

Thirteenth Day.
8 May 1907.

NAVAL DEFENCE.
(Lord Tweedmouth.)

definite force of their own, either a submarine flotilla, or help with regard to their naval volunteers at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and in Natal. Again we should be very glad to give some help with regard to that.

I ought to have said first, that so far as concerns the flag under which the submarines would sail, probably they would fly the white ensign but with a special mark on the flag—say the Southern Cross for Australia.

Mr. DEAKIN: We have the Union Jack with the Southern Cross besides.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: That is the sort of proposal to which we should be prepared to agree supposing that particular plan were adopted.

I do not think I need say anything with regard to Newfoundland. I understand that the Newfoundland view is that the present system should be maintained. The Government of Newfoundland would be very glad if a greater number of men were added to the Naval Reserve in Newfoundland, and they would be ready to give some further help in addition to the present 3,000*l.* which is paid by Newfoundland.

Sir ROBERT BOND: Upon precisely the same basis—yes.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: Yes, upon the same basis. With regard to Canada, I think I may say there has perhaps been some exaggeration in the idea that Canada does not do anything for the Empire in this matter. I think not sufficient account has been taken of the work they have done in taking up the protection of fisheries. They are very anxious to extend that work, and they have now taken over the dockyards at Halifax and Esquimalt, which I hope the Dominion will keep up and improve. I think that is really a very considerable contribution towards the general upkeep of our naval interests. There is at present no proposition from Canada to make any change at all, but I think it is proposed that matters shall go on very much as they have gone on, except that the Canadian representatives announce that they are anxious to do all that they can to expand the interest in the Navy throughout the Dominion, and in that way think that they will be really giving a great help to the Empire as a whole.

I think the important point we have to consider is the present situation in the various Colonies which already pay subsidies.

Then there is the question of manning. Of course Australia has already a considerable number of Naval Reserve men and men who are in the Navy. There are going to arrive here next week, on the 20th, 30 Australians and 10 New Zealanders, who are going to join British ships in this country for training. We shall welcome them very heartily, and I hope that they will gain great good by their visit and by the training they will receive.

Mr. DEAKIN: The training they are coming for is the higher training which could not be obtained on the squadron.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: Yes. You have now in Australia, I think, nearly 1,000 men of one sort or another who have been connected with the Navy or who are in the Reserve and so forth. If Australia prefers to terminate the arrangement with regard to the subsidy, the burden of those men would naturally fall upon Australia. That would be one of the things that would have to be provided for if the subsidy were dropped.

Mr. DEAKIN: Yes.