

The Address—Mr. Martell

league from that province upon his speech. Most worthily did he uphold the honour of the province from which we both come. Unfortunately I am not familiar with the language of old France, and therefore I could not comprehend all that was said by the second of the Address. It certainly must seem rather a paradox that I, descended from French Huguenots, cannot understand the language of my forebears; but judging from the fluency and grace displayed by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Rhéaume), and from the manner in which his remarks were received by his colleagues from Quebec, his address was both eloquent and convincing.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard many references to those of our membership who have passed beyond the veil since last we met. When I came into this House last year—although I am the baby, so to speak, of the Maritime representatives—there were some four or five members with us who to-day have passed beyond the veil because “the finger of God touched them and they slept.” I was not exceedingly well acquainted with the late hon. member for Lanark (Mr. Stewart), with the late Hon. Mr. Kennedy, and with the late Mr. Lafortune, but of the late Dr. Blackadder, I can speak with authority. We had stumped together in promulgating the principles of Liberalism as followers of the great chieftain, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and to-day it is to me a great sorrow that he is with us no longer. In thinking of him, the words of the poet recur to my mind: “Although he is absent in body, he is present in spirit.” Perhaps I can best give expression to my regard for Dr. Blackadder in these lines:

How can I cease to pray for thee dear heart!
Where'er in God's great universe thou art to-day
Can He not reach thee with His tender grace;
Can He not hear me when for thee I pray?

Somewhere thou livest and hast need of Him,
Somewhere thy soul seeks higher heights to climb,
And somewhere too there may be valleys dim,
Which thou must cross to reach the heights sublime.

Then all the more, because thou canst not hear
Poor human words of blessing, will I pray,
O true brave heart! God bless thee
Whereso'er in His Great Universe, thou art to-day.

Divers things find mention in the Speech from the Throne. It is true that criticism has been uttered by some hon. gentlemen opposite because certain matters have been omitted; but the Speech from the Throne is not supposed to contain all the legislation that will probably come before parliament. There is, however, one particular matter upon which we are to legislate this session in which I, as a representative of one of the most his-

[Mr. Martell.]

toric constituencies in the Dominion, am personally interested—that is the question of redistribution. I stand here representing the historic constituency of the county of Hants. With the prosperity that has come to various sections of the Dominion, Hants, through no fault of her own, has lost in population, with the result that the constituency which in days gone by was the scene of Joseph Howe's greatest battles is to be amalgamated with some other constituency in the province of Nova Scotia. In this regard there is one plea I wish to advance: At the time confederation was brought about it was undoubtedly understood that the representation in this parliament should be founded upon the basis of the four original provinces. It was never intended—I do not believe, Sir, it was ever in the minds of the Fathers of Confederation—that any of the four original provinces should lose part of their representation. The other provinces which were subsequently carved out of the western country are going to get a greatly increased representation, and that increase will be at the expense of eastern Canada which has borne the burden and heat of the day. So I believe, Sir, that this is the proper time for us to take into consideration and endeavour to secure for the older provinces an irreducible minimum as regards representation. True, some of us will be told that we are governed in that particular by the British North America Act. I admit that that is the case. But if we have borne the burden and heat of the past, if we at the expense of the East have built up the western country, in return the western country should be prepared to come to our aid and to say: The Fathers of Confederation did not foresee there was a danger of the West overruling the East, and we are prepared to come to your aid and join you in any petition asking for an amendment of the British North America Act which will guarantee to the people of the East an irreducible minimum of representation in the House of Commons.

My hon. friend from Cape Breton South (Mr. Carroll) yesterday in the course of his very excellent address dealt with the problem of immigration. You will permit me, Sir, to be somewhat laudatory of Nova Scotia and to say that I was extremely proud of the fact of being a Nova Scotian after hearing his address, eloquently delivered and replete with sound logic and good common sense. After listening to him, the hon. Minister of Finance, and other speakers of the day it was pleasing for me to recall the words of Tenny-