

in New Zealand, in Africa, in the West Indies, in India, and, in short, anywhere that the British flag floats. If France is at war she can be attacked not only in France but in her possessions in Cochin-China. If Germany is at war she can be attacked not only in Germany but also wherever the German flag floats. It does not follow, however, that because England is at war we should necessarily take part in the war; I will come to that presently. But, as that proposition which I laid down has been challenged in some parts of my native province, may I be permitted to recall to the memory of the members of this House an incident which is hardly ten years old? In 1898, the United States declared war upon Spain. The object of the war was to free Cuba from Spanish domination. The Cubans had been insurgent for many years. The congress of the United States decided to come to their assistance and they sent an army to Cuba in order to help the Cuban insurgents to free Cuba from Spanish domination and they did free Cuba from Spanish domination. But, at the same time, they sent a squadron to the Philippine Islands in the Pacific, a Spanish possession, and took possession of those islands. The same thing can be done again. If England is at war we are at war and liable to attack. I do not say that we shall always be attacked, neither do I say that we would take part in all the wars of England. That is a matter that must be determined by circumstances, upon which the Canadian parliament will have to pronounce and will have to decide in its own best judgment.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Can it be that there are men in this House so lost to the sense of responsible government that they will deny such a proposition? Let me illustrate my point by history. I appeal to history and I trust that I will be able to satisfy every hon. gentleman in this House. During the nineteenth century England has been more than once threatened with war. In 1861 she was nearly at war with the United States—luckily Providence averted it—when the United States ship 'San Jacinto' took from a British mail steamer the two delegates, Slidell and Mason, who had been sent to Europe as the agents of the southern confederacy. It was an act of war on the part of the United States, so interpreted and rightly interpreted, but luckily the United States gave way and war was averted. If war had been declared immediately we would have been drawn into it and it would have been our duty at once not only to defend our territory but to help England in that

struggle. There was another instance. England was at war in the Crimea with Russia. For myself I do not hesitate to say that if that war were to be undertaken by England under similar circumstances, I would hesitate very much before I would give my consent that we should take part in any such war if conditions were the same as they were then. But, they are not the same now as they were then because at the present time we have British Columbia to look after and if war were declared between Great Britain and Russia our first duty would be to look after British Columbia which might be attacked by Russia from the Pacific ocean.

I am well aware that for expressing the opinion which I did express the other day and which I repeat on the floor of this House I have shocked many and many a good Conservative mind. I was accused of treason. Charges of treason are familiar to me. I have heard them in my own province time and again, and I have heard them in the province of Ontario. Charges of treason are very easily manufactured. The other day I was speaking in Toronto. I was saying that we were British subjects, subjects of His Majesty the King, and in speaking of the sovereignty of the King I called in the use of the word suzerain and in doing this I find that I shocked many a tender soul. I shocked the tender soul of the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) for one. When reviewing my speech a few days afterwards, he spoke as follows:

Some rather foolish, even mischievous talk, has been indulged along these lines. It has been asserted that we have wrested our fiscal autonomy, our political autonomy, even our naval autonomy, from Britain, and the latest addition is practically our autonomy in our international relations. After this, all we have to do in bowing our knee and saluting King Edward is to call him, not sovereign, but suzerain. It is a mistake which creates false impressions.

If these utterances are merely for the sake of rhetorical adornment they are but foolish. If, however, they are studied and serious, they are revolutionary. We cannot have absolute autonomy in any of these and remain in the empire.

Well, is my hon. friend in this, merely playing on syllables? If I had said 'sovereign' that was all perfectly loyal, but I said 'suzerain' and that smacks of disloyalty! Sir, I am sorry to say to my hon. friend that I rather rubbed my eyes when I saw his criticism. I do not pretend to be a master of the English language, but I think I know something of it, and I have always understood that if there is any difference between 'sovereignty' and 'suzerainty' it is merely a shadow and that it is used by men of greatest eminence indif-