

presided over the proceedings of this chamber or participated in its debates he was true not only to the Laurier tradition in his point of view but, expressed himself in the Laurier manner with grace and dignity.

An estimate of Mr. Marcil's contribution to the life and work of this parliament would require perusal of its records and debates over forty sessions. To such a degree did he enjoy the unbroken confidence of his constituents that he was elected by them to ten consecutive parliaments. With the exception of two instances, so far as I have been able to ascertain, this record has not been surpassed. I believe Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself and the late Hon. John Haggart each sat in this House of Commons through eleven parliaments.

Mr. Marcil's return on so many occasions was a well deserved record of confidence and one which reflected equal credit upon his constituents. Last night I took occasion to glance through the pages of Hansard of the previous session in order to see what Mr. Marcil had said on the last occasion on which he spoke in this chamber. It was not surprising to discover that his last word was one of grateful acknowledgment to a minister of the crown for something the minister had been able to do which was of assistance to the constituency represented by Mr. Marcil and to adjoining constituencies. Confidence akin to that so fully given to Mr. Marcil by his constituents was also expressed in a very real way by his fellow members in this house of commons who elected him successively to the position of deputy Speaker and chairman of committees in 1905, and to that of Speaker in 1909, a recognition which was further emphasized by his appointment in 1911 as a member of the privy council of Canada. During the last four parliaments his fellow members of the Liberal party chose him as permanent chairman of the party caucus. In the course of his long life of public service, there was much else in the way of recognition of his abilities and attainments by municipalities, representative organizations, societies, universities and by governments in our own and other countries.

Mr. Marcil was in his 77th year. For a life so full of service of achievement and of well merited recognition, there surely can be either for him or for us no occasion for regret that he was taken away while still a member of the House of Commons and its oldest member in point of service. We shall miss the benefit of his long experience and wise counsel in parliamentary affairs, but to have had his faculties unimpaired to the end, and to have been spared the infirmities, disappointments and decline which too often are the

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

accompaniment of advancing years is something which of itself is in the nature of a benediction, and something we should not begrudge him who has been taken from us.

It was his to enjoy the fulfilment of the ancient promise—

"Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age
Like a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

As one whose life's endeavours were thus rewarded, his name will hold an honoured place in the history of this parliament, and his memory will continue to be cherished by all who knew him.

Mr. Speaker, this house will look to your Honour to convey to Mrs. Marcil and other members of the family an expression of its sincere and deep sympathy in their bereavement.

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we are reminded by what has been said, as well as by our own observation and experience, that the hand of death is ever with us. My first expression is one of deep regret that this house has lost the knowledge and experience of one who was its dean in point of service.

With respect to the character and extent of the service rendered by our late comrade and fellow member, I can add nothing to what has been said by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King). To have been a member of the house during ten parliaments is an almost unique experience. Indeed he was a connecting link between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; for he was elected Speaker of the house before most of us had a seat in the chamber. His life is a history of the years from 1900 to 1936.

I should like, too, to express my sincere sympathy to the right hon. the leader of the government, to his colleagues and the supporters of his administration, in the loss they have sustained both collectively and individually. They have lost a faithful friend, a warm supporter, a devoted follower, and a worthy exponent of the principles of Liberalism as he saw them. Faithful in the discharge of his duties, he was ever mindful of the claims of those who lived in the Gaspé peninsula. Those of us who have listened to him in the house will realize that while his convictions were strong he spoke but seldom, and expressed them in terms both moderate and persuasive.

Obviously it is not for one situated as I am to speak with any degree of authority as to the value and extent of the service he rendered to his party, and through it to the country. But I can say that on the other side of his life, that side we describe as