

tion of men willing to do their best to administer the affairs of this country at the critical stage that we are now at, let us give them every assistance we can. I have passed the stage when I regard all or most men with suspicion. It is only the odd man who is to be suspected. Most men are, in my judgment, endeavouring to do the best they can under Heaven, and the Lord knows it is a man's job being a minister of the Crown. He can hardly call his soul his own, let alone his time. The marvel is that men choose such slavery, but they seem to do it. The responsibility is on the country to give the men who are willing to serve the country a fair chance. Let us not treat them with suspicion. Let us not misinterpret their motives and suspect unjustly that their motives are corrupt and not decent. It is that sort of thing that keeps good men out of public life. Self-respecting men will not pay the price of the sacrifice of their self-respect in order to enter the public life of this country, and I do not blame them.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

After Recess.

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. R. L. RICHARDSON (Springfield) (resuming): Mr. Speaker, the adjournment at six o'clock gave me an opportunity of glancing over some notes I had made. It is usually my practice to make elaborate notes and then condense them on an envelope, and then forget all about them until I have finished speaking, and I see that I omitted one or two points this afternoon. I have spoken about the partisan soil of Canada being unable to produce statesmen. I dwelt at considerable length on that very important fact, and I want to emphasize it once more. It is my deliberate conviction, born of close observation, that owing to the partisan feeling, the absolutely silly partisan feeling that passes all understanding which has prevailed in this country for the last thirty or forty years, it has been almost impossible to raise a statesman in this country. If one "happened" it was merely the result of fortuitous circumstance, and if such a one attempted to preach the gospel of service to his country and to take high ground generally, he was usually regarded as a crank and a dangerous man, and promptly relegated to oblivion. Take the case of the Hon. Edward Blake who, in my judgment, is the greatest son Canada ever had. He knocked at the door of his country offering his splendid

[Mr. Richardson.]

services for a quarter of a century, and yet, notwithstanding his magnificent ability, notwithstanding his Liberalism and desire for service, the deliberate verdict of this country time after time was "Give us rather Barrabas," and this country has had to some extent a Barrabas after Barrabas, figuratively speaking. Consider for a moment the colossal mistakes that have been made in this country—the hundreds of millions, for instance, that have been poured into the lap of railway exploiters, until to-day we have on our hands an appalling mess which, unless we sail very carefully, may drag the country down. I shall not take the time to-night to recount the tremendous mistakes that have been made. One unfortunate thing is that the moment a man gets a position in this country, whether he be a great man or not, the people of this country place a halo about his head and our newspapers break into fulsome adulation. And yet, men are very much alike. With the exception of yourself, Sir, and a few others that I might name, there are really no great men in Canada to-day. Men are just mediocre, and fulsome adulation simply destroys them. It simply raises opposition against them, and encourages those disposed to criticise to criticise too harshly.

Now that I am on my feet I should like to say a word or two to the Canadian people. I should like them to get rid of the idea that two or three or a dozen men embody all the wisdom of the country. Why, in my judgment, the very best men of the country are excluded from office. They would not pay the price, would not consent to the sacrifice of self-respect, in order to attain a position in public life. You, Sir, I suppose, have been a candidate in many elections, and must have some idea of the methods that have been employed in the past. If you have not, I am sure hon. gentlemen opposite have. Who could get an Edward Blake to run around shaking hands with his constituents and singing such songs as "For you I am praying," accompanying himself on the melodeon as certain hon. gentlemen have done who have gained seats in this House in past years. The methods that have had to be employed, and which I assume are employed to some extent to-day, to get a seat in this House are such as would entirely turn the stomach of the average man, and that is why good men have been excluded from the service of their country. Mackenzie, for instance. How sweet the name Mackenzie sounds in every