

And first let me point out that we are all learning to speak—and to speak with pride—of Canada as a “nation.” We do not like the word “colony.” It connotes subordination, and subjection, and humiliation. We do not like that. We feel that we are big enough to manage our own affairs. Moreover we do manage them, without interference from anybody. “Canada is no longer a colony. Canada is a nation”; that language is, I say, becoming not only common but acceptable. And I submit to you that every man is a Canadian nationalist who asserts, with pride, that Canada is, or ought to be, a nation.

Now, probably, there is not a man in this room who would send Canada back to her colonial days; who would tolerate the exercise of controlling authority by our Governors-General; who would receive with submission, or accept without resentment, any appearance of dictation from the Colonial Office. Every one of you is in favor of Canadian self-government. Everyone is in favor of Canada being a nation. Well, that is what I call Canadian nationalism. At the close of an address which I had the honor of delivering before the Canadian Club in Halifax, an ardent imperialist, in moving a vote of thanks, dissented vigorously from the idea of Canadian independence, but added that he was entirely in favor of self-government. “If,” he said, “there is any minutest particular in which our powers of self-government are not complete, let us insist upon having it.” In reply, I pointed out that the speaker and I were in absolute accord. He advocated complete self-government; and that, of course, is independence. The two words “self-government” and “independence” mean precisely the same thing.

The Halifax gentleman and I cordially agreed that in all matters—in every matter, great or small, the Canadian people shall govern the Canadian people—our parliaments, elected by our electors, and not the British parliament elected by other electors, shall make our laws and regulate our actions. Would it not be, in the last degree, absurd that Canadian affairs should be included in the medley of House-of-Lords, Home-Rule, Dis-establishment, Licensing, Education, Land-taxation questions that at the present time are being submitted to the British and Irish electors? I need not dwell upon the point. I feel sure that, as to it, there is not a dissident in the audience.

But there are three qualifications which must, for the present at least, accompany what I have been saying:—(1) As a matter of theory and dry constitutional law, we cannot say that we possess complete powers of self-government. Nominally, the British Parliament has authority not only to override all our laws, but, if it so