

Here is his own language recorded in the pages of 'Hansard' and I am anxious to observe whether hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House who applauded with such vigour the speech just delivered will applaud the words which I shall proceed to quote, used by the right hon. gentleman as the leader of the Liberal party in this country, which, as he declares has an absolutely consistent record in this matter:

I hold out to my fellow countrymen the idea of independence, but, whenever the day comes, it must come by the consent of both countries, and we shall continue to keep the good feeling and the good-will of the mother land. If we are true to our record, we will again exhibit to the world the unique, the unprecedented example of a nation achieving its independence by slow degrees, and as naturally as the severing of the ripe fruit from the parent tree.

Then, further, in the course of the same remarks—

An hon. MEMBER. What date?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. 'Hansard' 1892, page 1142. If any hon. member desires to examine the remarks of the right hon. gentleman he will find them there and further at page 1143:

Is there a Canadian anywhere who would not hail with joy the day when we would be deprived of the services of British diplomacy?

As he has invited controversy with respect to the matter, although I had hoped that he would have elevated the discussion somewhat more above controversial lines. I have to tell him that in my judgment, since he has held the reins of government, British diplomacy has more than once got this country out of difficulties in which it has been involved by the blundering of himself and his colleagues. Further, at page 1144, since my right hon. friend desires a retrospect, I find him using this language on the same occasion:

The hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) no doubt would prefer an English shilling to a Yankee dollar; but for my part I am differently constituted. I am ready any day, whether I am charged with annexation or not, to take a Yankee dollar in preference to an English shilling. . . . I have again and again repeated that the goal of my aspiration is the independence of Canada, to see Canada an independent nation in due course of time.

Well, my right hon. friend may have recanted that opinion. I am not aware that he has ever publicly recanted that aspiration and it would seem to me, having regard to some of the provisions of this Bill that he has not, and, if I may indulge in the tactics of my right hon. friend, rumour reaches us from some sources in the country that this very measure now presented to the House in so eloquent a speech is being held out as an important step in the

direction of that independence which was at one time at least the aspiration of my right hon. friend.

Now, Sir, the right hon. gentleman declared to us that he has been told from some source in criticism of this measure that aid should be given by Canada to the mother country in respect of the naval defence by means of annual contributions. I have already expressed my opinion on that point, and as I spoke in this House at great length on the first reading of this Bill I shall be enabled to curtail my remarks to-day. As far as I am concerned, while the system of annual contributions might be best, and, no doubt, would be best from the purely strategical standpoint, I firmly believe that no such system could be adopted, but that eventually and permanently the basis upon which Canada must contribute to the defence of the empire will be by employing our own material, our own men, our own resources and the skill of our own people. But, Sir, we have to consider to-day some of the propositions of the government not only as embodied in this Bill, but as embodied in the speech of my right hon. friend. He told us on the first reading of this Bill that Canada must be at war when the empire is at war. Any man who has the slightest acquaintance with international law knows that that is absolutely the case. Yet, my right hon. friend has somewhat receded from that opinion to-day, because he has told us that under conceivable circumstances the rest of the empire might be at war while Canada was at peace. Such a proposition is absolutely impossible. So long as Canada remains in the empire, Canada is at war when the empire is at war. So long as the English flag floats above Canada, Canada is at war when that flag is attacked. The moment a shot is fired or a blow is struck at that flag, Canada is at war with the nation or country which fires that shot or strikes that blow. In view of the fact that the right hon. gentleman recedes, as I understood him to recede to-day, from the position which he took on the first reading of the Bill, we must understand that some very strong compulsion has urged him to take that course, and that difficulties within the ranks of his own party have compelled him to recede from what was in the first place the true and correct declaration of the position of this country. I shall not stop to dwell upon the argument of my right hon. friend based upon the authority of that great constitutional work, *Quentin Durward*, as to the exact similarity of meaning between sovereign and suzerain. Every one knows that the term 'suzerain' is a term which has come down to us from the old feudal days. I have not had an opportunity of examining the book, but I would not be very much surprised to find that my