

*"King of Canada"*

His Majesty in two languages, not the two languages which are official in this country, but the two languages used for such and like documents in England; that is to say, the English language and the Latin language. In the Latin language the words were:

*et terrarum transmarinarum quae in ditione sunt.*

That is, the lands beyond the seas which are under dominion. I looked up "in ditione" to see just what was the origin, and I find it is one of the expressions of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*.

Mr. MacNICOL: May I ask the minister if he translated the expression correctly? I thought he said "under the dominions"?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: No, "under dominion."

Mr. CHURCH: What is wrong with the title now? Are you objecting to it?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: What is wrong with it now is that it is somewhat out of date; it does not make any distinction between the condition of those lands beyond the seas whose peoples have attained autonomous self-government, and the colonies which are still lands under dominion, administered from the colonial office.

The hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg (Mr. Winters) says that to the layman this does not appear to be anything of importance, that it does not make much difference. I quite agree with him. Those of us who are within the commonwealth know exactly what the situation is, and it is not important as to whether or not it is accurately described in the title of His Majesty. That has no effect whatsoever upon the regard in which he is held here or upon the fact that in law, constitutionally he is our king; he is the King of Canada. The way in which he is described in this title has no effect upon that for us. But to others who are not within the commonwealth it may appear ambiguous; and those who remember their Caesar and their *De Bello Gallico* may think the "*et terrarum transmarinarum quae in ditione sunt*" are in the condition in which were the lands Caesar described as "*in ditione Germanorum*" or "*in ditione Romanorum*." That may or may not be important. Certainly it is not the fact. We are not "*in ditione Germanorum*"; we are not "*in ditione Romanorum*", and we are not "*in ditione*—"; I do not know what the Latin word would be, but whatever would be proper to describe the English people. We are not under the dominion of any but ourselves and His Gracious Majesty as King of Canada.

That is the fact, but it is also the fact that in the Statute of Westminster we, the United

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

Kingdom and the other autonomous units which, in the declaration of 1926, were declared to be all of equal status, agreed that there would be no further change in the royal style and titles without the action of the parliament of the United Kingdom, the parliament of Canada, the parliament of Australia, the parliament of New Zealand and the parliament of the Union of South Africa. This resolution directs attention to the fact that the style is not now in accord with what is the fact, but it also in terms recognizes that nothing more than a hope can be expressed by any one of the units, because the consent and concurrent action of all is required to bring about any change.

The resolution says that at the next imperial conference there should be a recommendation that all these parliaments concur in making this change. Well, I think a change will be inevitable in the course of this inevitability of gradualness. Have we reached the point where it is necessary that it be made at once? That is something upon which there may be various divergent opinions. All I can say as to the position of the government is that, this matter having been discussed in the high tone that was maintained throughout the debate, it will be considered by the government as its duty to ascertain from the representatives of the other autonomous units of the commonwealth if they feel that it should be considered at the next meeting. I think I can give the mover of this resolution the assurance that we shall ascertain, through ordinary diplomatic channels, if it is convenient to the other members of the commonwealth of nations that this matter be considered the next time there is an imperial conference. The hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Church) says none has been fixed. He is quite right, but these conferences take place from time to time. This resolution does not ask that a conference be called, and I would not want to give the assurance that we would ask to have a conference called; but I feel sure that at some near or later day there will be an occasion when representatives of the autonomous units of the commonwealth will be in session, and I think it would be proper to ascertain, through diplomatic channels, if they consider that when there is such a conference this matter should be on the agenda. It is something that I am sure will be considered in the same spirit in which it was discussed in this house. We cannot forever maintain forms that no longer represent the substance; and the substance has been changed. The substance is now different from the condition that existed when this form was adopted. When will that change