

and concise as the official speech itself. I must first state that I am pleased to offer my congratulations to our new Speaker who has all the qualifications required to do honour to himself and to the Senate in the performance of his important duties, and will preside over our deliberations with wisdom and dignity, kindness and impartiality. It is a great honour to be called to preside over such an important body, composed of men who have grown old in the service of the country, and this honour must have been deserved by a laborious and honourable life.

Congratulations and regret are like joys and sorrows, often mingled in the affairs of life, and I cannot help regretting the retirement of the hon. gentleman who has been for so many years the leader of this House and who seems to take pleasure in defying the ravages of time and in developing, beneath the snows of winter an eternal youth.

The hon. gentleman will enjoy in a well deserved rest the sturdy and happy old age promised to those who have faithfully served their God and their country, and whose life has been honest, useful, laborious, benevolent and virtuous. Happy, thrice happy, those who like the venerable gentleman can in the evening of their life look serenely, without regret, over half a century filled with good actions and with domestic and public virtues. In all the high positions which he has occupied, he has done his duty without fear or reproach, and he has displayed a variety of knowledge and aptitudes which enabled him to fill all vacant positions in the cabinet, and to make people forget those who were missing. He has become what I might call a public utility in the political and governmental field. Fortunately he remains with us still, and he will continue, in a more serene atmosphere, to sit in this House and to help us with his advice and experience.

The regret we feel because of his retirement is lessened by the thought that he is replaced by one of his old war companions, a veteran of our political battles, by a man whose talent and high culture are much appreciated. In the powerful generation which has brought forth Macdonald, Cartier, Blake, Tupper, Mackenzie, Mills,

Hon. Mr. DAVID.

Thompson, Bowell, Laurier and many other distinguished men, he stood in the front rank; in that grand constellation which has illuminated the lights of our political world. He has been a bright star that still continues to shine. Soldier, or rather one of the commanders of the old guard, he will be assisted by one of the chiefs of the young body guard, who presided over this chamber with so much tact and intelligence in the last parliament; a man in the prime of life, whose tireless activity and electric and vigorous eloquence will no doubt create much animation in our debates.

From the Speaker's chair, where his activity was restricted, he comes back into this arena on which more than once he seemed to cast longing looks. He comes back to take his place in the first rank of the combatants, with experience and aptitude matured by study and observation, with an abundance of ideas, of sentiments and projects which will be highly beneficial to this House and to the country.

As the hon. members of this House may entertain a doubt if I continue in the same strain, whether I intend to comment on the speech from the Throne, I shall instantly proceed to consider it.

His Excellency commences in a most happy way by thanking Divine Providence for having given to our country the favour of an abundant harvest. It is not the only favour that we owe to Providence. God is merciful to Canada. He seems to take pleasure in bestowing His favours upon us, in keeping away from us the calamities and disasters which bring desolation to other countries, and in sparing us the troubles which threaten the peace of the world. Whilst other nations impoverish themselves by manufacturing ammunition and engines of war to destroy each other and cover the earth with ruin and blood, we build cities and railways, settle our lands, and develop the immense resources of our country, and our prosperity allows us to assist the unfortunate all over the world and to offer them a refuge, a home where they can be happy and prosperous provided they be industrious and law-abiding.

His Excellency speaks in high terms of the tercentenary festivals, of their character and significance. There is no doubt that they have given evidence of the feelings of