

manity and the future happiness of the world, that the League of Nations had been brought forth under more favourable auspices. I regret that the League at its very inception was unable to put a stop to these wars and disturbances which are upsetting the peace of the world. The circumstances attending its birth are unfavourable, but they should not in themselves determine its rejection unless there are within the Treaty itself and within the Covenant of the League of Nations vices which emphatically demand its rejection. We are told that the League is of such a nature that we, the Canadian Parliament, the representatives of the Canadian people cannot amend it. We must accept or reject it in toto. To my mind that is an illogical mode of procedure; but one which doubtless seems perfectly reasonable to our plenipotentiaries who have during their long sojourn in Europe acquired by their close association with the statesmen of the world a different point of view to that of the average Canadian, whose misfortune it has been not to have rubbed elbows and exchange opinions with the world's distinguished statesmen. However, as it is the average Canadian of this and future generations who is being obligated under the Treaty, and who has to accept the responsibility in connection with the League of Nations, I prefer to take his point of view and to attempt, by placing myself in his position, to draw certain conclusions.

We have become confused of late, it is true with regard to our so-called national status. I have neither the constitutional knowledge, the time nor the ability to discuss this matter at great length, but it strikes me that either we are a dependent nation, even though self-governing,—and in that case we have no business to sign the Treaty—or we are an independent, bound to the Mother Country only by ties of common interest, of blood and sentiment, and by a common King. For myself, I have no hesitation in proclaiming and approving of the latter proposition, and I think that this is the saner and truer conception of our status. It is from this point of view that I intend to discuss our present question. Having proceeded thus far towards the goal of our national aspirations and towards the fulfilment of our national destiny, it behooves us not to hesitate in consolidating and strengthening our position. We are an independent nation and proud of the fact, and as such should be jealous of any invasion of our rights; and

[Mr. Power.]

should this covenant imply any such invasion we should, if it cannot be amended, reject it. Rather than lose one atom of the self-government which we have so far attained, I would cheerfully reject the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the Treaty of Peace if need be. I would do this rather than lose any of the liberty the preservation of which has cost us such untold hardships and sufferings and the loss to our country of 60,000 of its best brain and brawn,—men whose blood, spilt with those of our allies has rendered more holy the sacred soil of France. I submit, Sir, that the Treaty so interferes with our autonomy, in that it takes away from the Parliament and the people of Canada the right to decide on the question of war, a question which hitherto has been exclusively within the province of this Parliament; for no war can be waged without a certain amount of money being appropriated for it, and the moneys of the people of Canada must not be appropriated without the consent of Parliament. This right is ceded to a council foreign to our body politic, a council on which, notwithstanding the assurances of the Minister of Justice, I am convinced we shall have no representative and in which we shall have no voice. The Treaty interferes with our autonomy in matters which are purely domestic. For instance it interferes in matters of immigration and trade. To take one example: Should China feel aggrieved at our immigration laws she could appeal to the League of Nations. In the League, there would be our friend and natural protector, Great Britain; but bound as she is by her ties of alliances and friendship with Japan and bound as she is by fear of ever-uneasy millions in her Asiatic possessions, I am afraid she would not be a very great help to us. Supposing last session we had accepted the amendment of the hon. member for London (Mr. Cronyn) and approved what I might call the Cronyn line of Europe, we would very shortly have been in conflict with a large number of our Allies, our fellow-members in the League of Nations. And the history of the Ashburton Treaty and the Alaskan dispute are still too fresh in our memories for us to fondly imagine that Great Britain would come to our rescue in such a position.

I had intended to criticise the time which is allowed us for withdrawing from the League, and I sincerely hope that when the next Government comes into power it will see to it that we do withdraw from it. I had intended further to criticise the pro-