy of military and naval consolidation as fatal to the principle of self-government, and declared that:—"The democracy of our country cannot admit that the people should not control their own destiny. We should not be bound before we have been consulted and manifested our wishes;" while, in reply to Mr. Monk, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, speaking at Toronto, declared that: "If we do have a navy that navy will go to no war, unless the Parliament of Canada chooses to send it there."

Later Premier Roblin, of Manitoba, described the Laurier Naval Scheme as separatist in character, useless in effect, and costly in price, and declared that "Canada should contribute in the best possible way to the maintenance of British sea supremacy, through prompt and direct contribution to one great Imperial Navy;" while Premier McBride, of British Columbia, Premier Hazen, of New Brunswick, Mr. Hanltain, Provincial Conservative Leader in Saskatchewan, on various occasions, strenuously urged direct contributions either in money or in ships.

A new note in favor of Imperial co-operation was sounded by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, at a banquet in Montreal, on December

2nd, to the effect that in the future Canada would become "a great nation, a powerful influence in the Councils of the British people, a powerful factor in Imperial affairs." To which Henri Bourassa, who was thereafter destined to take a large and influential part in the discussion of Canadian naval policy, concisely retorted, at a banquet held one week later, that:—"If Canada is to aid in British wars, she must have representation in British diplomacy."

Thereafter petitions were largely circulated in Ontario and in the West which directed public attention to the fact that: "No constitutional means have been provided whereby the people of Canada may influence the declaration of war, or the conduct of it, or the conclusion of peace."

The Canadian Grange and the Canadian National Council of Agriculture also emphasized the demand for a popular vote on the navy question.

In November, 1909, the Canadian Parliament again assembled, and on January 10th, 1910, the Naval Bill was introduced by the Prime Minister, who explained that the Canadian Government had not accepted the British Admiralty's suggestion of a complete naval unit, but that they proposed to construct eleven ships at a cost, if constructed in Great Britain, of \$11,000,000, or, if constructed in Canada, of at least \$15,000,000; and he added—"I may say that it is our intention to start at the earliest moment with the construction of this fleet, and, if possible, to have the construction done in Canada."

The Premier also directed attention to a special provision of the Bill, that while the naval force was to be under the Canadian Government, "yet, in case of emergency, the Governor-General in Council," that is the Canadian Government, "might place the Canadian ships, officers and men at the disposal of His Majesty for general service in the Royal Navy;" and over this provision of the Bill a prolonged guerrilla warfare was afterward furiously waged. On the one hand, Mr. Borden, who is now Prime Minister, made the pungent criticism that:—"Under existing proposals the Canadian navy would be a Canadian force in time of peace; in time of war it would be an order-in-council navy."

On the other hand, Mr Monk, M.P., now Minister of Public Works, declared that—"What is proposed to-day is to invite us to

"become responsible for the policy, for the diplomacy, for the treaties for the alliances (of the Imperial Government) of which we know nothing, over which we have no control, made by men, excellent men, no doubt, but men who are not responsible to us. And the proposal is to ask us to assume all these responsibilities, without our enjoying the privileges of representation."

"Most important of all," said Mr. Monk, at a later date, "we have no voice of any kind in the conduct of Imperial affairs, while being bound by Imperial obligations toward other countries. We become liable to the political and financial results of those obligations, without any representation, or administrative responsibility."

Mr. Doherty, M.P., who is now Minister of Justice, also insisted that any policy of contribution to Imperial defense should embody the right of participation in the control or direction of Imperial foreign policy. "I am here to say," said he, "that when this duty is presented to us of our taking a share in the maintenance of the naval forces of this Empire, there is necessarily presented to us, at the same time, another duty, the duty of our taking a share in the heavy burden of the control of the foreign affairs of this Empire."

Mr. Perley, M.P., who is now a member of the Canadian Government without portfolio, was also insistent upon the importance of maintaining the unity of the Empire, and the necessity of Canada contributing efficiently to the defense of the Empire, with a view to obtaining representation in its government.

The Quebec Campaign

The Naval Bill was enacted into law, by the votes of the Liberal majority in a divided house, and in May, 1910, Parliament was prorogued. In the previous January, Henri Bourassa, a former supporter of the Laurier administration, and subsequently a member of the Quebec Legislature, a Canadian of French descent, a close student of constitutional history, possessed of clear political insight, of unsurpassed literary attainments and oratorical gifts, founded in the City of Montreal the newspaper "Le Devoir," in which day after day he preached the doctrine of Nationalism and Autonomy, and persistently assailed the Laurier naval policy with most biting criticism and the keenest satire.

A political campaign of platform addresses was also carried on in the Province of Quebec during the ensuing summer by Messrs. Monk, Bourassa, Nantel, Blondin, Lavergne and others, while Sir Wilfrid Laurier and a number of his colleagues, treating the campaign in Quebec with apparent indifference, made a tour of the Western Provinces, presenting the usual political platitudes, and occasionally arousing some enthusiasm by describing the Imperial structure as "a galaxy of young nations surrounding Great Britain, each with "National responsibilities, and bound together by the link of a common allegiance."

But early in October, 1910, the Federal representation for the electoral division of Drummond and Arthabasca became vacant; the writ for a new election was issued; and, in the short political campaign which ensued, the pent-up energy and enthusiasm of the opposing parties found opportunity for full, free and frank expression. Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself boldly entered the contest in his old constituency, and probably never before, in a single electoral contest in Canada, were so many political speakers engaged, or so many impassioned appeals made to the electors. On November 3rd the blow fell, and was felt throughout Canada. The candidate of Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been utterly defeated on the naval issue, in a constituency of his own selection, in his own Province of Quebec.

On November 9th the Nationalists celebrated their victory by a monster demonstration in the City of Montreal, when some 15,000 people cheered to the echo, Monk, Bourassa, Lavergne and Gilbert, the successful candidate, and unanimously re-affirmed the tenets of their political faith in the following resolution:—

"This meeting approves and ratifies the verdict rendered by the electoral division of Drummond and Arthabasca, re-affirms the will of the Canadian people to uphold the rights of the British Crown in Canada, declares itself ready to approve of all necessary and efficient measures to make sure the defense of Canadian territory; but it considers as contrary to the principle of Canadian autonomy and to the real unity of the Empire any policy tending to impose upon Canada, that has no voice in the Government of the Empire, any share in the external responsibilities or in the military defense of the Empire, outside of Canadian territory—the only portion of the Empire upon which the Canadian people may exercise any political or constitutional action."

That contest and that emphatic declaration of political principles impressed the consciousness of the Canadian people with a more intelligent perception of the real significance of the naval issue; and they began to realize more clearly that a decision upon the naval issue involves the necessity of solving, or at least of making a rational

effort to study, to appreciate, and eventually to pave the way for the solution of the problem of Canada's political relations with the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and with her sister Colonies of Australasia and South Africa.

Later, in November, 1910, the Canadian Parliament again assembled, and, in discussing an amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the Throne, Mr. Borden, then Leader of the Opposition, who is at this moment Prime Minister of Canada, made a pronouncement of far-reaching importance, to the effect that the adoption of a permanent policy of contributions, by Canada, to the naval defense of the Empire, necessarily involves a readjustment of the political relations between Canada and the Empire:—

"I cannot see," said he, "that it is possible to maintain the naval supremacy of the Empire by a series of diminished navies, not under one central control. . . . I think the question of Canada's co-operation, upon a permanent basis in Imperial defense, involves very large and very wide considerations. If Canada and the other Dominions of the Empire are to take their part as nations of this Empire in the defense of the Empire as a whole, shall it be that we, contributing to that defense of the whole Empire, shall have absolutely, as citizens of this country, no voice whatever in the Councils of the Empire? I do not think that such would be a tolerable condition. I do not believe the people of Canada would for one moment submit to such a condition.

Shall Members of this House, representative men, representing two hundred and twenty-one constituencies of this country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, shall no one of them have the same voice with regard to those vast Imperial issues that the humblest tax-payer in the British Isles has at this moment?

It does not seem to me that such a condition would make for the integrity of the Empire, for the closer co-operation of the Empire! Regard must be had to these far-reaching considerations; a permanent policy will have to be worked out, and, when that permanent policy has been worked out and explained to the people of Canada, to every citizen in this country, then it will be the duty of any government to go to the people of Canada, to receive their mandate and accept and act upon their approval or disapproval of that policy."

From the day that Mr. Borden made this public political pronouncement, so nearly in accord with the clearly expressed views of the exponents of Nationalist ideals in Canada, it was apparent to all intelligent observers of Canadian political affairs that he had thereby rendered it possible for the Nationalist group to accept the chief planks of his political platform, and for the leaders of that group, in the event of his triumph at the polls, to unite with him, as colleagues in his ministry, in working out a permanent policy on the basis of fully conserving National interests and maintaining Imperial unity.

In the face of this combination of opposition forces, which gave promise of undermining completely Sir Wilfrid Laurier's political

supremacy in his native Province of Quebec, it was not surprising that he thereafter encouraged the proposed negotiations for reciprocity with the United States, and that he subsequently adopted the reciprocity program, and sought to confine the subsequent electoral contest in Canada to a decision upon that single issue.

But to return to the naval issue, the discussion of which, had, by this time, forced upon public attention the question of Canada's political relations with the Empire. Sir Wilfrid, doubtless in the hope of rallying to his standard those electors of Quebec who were still hesitating to link their political fortunes with the Nationalist movement, declared, during the debate on the address in the House of Commons in November, 1910, that:—

"Under present circumstances it is not advisable for Canada to mix in the armaments of the Empire. But we should stand on our own policy of being masters in our own house, of having a policy for our own purpose, and leaving to the Canadian Parliament, to the Canadian Government, and to the Canadian people to take part in these wars, in which to-day they have no voice, only if they think fit to do so."

Imperial Conference of 1911

And later, in June, 1911, at the Imperial Conference in London, in which he had participated with evident reluctance, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in discussing the question of approving of the proposed rules of warfare, expressed in the Declaration of London, which would govern future wars between Great Britain and any other of the Great Powers of Europe, assumed unequivocally the position that Canada did not wish to be consulted in such diplomatic negotiations of the British Government, on the ground that being consulted implied giving advice to the Imperial Government, and giving advice implied the responsibility of going to war to give effect to any advice so given; and he declared, as a matter of fact, that Canada would, in the exercise of her own discretion, reserve to herself the right to refrain from participating in any war carried on by Great Britain with any other power. Turning to the representatives of the other British Dominions, present at the conference, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:—

"This is a thing which, in my humble judgment, ought to be left altogether to the responsibility of the Government of the United Kingdom, for this reason: This is a treaty which lays down certain rules of war as to in what manner war is to be carried on by the Great Powers of Europe. In my humble judgment if you undertake to be consulted and to lay down a wish that your advice should be pursued as to the manner in which war is to be carried on, it implies, of necessity, that you should take part in that war. How are you to give advice and insist upon the manner in which war is to be carried on, unless you are prepared to take the responsibility of going into the war?"

We may give advice if our advice is sought; but if your advice is sought, or if you tender it, I do not think the United Kingdom can undertake to carry out this advice unless you are prepared to back that advice with all your strength, and take part in the war and insist upon having the rules carried out according to the manner in which you think the war should be carried out. We have taken the position in Canada that we do not think we are bound to take part in every war, and that our fleet may not be called upon in all cases, and, therefore, for my part, I think it is better under such circumstances to leave the negotiation of these regulations as to the way in which the war is to be carried on to the chief partner of the family, the one who has to bear the burden in part on some occasions, and the whole burden on perhaps other occasions."

This declaration, when it was reported in Canada, met with a perfect storm of adverse criticism, to the effect that in the event of war between Great Britain and any other Great Power, a declaration of neutrality by Canada, would be nothing less than a declaration of political independence, and that even if Canada's neutrality under such circumstances might be respected by a hostile power—a suggestion which involved grave doubts and difficulties—it would be most dishonourable and cowardly for Canada, at a time when the Empire should be involved in a supreme struggle for the preservation of its political existence, to seek to safeguard her own territory by declaring her political independence.

During the previous year the independence of Canada had been advocated on the platform and in the press more frequently and more persistently than for many previous years; but without evoking very much of popular favour throughout the country generally, and no enthusiasm, indeed, in the Province of Quebec, where it was realized, by many Canadians of French descent, that a declaration of independence by Canada implied the wiping out of the existing constitution, created by the British North America Act, and the placing of the rights of the minorities, guaranteed by that Act, at the absolute disposition of an English and Protestant majority, composed of representatives of the English-speaking Provinces of the Dominion.

The maintenance of British connection again became a potent political watchword in the Province of Quebec; but the views of many of the people of that Province were doubtless expressed by Henri Bourassa, in a subsequent campaign speech at Sudbury, Ontario, where he declared that the maintenance of British connection is the first principle of Nationalism, though he strictly adhered to his previous contention that, if there is to be participation by Canada in the wars of the Empire, there must also be a corresponding participation in directing the foreign policy of the Empire:—

"I say," he declared, "that no government, whether Tory or Liberal, whether headed by an Englishman or a Frenchman, has

"the right to plunge us into a war beyond Canada's borders altogether, until the people of Canada have the same voice in the declaration of such wars as have the people of Great Britain. And in saying this I appeal to the very foundation stone of British citizenship."

Canadian General Elections

The electoral campaign, which closed on the 21st of September last, resulted in the defeat of the Laurier Ministry and the return of Mr. Borden, and his colleagues to power.

The first announcement of the new Premier was to the effect that the Laurier naval policy had been abandoned, or, at least, postponed for further careful consideration. The fact that Mr. Monk, Mr. Doherty, Mr. Nantel and Mr. Perley were invited by Mr. Borden, the new Prime Minister, to accept membership in his Ministry — and that they all felt free to accept office under Mr. Borden, was in itself a guarantee that the preceding prolonged public discussion had served to bring their views upon questions of naval policy and inter-imperial relationship very nearly into complete accord.

I cannot presume to suggest the considerations on which the policy of the present Government of Canada will be based, nor the general outline of the policy that will be formulated; and the events of the recent political contest are altogether too recent for one who participated, even to a very limited extent in that contest, to express an altogether unbiassed opinion as to the limitations which the views, generally entertained by the Canadian people, impose upon the positive constructive statesmanship of the new Ministry.

It is, however, generally conceded, I think, that Canada cannot yet stand alone among the nations of the world; and that the British connection is far more consistent with our Canadian traditions, and far more honourable to both races in Canada, than any other political connection which we might hereafter form for the purpose of safeguarding our autonomy, as well as our national interests generally.

But any form of Imperial Unity that implies Colonial dependence and subordination, Colonial subservience and servility, is, I think, distasteful to most Canadians, who may, for a time, but will not always, willingly permit their external relations, in peace and in war,

to be controlled solely by the Government of the United Kingdom, which, though Imperial in name, and Imperial in its executive and legislative jurisdiction, is elected on issues entirely local and never Imperial in their nature and scope, by electors of the United Kingdom who are never cognizant of, and never influenced by, the public opinion of the Over-Seas Dominions.

Nationalism and Imperialism

The external affairs of the Empire are, in fact, now controlled by the accidental selection, by the popular vote of the electors of the United Kingdom, of representatives who may or may not be qualified for high Imperial duties and responsibilities—who are selected by reason of their expressed views upon petty issues of provincial or parish politics, such as licensing public houses, church disestablishment, poor laws, old age pensions, local taxation, local education, or the like; and the representatives selected on these insular, local or parochial issues control the external affairs of the Empire, without regard to the views of the people of the so-called "Self-governing Dominions."

When these Dominions were granted the right of responsible Government, that right was distinctly restricted; it extended only to their domestic affairs, while, in respect of their foreign relations, they have since remained, constitutionally, in as dependent a position, in almost as complete political vassalage, as the Crown Colonies of the Tropics, which are inhabited by the unprogressive black descendants of the victims of the African slave trade. These Dominions were never endowed with the Imperial franchise; and they have never undertaken the corresponding Imperial responsibilities and obligations. They are deprived of any constitutional voice in the foreign affairs of the Empire—even though their own special interests are closely affected—and they are possessed of no constitutional means of carrying out for themselves, or of procuring the Government of the United Kingdom to carry out any foreign policy, no matter how vitally their interests may thereby be affected. They are exposed to the risks of wars undertaken by the Government of the United Kingdom, in the making and ending of which they have no constitutional right to be consulted. Herein lies the crux of the whole situation. How long can Imperial Unity be maintained on this basis?

It does not seem to me that Canadians of either French or of English descent can contemplate with complacency the perpetuation

of the existing Colonial status, which deters the growth of true Canadian patriotism, and encourages a servile Colonial lip-loyalty that can never be consistent with Canadian self-respect.

The Leaders of the Nationalist movement in Canada have done and are doing an invaluable service to Canada and to the Empire in defining more clearly the limitations, with respect to Canadian autonomy, which Imperial Unity must ever respect.

They have made it clear that Imperial Unity cannot be inspired by the idea of a common nationality; that it cannot consist of an organic political federation of different nationalities, or of widely scattered states; that it must, in fact, resemble more closely an alliance of independent nationalities for the joint direction and protection of their collective interests; that the objects and organization of such an alliance must be such as to satisfy nationalities jealous of their present political autonomy and independence in the administration of their internal national affairs; that Imperial Unity cannot be perpetuated on a basis which shall permit Canada, for instance, to be completely over-ruled in matters of internal agreement or convention, such as protection for the rights of minorities; nor in matters of internal policy, such as that of East Indian immigration, which so closely affect Canada's vital national interests.

The leaders of the Nationalist movement have also rendered a splendid service to Canada by inculcating a truer Canadian patriotism, by fostering the self-reliant spirit of the Canadian people, by teaching that Nationalism is the surest guarantee of Imperial Unity, by defining the limitations which any permanent form of Imperial Unity must certainly respect, by suggesting the possibility of a New Imperialism, which may have a wider scope and a nobler purpose than mere defensive or commercial interests.

But though the growth of the colonies into nations necessitates a corresponding change in the nature of the Colonial connection, and the certain disappearance of the older forms of centralized organic Imperialism; yet there is undoubtedly possible an Imperial Unity of the white races of the Empire, not merely based upon the racial sentiment, nor upon the insular traditions of the English people.— either of which would ignore the French of Canada, the Dutch of South Africa, and the numerous native born and foreign immigrant populations who inhabit all the Over-Seas Dominions—but an Imperial Unity based on a permanent alliance of the nations of the

Empire, for the preservation of their distinctive yet converging sentiments and traditions, for the protection of their common external interests, and for the most effective exercise and performance of their supreme moral responsibilities and duties, to which they are joint heirs, as an incomparable civilizing power, world-wide in the scope of its influence and efficiency.

The political affections of the majority of the Canadian people are first centered upon Canada; her vital interests are their first concern; but, though the Canadian Colonies, founded by both French and British exiles, have become the Canadian Nation of their descendants, yet it seems to me that the National life of Canada can best find its full expression by perpetuating, during many future generations at least, Canada's close union with Great Britain and the Overseas Dominions of the Empire, on a basis sufficiently broad and elastic to permit of the autonomous development of the National characteristics of each of the constituent nations forming that Imperial union.

Bases for Imperial Unity

The basis of such a union already exists in the perception of the several self-governing Dominions that their continued safety from foreign aggression depends upon their joint alliance and co-operation; that many of their inter-imperial problems may best be solved by their combined wisdom; that in the foreign policy of the Empire they are vitally and yet conjointly interested; that in the direction of the incomparable civilizing forces of the Empire, and in the perpetuation of those ideals of political liberty, which are the birth-right of all British peoples, they are entitled to the responsibilities of a joint participation.

The basis for such a union also exists in the Monarchical form of Government, established on existing democratic institutions, the representative character and basis of which may now, with absolute safety, be even more widely extended. So far as they could do so by solemn binding agreement between themselves, and, so far as they have had legislative jurisdiction, by well-considered legal enactments, the immediate ancestors of both races inhabiting the Canadian Colonies, in 1866-7, voluntarily provided that the Sovereign of Great Britain should thereafter be the Sovereign of Canada. May not, and, in fact, should not their descendants in Canada now anticipate the ultimate enlargement of the existing basis of Imperial Union, by an

inclusion of the representatives of all the white races constituting that Imperial Union, as joint advisors of the Sovereign in all matters of interest strictly common to them all? Can Imperial Unity be maintained on any other basis?

We all agree that Canada's destiny is in the control of the Canadian people; and that any new departure must first be submitted to the people. Nor have we any cause to distrust the final verdict of the people.

The winged creatures in Autumn take their flight to more temperate zones, and in Spring return again to their feeding grounds in the North. They have no star in the heavens to guide them; they know no mariner's compass by which to steer their course—yet they trust their instincts and prove them true. So the instinctive desire of all white races under the British Crown leads to the consummation and maintenance of some form of Imperial Unity; and the instincts of the people are often a surer guide than the intelligent foresight of the wisest of statesmen.

The solution of the problem lies in achieving the right balance between the Nationalism of the Colonies and the Unity of the Empire. It must combine in a pre-eminent degree the liberty and autonomy of the individual Dominions and the strength and security of an intimate alliance for administering and safeguarding the collective interests of the whole Empire.

The Imperialism of former days, which implied the continued acceptance by dependent Colonies of the policy of the Mother Country, both as regard foreign affairs and the expenditure of common funds, should give place to a sane Imperialism, which, while recognizing the necessity of conserving the National interests of the component units of the greater unity, will concede that those component units must have a voice in the control and direction of those matters of Imperial interest in which they are concerned equally with Great Britain.

The older conception of a gradual reunion of the Colonies with the Mother Country, through representation in either of the existing British Houses of Parliament, may eventually pass away; but may we not hope that it will be replaced by that nobler ideal of Imperial Unity, which originates in the consciousness of the people of each self-governing Dominion, not only of their own National in-

dividuality, but of those high moral responsibilities, imposed by their very existence, collectively to assume and perform their allotted work as one of the informing and civilizing forces of the world?

If, at the outset, instead of concentrating their attention upon matters of detail, the statesmen of the Empire could first determine in their own minds the general design of the political fabric, the creation of which they really contemplate, then the minor patterns, the warp and the woof, and the colors of the material with which they weave, would, even by the unconscious direction of the weavers, take their relative places in the accomplishment of the work thus intelligently designed. Matters of Imperial Defense, whether military or naval, matters of legislation and administration respecting navigation and shipping, copyright and naturalization, domestic policy and external relations, would readily and effectively be dealt with, in conformity with the British principles of responsible self-government, by the several respective authorities, constituted on a representative basis and acting in harmony within their prescribed jurisdictions.

Attitude of British Government

To me it seems that Imperial Unity is not so seriously threatened by external pressure from Germany, or from any other Great Naval or Military Power, as it is by the obvious unwillingness of the Government of the United Kingdom to admit the Governments of the Dominions beyond the Seas to share in the responsibility of advising the Sovereign in matters of external policy, including the negotiation of political treaties, the declaration of war, and the conclusion of terms of peace; in refusing, in fact, to share with them the responsibility of advising the Sovereign in all matters relating to the foreign policy of the Empire.

The attitude of the present British Government was made clearly apparent at the recent Imperial Conference, in London, when its President, Premier Asquith, speaking on behalf of that Government, and referring to Sir Joseph Ward's proposition that the self-governing Dominions should be admitted to participate in the councils of the Empire, said:

"For what does Sir Joseph Ward's proposal come to? I might describe the effect of it without going into details in a couple of sentences. It would impair, if not altogether destroy, the authority of the Government of the United

Kingdom in such grave matters as the conduct of foreign policy, the conclusion of treaties, the declaration and maintenance of peace, or the declaration of war, and, indeed, all those relations with Foreign Powers, necessarily of the most delicate character, which are now in the hands of the Imperial Government, subject to its responsibility to the Imperial Parliament. That authority cannot be shared."

The obvious result of such a declaration is that the Governments of the self-governing Dominions may reluctantly be forced to choose between the two alternatives: of restricting their naval and military expenditures to such as are necessary for the protection of their own coasts and international boundaries, until the increase of their population and the development of their own resources shall warrant them in assuming control of their own international relations, by taking their places among the nations of the world as independent Sovereign States; or, of placing their financial resources at the disposition of an Imperial Government, in whose councils they are denied representation, for the maintenance of foreign policies in respect of which they have no direction or control.

Hope for the Future

But, nevertheless, the growth and expansion of the British Constitution is always based on the reasonable compromises effected by opposing political forces; and it may be that a satisfactory *modus vivendi* may be contrived for, at least, the provisional adjustment of the existing difficulty.

I cannot, therefore, presume to suggest in what manner or by what means Canadian statesmen should determine, for the time being, the policy they will pursue with respect to naval and military defense; except that the maintenance of Canada's political individuality, the conservation of her political rights and interests, and the adequate defense of Canada, both as a growing nation, and as a part of the Empire, must ever be their special responsibility, and their chief concern.

If the continued existence of the Empire depends upon the maintenance of the supremacy of the British navy, and thorough enquiry and investigation show that the supremacy of that navy is really seriously threatened, then may we not yet hope that the British Government of the day may prove itself worthy of its Imperial title by co-operating with the Government of Canada and of the other Dominions beyond the Seas in devising ways and means, consistent with the recognized principles of responsible government,

for the maintenance of that naval supremacy, in so far as it is necessary, for the protection of the Empire as a whole, and for safeguarding the interests of its component political units ?

The problem is undoubtedly, in view of the present attitude of the British Government, one of the most difficult with which a Canadian Government was ever confronted. We know that the members of the Government of Canada are actuated by motives of the highest patriotism. They fully realize that the political destiny of Canada is now, for the time being, committed to their care and direction. May we not also hope that in the fulfilment of their responsible duties they may ever be guided by Infinite Wisdom ?



