

Mr. ROWE: Evidently it had some effect, anyway.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, but it was a very poor effect; and no one felt that more keenly than the hon. member who has just interrupted.

May I now come to something which may be more pleasing to the leader of the opposition, and join with him in the wishes he has extended to the new members who have entered the house. May I join cordially in extending a welcome to them. I wish that all had come to this side of the house, but that is part of the uncertainty of politics.

In that connection my hon. friend has referred to some of the by-elections held recently. I do not see how he can derive much comfort from the support given his party. I hold in my hand figures with respect to the by-elections which have been held since we last met here. The first of these was in Pontiac. In that by-election the candidate for the Liberal party received 10,379 votes, while the candidate of my hon. friend and his party received only 7,487. That does not give my hon. friend much to crow about.

Mr. BRACKEN: Who lost the seat?

Mr. MACKENZIE: You did not get it.

Mr. ROWE: Who lost it? You lost it.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Give the figures for 1945.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Then I come to the next one. We have heard a good deal about Portage la Prairie. It is true that the candidate for the Liberal party received only 4,137 votes, while the candidate of the Progressive Conservative party received 4,805. That was not a very great difference in a constituency which, in the last parliament and in this one was represented by a gentleman who, to a great extent, was independent in his attitude, and who had succeeded the former leader of the Conservative party who had held the seat for something like thirteen years.

Hon. members opposite have been speaking about Portage la Prairie as a Liberal seat. That is giving little credit to their leader of some years ago who held it for the time I have mentioned.

Mr. BRACKEN: You called him a Liberal candidate.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: In the Parkdale by-election it is true the Liberals received 7,659 and the Progressive Conservative 8,212, but the Parkdale seat has been Conservative for as long as I can remember. Comparing what happened at this last by-election with

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what happened in previous elections it becomes quite clear that in Toronto and its environs my hon. friend and his friends are losing their former support while the Liberal party is coming up and up.

Let us come to the next seat, Richelieu-Vercheres. There the Liberal party candidate polled 11,984 votes. What did my hon. friend and his friends receive? The Progressive Conservative candidate polled 1,875 votes. That shows where the province of Quebec is getting to under the leadership of my hon. friend. There is quite a difference there between 11,984 and 1,875.

Let us take the totals for the four by-elections which should be the test as to whether hon. gentlemen opposite are gaining fresh strength and whether the Liberal party is losing any of its strength. The totals show that in those four by-elections the Liberals received 34,159 votes while the Progressive Conservatives received 22,379. If my hon. friend gets much comfort out of that, I am sure he is welcome to it.

Take it in percentages. The percentages indicate that the Liberals received 39.27 per cent or nearly 40 per cent of the votes cast in those four by-elections, whereas my Conservative friends opposite received 25.73 per cent. In other words, the Liberals received 34,159 out of the total vote of 86,982—I am taking in the votes polled for all parties—which is a little over 39 per cent of the total vote cast. When you compare that with the Liberal standing in the general election I think it will be seen that the Liberals have held their own in public confidence notwithstanding the misfortune that two seats have gone to the other side which I wish and which I think should have come to this side of the house.

Here I wish to say a word to my friends on this side and I want them to take it to heart. I want them to take a leaf out of the books of hon. gentlemen of different parties opposite and consider their own organization. If we had had the organization we should have had in those constituencies I venture to say that all four members would have come in on the Liberal side. I do not think I am far wrong in that.

While I am dealing in pleasantries, may I say a word of thanks to all the leaders opposite for having joined with me the other day in seeking to work out a procedure whereby the business of the house might be expedited. I have referred already to that, and I wish to repeat that, so far as this session is concerned, every effort will be made by the administration to cooperate with hon. gentlemen opposite. We hope that their