

*HON. JOHN COSTIGAN'S SPEECH.*

For many reasons, we are pleased to be able to give our readers the complete discourse delivered by Hon. John Costigan during the debate on the Speech from the Throne. It is a noble evidence of thorough honesty and unflinching adherence to principles of right and justice. Mr. Costigan has represented the same constituency for a continuous term of thirty-six years, and has sat in the Federal Parliament since Confederation. His views, therefore, are of more than ordinary importance. Mr. Costigan has been a worthy representative of the Irish Catholics of Canada.—[ED.]

I have had the honour, Mr. Speaker, of a seat in the Canadian Parliament since the day the doors of that Parliament were first opened. I have seldom troubled the House with lengthy speeches, because I was, perhaps, not competent to interest the House with a lengthy speech. At the same time I claim that I have studied the convenience of the House in not inflicting myself more frequently upon it, and, therefore, I feel that I may rise now and ask the attention of hon. gentlemen for a short time while I say what little I have to say on the subject now before us.

Having sat in this House so long, I am proud to be able to say to-night that in my opinion the happy temper of the Parliament of Canada has not deteriorated. Even looking at the debate that has taken place, irregular in many ways as it is, I am happy to say that nothing has transpired to change my view on that point, and that, while subjects are discussed and references made here which might call forth very strong and very unpleasant expressions outside, no part of this debate has been offensive to any person within or without this House.

I find a difficulty in mapping out for myself the line that I should take in this discussion. But I will try to give expression to my views as they occur to me, and, beginning at the beginning, I may refer, at the first opportunity which I have of doing so, to the fact that I find myself on this side of the House instead of on the other side. On the 23rd of June last the elections went decidedly against

the party to which I have so long belonged. The Government of which I was a member was defeated in a very pronounced way. The policy however of that Government was sustained as clearly and definitely as it ever was in any previous election. Two principal features of the policy of the Conservative Government in the elections in June last were: first, the general trade policy, the policy of protection to the manufacturing industries of this country; and, secondly, the observance of the constitution of this country so far as it affected the rights of the minority in Manitoba. Now, I might have some difficulty in proving that our policy on the subject of protection was endorsed by the people of this country; but I think it is not beyond even my powers to establish that fact. That policy was clearly defined and laid down and voted upon in election after election during the previous seventeen years; it is confirmed by the commission appointed by hon. gentlemen opposite, which has gone over the country to inquire into the subject; and, so far as I have been able to draw any conclusions from the evidence given before that commission, I take it for granted that the policy of protection is the policy which the Canadian people still want.

Now, with regard to the Manitoba school question, I take the ground that our policy on that question was amply sustained by the electors of this country, and I undertake to prove that assertion, in this way. Take the different provinces; take Manitoba itself, go down through Ontario and Quebec—and “en