

all in my power to help—not the temperance societies alone—but it seems to me that it is possible to protect the people by the introduction of certain measures which would render the trade in liquor more difficult than it is to-day, either by a change in the duty paid upon liquors, or some other prohibitive measure. When the proper time comes we shall have an opportunity of expressing our views on this point, and I certainly think there is nothing which calls for the action of the Government more than this subject.

We are promised a measure for the assimilation of the laws affecting the electoral lists, and I thoroughly approve of such a step, assimilation of the laws being most desirable in my judgment. It is true that we number different Provinces in this Dominion, but at the same time there should be but one statute book for the whole Confederation; we should find there what is fitting and proper for Prince Edward Island, should provide for the needs and wants of Manitoba and British Columbia; therefore I welcome the measure promised by the Government on that point. I shall not continue my remarks at any greater length at present, but I certainly am pleased to see that, although the Speech is not very long, it promises a number of different projects by which not only our persons but our property will be protected; and under these circumstances I give my full concurrence to its adoption.

HON. MR. TRUDEL—I did not intend to address the House upon the subject of the Address, but the question raised by my hon. friend from DeLanaudière (Mr. Bellerose) is of such importance that I think a few words should be said by me in the same direction. It is hardly necessary that we should repeat again and again how unpleasant it is for us to come here year after year, and enter a protest, always the same, against what we consider to be a grievance. At present I only propose to read, with the permission of the House, a letter which I had the honor to address to the Hon. the Prime Minister of the Dominion, on the occasion of the last ministerial changes, that is, in July last. As everybody knows, the French language is the official language in the Confederation as well as the English, and yet we are put in one or other of the fol-

lowing dilemmas. Either this language is not of sufficient importance to be officially represented here in the Senate—the first House of the Dominion—either this language is not deemed worthy of being represented here on the treasury benches; or, on the other side, the Senate is not worth having representation in both official languages of the Dominion. We can hardly escape from one or other of these dilemmas, but it is my opinion that we ought not to admit either the one or the other. I may say here that, when I had the honor to submit to the Premier the letter which I shall shortly read, I reserved to myself the right to place my views before the public upon the first opportunity, but in fact I did not intend to read them now; I think, however, that the position taken by hon. gentlemen on the other side obliges me to quote these expressions, which reflect my opinion of the matter. I must apologise in advance to the House if I take up some time in reading the letter, which is as follows:—

*** When Confederation took place, the Province of Quebec consented to accept the present basis of representation in the House of Commons—to wit, representation based on population—against which she had fought with so much energy, under its leaders Sir J. A. Macdonald and Sir G. E. Cartier, on the express condition only, that the equilibrium between the different Provinces thus broken in the Commons, would be, to a certain extent, re-established by the Senate.

This was not a simple matter of form, it was understood that the Senate would present an efficient counterpoise, sufficient to secure to the less populous Provinces, particularly to the Province of Quebec, the complete integrity of their rights.

For twenty years the question of representation based on population having been the burning and vital question, Quebec could not consent to abandon the fruit of a twenty years struggle and stultify herself to the extent of accepting without reserve, without any guarantee, without restriction, without striking a single blow, a state of things which for twenty years our first statesmen had pronounced to be the death blow to our nationality and the ruin of our Province.

Therefore, the Senate was to be, for the Province of Quebec, as well as the group of the Maritime Provinces, the legislative body on which they could particularly depend for the safe-keeping of their rights; for, in the Senate alone they were to be on an equal footing with the powerful Province of Ontario. They were thus highly interested in maintaining to that body its full strength and prestige, and could not countenance its abdicating any power or prerogative; for so soon