

planet reduced a million times. On my own account, I discovered thereon America, and within America, the Dominion of Canada, and within Canada, the province of Quebec. But it was only with a good deal of difficulty that I succeeded in finding within the limits of the latter province, the city of Quebec, which was hidden under a ring of gold encircling the whole of Canada, and which, according to charts hanging on the wall, represented the ideal short route between Europe and Asia. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Canadian, lost as he was in the great city of Paris, felt his heart throb at that moment, and was dreaming of things which will shortly have come to pass. Such was also the dream of the statesman who, to-day, has in his hands the future of the Canadian nation and whom we have the honour to have as our leader in this House. Thanks to him and to his government, steel rails will soon have taken the place of the golden ring, and that painful catastrophe, the wreck of the Quebec bridge, will cause delay, but not a break in the carrying out of the undertaking. We have, to strengthen us in that belief, the stand taken by the government heretofore; we have also the solemn pledge given, on behalf of his party, by the hon. leader of the opposition, the very night that unspeakable catastrophe occurred. 'The Quebec bridge,' did he say, 'must and shall be rebuilt.' It was a compliment paid, unwillingly perhaps, but truthfully, to the grand liberal policy; it was also a wish worthy of a great patriot.

All these circumstances, the outcome of the general elections, your unanimous choice, Sir, as Speaker, of this House, the conciliatory stand taken by the hon. leader of the opposition, all these circumstances, I say are indications that the request of the hon. Prime Minister ('Allow me to complete my work') having been agreed to by the people, will presently be approved of by parliament.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Halifax). Mr. Speaker, I desire to extend my congratulations to both the mover and seconder of the address on the very satisfactory manner in which they have discharged the duties imposed upon them. They have gone with great particularity into various paragraphs of the speech which has been delivered to us by His Excellency. I do not propose to go into those paragraphs in the same detail or with equal thoroughness; nor do I find very much in the remarks of either hon. gentleman which calls for any criticism from myself. The hon. member for Quebec county (Mr. J. P. Turcotte), who spoke, as all our fellow countrymen of the French race do speak, with very great eloquence, referred to the confidence which has been again reposed in this administration by the people of the country. It might perhaps be not amiss

Mr. J. P. TURCOTTE.

to call attention to the fact that if a system of proportional representation, such as is being advocated in very high quarters in Great Britain at the present time and which is practised, I believe, in some countries, had been adopted in Canada, the government would have rejoiced in a majority of less than 5, or to be exact 4.4. After the election of the Speaker they would have been able to command the confidence of the House and the country by a majority of 3.4.

My right hon. friend the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) declared some years ago that there had been an infamous gerrymander in the province of Ontario, for which the preceding Conservative administration was responsible. On that occasion he demonstrated very much to his own satisfaction, at least, that such was the case by taking two groups of constituencies in the province of Ontario. Each one of these groups had between 86,000 and 88,000 of a voting population. One group elected nineteen members more than the other group, and that was ample evidence for my right hon. friend and for all his followers, of course, that the conditions in Ontario at that time required radical and imperative amendment.

But, I would like to point out to him that the returns of the last general election indicate that a most infamous gerrymander has been perpetrated upon the Dominion of Canada by himself according to his own logic. I find that 563,547 votes elected 85 Conservative members and that 587,664 votes elected 133 Liberal members; in other words that each Conservative member of the House represents 6,630 of a voting population, that each Liberal member of the House represents 4,411 of a voting population, and that the average voting population for each member of the House, taking the whole vote, will be 5,280. I have no doubt that with that sense of justice which the right hon. gentleman undoubtedly possesses and which certainly he at all times is ready to claim, he will redress this evil, this injustice to the people of Canada and give us such a redistribution as will accomplish the results that should have been accomplished according to the standpoint which he took only a few years ago in this House.

But, in reply to certain statements which have been made not only by my hon. friend from Quebec county, but by the Liberal press of this country as to the expression of confidence which the government obtained from the electorate during the last contest, I would like to point out one significant fact; that is that if the government has received the confidence and endorsement of the country, my hon. friend from Westmoreland (Mr. Emmerson) has tenfold more received the endorsement of the electorate. Elected in the maritime provinces by a majority of 1,400, three