

and I say, Mr. Speaker, that that does not correctly set forth the relationship between Great Britain, and New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Australia or ourselves. I like much better the word "Commonwealth", and I like better still the word "Commonwealths" because there are five of us: There is the British Empire, which is composed of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, India and the Crown dependencies and colonies, and alongside are the four great self-governing Dominions. To call the relationship which exists between these self-governing Dominions and the Metropolitan an empire is to say something which is not consonant with the facts. It is of paramount importance not only for a correct understanding of our own relationship, but in order that our relationship and our status may properly appear before the world and be understood by all that this use of the term "British Empire" should cease, and that the words "British Commonwealths" should be given to Great Britain, to ourselves, to New Zealand, to Australia and to the Union of South Africa. There has been a beginning; I notice with some pleasure that a little while ago the Prime Minister while he was in England stopped talking about the British Empire and began talking about the Britannic Commonwealth.

But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that I have a better witness than those whom I have summoned—better because I believe his evidence fits in more nearly with the facts. I refer to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell). He has not in this House always enjoyed my full approval or strong commendation, but I trust that the fog of partisanship will never so becloud my mind that I will be unprepared to give the meed of praise when it is due. I listened with care and with pleasure when, rising in his seat the other day, he declared himself as strongly opposed to the Milnerite plan—to the plan of that young apostle of Imperialism, Lionel Curtis, who has been going around the British Empire for many years preaching his conception of Imperialism, a young man endowed with great ability and sincerity, and backed with ample funds by the Imperialists of the old land. I admire the stand of the President of the Privy Council when he says: "When I spoke in 1912, setting forth what I believed to be the Liberal conception of the true relationship which should exist between the great overseas Dominion and Great Britain—and in order that I may avoid, Mr. Speaker, the imputation of party politics, I say it is the

true Conservative view as well, the view of Sir John A. Macdonald"—I am endeavouring to quote more or less roughly the words spoken by the President of the Privy Council—"when I spoke as I did in 1912, I believed I was right, and I believe I am right to-day." I commend him for his words. So that no objection can be taken to my quotation, let me read the note which I have made of the words he used:

He says truly that our status is in a state of transition; we are reaching out to the position of a sister nation of equal status with Great Britain and Ireland.

That is a true statement of our real position. We have not acquired all the sovereign powers of a nation. We are a nation because we have acquired a great many of the powers incident to nationhood, but there are certain other powers which we have not yet acquired, and we are reaching out to the position of a sister nation of equal status with Great Britain and Ireland. In his speech he gave credit to many Canadians—to Macdonald, to Galt, to Blake, to Cartwright, to Mills, and last of all to the great chief of the party to which I belong, that man who was so universally admired throughout Canada, the late Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier. And I say, Mr. Speaker, without fear of successful contradiction, that if our representatives at the Peace Conference—and I am glad they were there—were able to take the stand that they did take, they owed it in no small measure to the attitude taken years ago at Imperial Conferences by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, when he withstood Chamberlain face to face and defeated his plan to centralize the British Empire and take away our name from among the nations of the earth.

Now, during the debate the President of the Privy Council asked this question of the member for Kamouraska (Mr. Lapointe): How can our constitutional position be improved? It is not hard to answer that question. The President of the Privy Council has just come in, and I might repeat for his benefit for a moment that I was praising him highly for the attitude he took in insisting upon Canadian nationhood. I am now endeavouring to answer the question he propounded to the member for Kamouraska: How Canada could improve her constitutional position? She can improve her constitutional position by insisting upon all those sovereign rights which she does not now possess, the acquisition of which will make her a sister nation equal with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.