

of this kind, would be an enormous advantage to them. It would be an enormous advantage to find ready to their hand men well trained, ready to take a part in the work of the fleet. There is, I think, the further advantage in these small flotillas, that they will be an admirable means of coast defence; that you will be able by the use of them to avoid practically all danger from any sudden raid which might be made by a cruising squadron. What I should like to point out is that, above all things in this work, the submarine is probably the most important and the most effective weapon. It is the weapon with which you can meet a fleet attacking during the day, or individual ships attacking by day. I am assured by my advisers at the Admiralty that it is a most important weapon; that it has already reached very considerable development; and it is one on which we may rely with great confidence. That is a view that is very strongly taken by some of the leading men in the French Navy, who think that the submarine is really the weapon of the future. I believe myself that the provision of submarines and all the smaller torpedo destroyers and boats would be of the greatest help to the Navy, supposing it were, as I hope it may not be, drawn into a war abroad.

Fifth Day.
23 April 1907.
NAVAL DEFENCE.
(Lord
Tweedmouth.)

We want to consult with you as to the details of this scheme. Of course if each separate colony is to be treated on a different footing, we are quite ready to do that and to make separate arrangements with each separate Colony according to its own wishes. I thoroughly recognise the great difference that there is between the conditions of one country and another. The desire of the Admiralty is to meet those wishes so far as they possibly can be met. I think perhaps it is impossible suddenly to make a change. I would suggest that a beginning should be made, and that probably the best way to start would be to allocate to local purposes certain portions of the subsidies already given. The particular purposes to which that money should be devoted should be discussed in detail between the representatives of the various Colonies and the Admiralty, so that a thoroughly good scheme might be worked out in the end. At the same time we do not put aside the payment of the subsidies at all. From those Colonies who are desirous of continuing altogether on the lines on which they have gone in the past, we shall be very glad to accept their contribution, and accept it gratefully, and do the best to apply the money in a useful manner.

Then I should like to say a single word on the further point of the provision of docks and coaling facilities in the Colonies. The enormous development of the modern warship entails important consequences. These great modern warships require large docks to contain them. I think we are getting on well with the provision of docks. At this moment in our own country and abroad we have, I think, 13 Government docks which will take in our largest ship, the "Dreadnought." I think in the course of the next two years we shall have four more, which will make about 17 altogether. But it is very desirable that we should have in all parts of the world docks which could take such great ships, supposing they were to meet with an accident or were to receive damage in war. I do not know whether Sir Wilfrid Laurier would consider that there might be some chance of Canada doing that in Esquimalt and Halifax, which have now been handed over to the Canadian people. We have already a dock at Simons Bay which will take a "Dreadnought," but all through the Empire it would be a great thing to find big docks at hand in the event of any accident or damage that might happen to a ship. It is the same thing with regard to coal. Coal is the life of a modern warship. It is an absolute necessity. There are great difficulties in getting it. We are better off, no doubt, than other Powers in that respect because we have coaling stations already scattered here and there over the whole world, and now there are many new