

me to know what I can say that will be of real importance or of interest to hon. members. I can only protect myself to a certain extent from perhaps just but severe criticism by reminding those members who, in common with myself, are new members, that they will soon be in my position. I know that the old members will be lenient in their judgment when I remind them of the occasion on which they were first placed in a similar position. I realized, Mr. Speaker, when I was asked to second the address in reply to the speech from the throne that the choice was not made from a personal standpoint but from the standpoint of constituency. On that ground I can justify the choosing of myself as the seconder of the address, but on no other ground.

The constituency which I represent has a unique history in the annals of Dominion politics. In the first election held in that constituency in 1871 there were two candidates, and the result of the polling was a tie. Owing to the fact that there was no provision for a casting vote by the deputy returning officer the two members were both sworn in and given a seat in this House. Another reason is that the constituency was represented, as every hon. member of this House knows, by one of the greatest men that Canada has ever produced, and who will always be regarded as such. I refer to the fact that the late Sir John A. Macdonald was returned by the electors of Portage la Prairie in 1878. To be represented by such a man is a distinction that any constituency can be proud of. I do not wish to go too much into detail, but I must mention one or two others. Sir John A. Macdonald was followed by a gentleman who is a friend of all the old members of the House and who has been a friend of every member in this House. Our constituency was represented for years by Robert Watson, now Senator Watson. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that the west has ever realized the work that Senator Watson did on behalf of that constituency during the long years when he was a voice crying in the wilderness, when he was the only Liberal member west of the great lakes. He was followed by a gentleman who was quite prominent, although not from a political standpoint. I refer to Dr. J. G. Rutherford, a Scotchman with a big heart and a bitter tongue, but he was a man above others, and as an official in the Department of Agriculture I think gave more to this Dominion in connection with animal husbandry than any other official has done at any time. Following him, at a later date, the constituency was

honoured by having as its representative the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen, a warm personal friend of mine and a gentleman possessing great ability. In twenty years we disagreed on one thing only, but from a House point it was rather important. As to whether he was right or I was right I do not know. We had our own opinions—perhaps posterity will decide we were both wrong. But as I think of all these gentlemen who have represented the constituency, whom I cannot hope to equal in the matter of ability, it makes my task doubly hard. For these reasons I wish to thank the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and his colleagues for the honour they have conferred on the constituency through its humble representative.

It is also most fitting, Mr. Speaker, that I should congratulate you upon your election to your present position. It was not necessary to hear the words of commendation expressed the other day by hon. members of this House, because your reputation is not at all restricted to this part of Canada, but is as well known in the west as in the east. I sincerely congratulate you. I wish also, on behalf of the western portion of the Dominion especially, to congratulate the country on the fact that we have now with us Lord Willingdon as the representative of His Majesty the King. His long and distinguished career is a guarantee that the bonds of friendship and loyalty existing between this country and the motherland will be strengthened as the days go by, and I am satisfied that in the discharge of his duties he will be ably assisted by his gracious consort, Lady Willingdon, and that she will endear herself to the hearts of Canadians, as her predecessors have done in the past.

In connection with the bond of empire it is fitting that I should congratulate the right hon. Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) upon the prominent part they took in the conference from which they recently returned, and the favourable position in which they placed our Dominion in connection with the affairs of the empire. If some years ago, or some months ago, I could have foreseen that I was likely to occupy my present position I might have devoted more time to the consideration of Dominion politics as a whole, but not expecting such an occasion to arise, I must confess that my interest in Dominion politics has been largely confined to those questions which interest us in the western provinces. This attitude was not taken from the standpoint of sectionalism, but because we felt that we required certain