

to act as the constitutional link between Her Majesty the Queen and the government of Canada. May that chain that has been wrought so skilfully and that has done so much good service in preserving the constitutional liberty of the people of Canada never be broken. Hon. gentlemen I come from a distant part of the country, where the population is not so consolidated as it is down in the East, where we have not the same means of communication and have not the same opportunity of expressing our views upon the great public questions which affect us materially, and therefore it has been my habit since I have had a seat in this chamber, always to speak on the Address, where you have great liberty and license in discussion so far as the subject will permit. I may say this House has suffered during the last year from deaths rather more than usual, and we have had to welcome several new senators to take seats in this House. I am very glad, indeed, that the government did not put into practice the views that some members of the Liberal party have expressed, with reference to the total abolition of the Senate, and letting it die out gradually by refusing to make any further appointments. This augurs very well as to what the idea of the government may be as to this House. I desire expressly to welcome to this chamber a life long friend and neighbour of mine in the town from which I come, Cobourg. I refer to the Hon. Senator Kerr, who has been honoured by the government with a seat in this House. He has been a good neighbour, a kind friend, an upright, honest man, and a resident of Cobourg from his youth to the present day. To that extent I think the House is greatly benefited by having him appointed here by the government. We are called upon to discuss the policy of the government as enunciated in the speech from the Throne. This is the fourth session which has been held under this government, and they have now had that much time to decide what policy they propose to pursue, and how far they are going to carry out the pledges that they made to the country during eighteen or nineteen years of opposition. The speech as it has been prepared is put before us. The stereotyped expression generally used in criticizing the speech, is that it is strongest in what it does not contain, or written to conceal thought rather than express it. The first thing is that we

enjoy a very large degree of prosperity. I am very glad indeed that the government is able to put that in the Address. But the question of prosperity is comparative. To some people and in some localities the country may seem very prosperous; in other localities and to other classes the country may not seem so prosperous. So it all depends on how you feel and how you are individually prospering. My arguments have always been that under protection the distribution of wealth goes on unevenly, and the system of collecting wealth for a few has been the result of a protective policy, no matter what country it may be. That is a question in which also I have the warm support of the liberal party. I am only speaking of what they argued for before the country during the time they were in opposition. At a later period I will discuss as to how far they have put into operation the views they held and the promises they made to the people. So far as the province of Manitoba is concerned, I think it is always a matter of very great interest to the people of Canada to know how far we have prospered. Unfortunately, I am sorry to say, last year was not as good a year as the public were led to believe, or we ourselves anticipated it would be. A hot wave passed over our province in the beginning of July, and in some localities produced very disastrous results. You must understand that in Manitoba we have different localities. Around the city of Winnipeg the bottom lands are only 700 feet above the level of the sea. When you go west, where I reside, 200 miles west of Winnipeg we are 1,000 feet higher, and they are two different classes of soil, and the higher lands suffered to a considerable extent in consequence of the drought I speak of, while the lower lands, which promised a very large crop, did not suffer from the drought and had more moisture than we had, but they suffered from severe rain in the fall of the year during harvest to such an extent that a great deal of the wheat, was dampened and losses were sustained by the farmers in consequence of damp wheat which was not exportable, and had to be sacrificed at a low price and in some cases was really unmarketable. Damp wheat is not always an evil with us, because it is very good feed for stock, and farmers can turn it to profitable account in that way if they have the stock on hand to do it, but in