

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Before proceeding to discuss the questions opened up in the speech from the Throne, allow me to congratulate the new members of this House who have been entrusted with the somewhat delicate task of presenting the programme of the government to this honourable House, on the manner in which the task has been performed. Although the mover of the address spoke in a language with which I am not familiar, yet it was evident that he has a graceful command of his mother tongue; and unless I am much mistaken I predict that the hon. gentleman will, as time passes, give undoubted evidence of his ability to participate in our discussions in the English language. In the case of the seconder, it was to be expected that his long experience in public life would enable him to import much wisdom into the discussion of the questions of the day. In view of the large number of vacancies which have recently occurred in this House, there is much consolation in the reflection that a very considerable voice in the choice of new members must necessarily rest with the hon. Minister of Justice, who is well known to have long established and definite views regarding the qualifications requisite to merit a call to the Senate. Turning to the Commons *Hansard* of 1875, page 405, I find the hon. gentleman using the following words:

Who are you likely to find composing the second Chamber? Is it the artisan: the agriculturist: the lawyer of good standing? No: You get none of these. You find a few wealthy merchants and retired bankers and defeated politicians and when you go beyond this list you get nothing.

I have not the pleasure of personal acquaintance with any of the gentlemen recently called to this honourable House, but appreciating the scientific loyalty to principle which guides the action of the hon. minister, we may take it for granted that no wealthy merchant, no retired banker, and no defeated politician is found amongst them, and that they are all eminent agriculturists or artisans or lawyers of good standing. I am far from expressing opinions adversely to the fitness for seats in this House of wealthy merchants, retired bankers and defeated politicians. On the other hand, I acknowledge a fellow feeling for a defeated politician, having gone through the mill myself. I merely desire

to point out to hon. members the great advantage of having a minister who, we are sure, is guided by so high a standard in choosing members of the Senate. There is another point in which the Minister of Justice has had very well defined views. In 1875, the hon. gentleman said:

It was said by a gentleman who when appointed to the Senate found himself among gentlemen very much his senior in years, that he expected to be with those who lived two or three generations ago, but to his surprise he found himself with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when he took his seat in that Chamber.

In view, therefore, of the well known consistency of the Minister of Justice, I hope that when the mover of the address, makes a reconnaissance of the House he will not be guilty of the unpardonable indiscretion of classifying such blooming youngsters as the hon. Minister of Justice and the seconder of the address as representatives, in this House, of the patriarchal dispensation. The same consideration will, I trust, enable the whole of us to divest ourselves of the idea that the voice of the hon. gentleman from Sunbury (Mr. Burpee) has reached us from the place of spirits of departed politicians.

In considering the address with which this session has been opened, for the convenience of discussion it might not be amiss to group these various sections in such a way as would prevent many repetitions, and I find therefore that the first, sixth, seventh, eleventh and thirteenth sections of this speech from the Throne may be described as the prosperity clauses. Papers supporting the government, when speaking of this subject, talk of the Laurier prosperity. I have no doubt that there is a good deal of prosperity within the ranks of the Cabinet, but it is going a little too far to attribute whatever degree there is of prosperity in the country to the premier and name it after the premier of the country. The first of the clauses refers to the remarkable increase of the volume of trade, and the exports and imports. This is a point which has been dwelt on by my hon. friend who seconded the address at some considerable length, and he presented some figures to the House which are certainly a subject of congratulation to the whole of us. There is no question about it that we are in the midst of a season of very general and widespread prosperity, but we are