

Fifth Day.
23 April 1907.

NAVAL DEFENCE.
(Sir
Robert Bond.)

necessary for its development must come from the resources of the Colony. We stand in an exceptional position amongst all other Colonies of the Empire, I think, in that we have not received any assistance from His Majesty's Government—money assistance, I mean—in the direction of promoting the industries of the development of the Colony. Yet at the present time the Government owns some 700 miles of railway, nearly 1,500 miles of telegraph, 300 miles of cable which connect the Colony with the neighbouring continent, and a dock which up to a very recent date was pronounced to be one of the finest in British North America. All these great undertakings have come out of the funds of the Colony itself. In the future, I take it, we shall have to look to our own resources, and such being the case, as I mentioned a moment ago, any large money consideration or contribution towards the Navy can hardly be expected from the colony of Newfoundland.

There is a matter that I am pleased my friend the Canadian Minister of Marine has touched upon, namely, the expenditure incident to the policing of the waters consequent upon treaties entered into many years ago by His Majesty's Government with certain foreign nations. While the liability of expenditure to which my friend the Canadian Minister referred only applies to the Americans in his case, we have a further obligation in the Colony of Newfoundland, inasmuch as by virtue of a treaty entered into with France many years ago, she occupies St. Pierre and Miquelon islands off our south coast, which are a continual menace to our revenue. What I mean is this, that a system of smuggling has been carried on from St. Pierre for a number of years. We have estimated the loss to our revenue at something like 150,000 to 160,000 dollars a year. We have to police—at very considerable expense to our revenue—the waters of the south coast in the neighbourhood of St. Pierre and Miquelon. We also have to police our waters right around the whole coast line of nearly 4,000 miles to protect our fisheries and protect our revenues from encroachment at the hands of the American fishermen. My friend, the Canadian Minister of Marine and Fisheries, has contended, I think, with very much force and very much justice to his Colony, that the expenditure incident to that protection service ought to appear really as a contribution from his Colony towards Naval Defence, because unless the Colony provided that protection service itself I take it it would be regarded by His Majesty's Government as a duty incumbent upon itself to supply such protection, inasmuch as the necessity is one that the Colony can hardly be held responsible for. The argument applies with greater force in the case of Newfoundland. The treaties are of old standing, namely, that of 1818 with the Americans, and the Treaty of Utrecht with France more than a hundred years older. They were made without the consent of the Colonies by the Imperial Government in the interests of the Empire. Therefore I respectfully submit that the expenditure that the Colony is called upon to make for fishery protection service by reason of those treaties might be properly regarded as a contribution toward naval expenditure.

Under the agreement that was entered into in 1902, to which I have made reference, the liability of the Colony is to the extent of 5*l.* sterling per head for every man recruited in the island, His Majesty's Government assuming the whole of the balance of the expenditure in connection therewith. The arrangement that was made having worked out entirely satisfactorily to the Colony, and I believe, entirely satisfactorily to His Majesty's Government, I assume there is no reason for any revision of the agreement that is existing.

I have only to add that I shall be pleased to recommend to my Government a further increase to the amount that is at present being contributed if it is deemed desirable by His Majesty's Government to