

speaking for myself and a great many other members of the party—that, in my opinion, a universal suffrage law based on a satisfactory residence in the country and constituency, with a cheap form of registration, would solve this difficulty which, I frankly admit, exists, of a very expensive Act, and would avoid the humiliation proposed of our people electing members to this Parliament on different franchises in different provinces. I beg to apologize to this House for taking up so much of its attention, and I must express my regret to my right hon. friend for not having been able to conclude my remarks at an earlier period, and thus giving us earlier the pleasure of listening to him.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I have listened, Mr. Speaker, without any astonishment to the extraordinary harangue—I cannot call it a speech—in which the hon. gentleman has vented out the spleen and disappointment which have filled his soul ever since a certain day in the year 1896 which I shall not further harrow his feelings by mentioning. Well, knowing my hon. friend, having had a long experience of his ways and methods, I must say that I was prepared for a very large share indeed of wild and extravagant declamation, but I must pay him the compliment—doubtful though it be—that upon this occasion he has fairly out-Heroded Herod, or, to speak more accurately, out-Tuppered Tupper. But such is the high estimate which we have formed, on this side of the House, at all events, of his power of vituperation, of his recklessness of statement, of his faculty of distortion, that, for my part, I repeat it again, I heard it all without any astonishment. My hon. friend is not in a happy frame of mind; he is angry; he is choleric; he is wrothy—and the cause is not at all far to seek. I once heard upon the floor of this House our friend Joseph Rymal declare that there was not a she-bear deprived of her cubs half so ferocious as the Tory party when deprived of office. If that was the cause of the hon. gentleman being choleric and wrothy, we can easily account for the extraordinary outbreak of disappointment and bitterness we have just heard from him. There are many things in the speech of many hours to which perhaps I might reply, but my hon. friend will pardon me if I say that the speech of five or six hours to which we have listened this afternoon and evening, was well characterized this afternoon by the hon. gentleman who seconded the Address, when he spoke of a deluge of words in a desert of ideas. I must say for my hon. friend that I cannot follow him in everything he has said. I cannot, for instance, follow him in the statements he made, which were decorated with such adjectives as “want of ability,” “humiliation,” “incompetency” and “profound ignorance.” After all, we must all submit to the laws of fate. The laws of fate are in-

exorable, and painful as it may be to us, it is evident that it is our fate as a Government not to come up to the expectations of my hon. friend. My hon. friend is not the first man who, smarting under a sense of disappointment, finds some solace for himself in reviling those who are stronger than he. Shakspeare has shown us Thersites, deformed and scurrilous, venting his spleen on account of his deformity, in the camp of the Greeks, by abusing the leaders of the army; and after a more vicious tirade than ever, concluding by this pious ejaculation: “I have now said my prayers; let the Devil Envy say amen.” It would have been quite in order for the hon. gentleman, when he concluded his speech, to have said, like Thersites: Now that I have finished my prayers, let the Devil Envy say amen. My hon. friend has weighed us and found us wanting, and he has seen the signs on our walls of our condemnation. I must say that such a judgment and such a verdict, uttered in so solemn a manner, might prove disquieting and disturbing were it not for the fact that we know, from many an experience, that whether as a judge of events or as a prophet, my hon. friend is the very reverse of a Daniel. Where in the world has he seen the signs of condemnation?

Mr. SUTHERLAND. The Toronto “World.”

The PRIME MINISTER. I must confess that I have not thought of that, but the Toronto “World” evidently does not comprise Toronto Centre, which sent us, some few weeks ago, so able a representative as the one to whom we have had the pleasure of listening this afternoon. Neither has he seen signs of condemnation in Temiscouata, which elected by acclamation my hon. friend (Mr. Gauvreau) who seconded the Address. Neither has he seen them in Rimouski, where my hon. friend was also elected by acclamation, because hon. gentlemen opposite did not dare try the issues with us. Neither did he see any in Drummond and Arthabaska, where the hon. gentleman's friends did try the issues and were snowed under by a majority of over 700. Neither did he see them in Nicolet, an old Conservative county, which was carried by its present representative in 1891 by one of a majority, which he lost in 1896 by 130, or something like that, and which he has now carried by a majority of over three hundred. Neither has he seen signs in Quebec Centre, where my hon. friend (Mr. Malouin) has just been elected by acclamation. My hon. friend has spoken in somewhat extravagant language. There might perhaps be something to retort to, if one were blessed with the happy faculty, which is so natural to him, of blowing his own trumpet and singing his own praises. But I must confess to my hon. friend that in that art, in which he is past master, I am absolutely incompetent. I must further confess—and I do so with due humility—that