

the past, some of whom are still with us, will never skip that splendid period in the history of this country in which the energized soul and life of this confederation showed itself in every movement, every purpose and every project. The man who misses that, misses the gist and quality of early Canadian history, and he would be condemned to eat the husks for the remainder of his life if he made so grave a mistake. Sir, biblical history tells us of a celebrated character named Nebuchadnezzar who, residing amidst the luxuries of great Babylon, came, at a certain time, to think he had made it all, and lifted up his voice and said: Is not this great Babylon which I have builded. He suffered from something which has a long Greek name, and for that he was obliged to go out and eat grass for seven years with the beasts of the field. I present this terrible example to my right hon. friend and warn him lest a similar fate should befall him.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright). No doubt, Mr. Speaker, the debate up to the present has been one of a rather unusually instructive and interesting character, and I am free to say that all the various gentlemen who have contributed to it, from the mover and the seconder down to the gentleman who has just taken his seat, have distinguished themselves in their respective ways. I am free also, Sir, to confess that I am lost in admiration. I do not know which deserves the greatest credit—the tactical skill of the leaders of the Opposition or the sense of party loyalty and party discipline evinced by their supporters. Some of us perhaps were a little disposed to think that the hon. baronet, who leads the Opposition, was just a trifle verbose in his opening, but I am sure that I speak the unanimous sense of this side of the House when I tell him that we would have listened to him twice as long for the sake of his peroration and the incidents which followed.

Sir, the spectacle we had the pleasure of beholding on Friday night was one which, in a pretty long parliamentary experience I think, I may say, was equalled by few and surpassed by none, save on the one memorable occasion, about two years ago, when seven Ministers of the Crown saw fit to withdraw their advice from His Excellency in the interval between the presentation of the Address and the consideration thereof. Now, I am not able to speak with authority of the ceremonial which may attend the opening of the Conservative caucus, but I would just venture to suggest to the chairman of that institution, whoever he may happen to be, that if it conforms to the ritual which prevails on such occasions, I do not think he could do better than open the proceedings by a reference to that famous passage in Dr. Watts which, I dare say, hon. gentlemen opposite will remember, and which runs thus:

Mr. FOSTER.

Birds in their little nest agree,  
But 'tis a shameful sight,  
When children of one family  
Fall out and scratch and bite.

Now, while my hon. friend who has just sat down (Mr. Foster) has, as is customary with him, given us a display marked with great rhetorical skill, we cannot but feel that he is rather thrown away upon this generation.

Mr. FOSTER. A stiff-necked and rebellious generation.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. So you find it. I remember long ago, an editor (a naughty Reform editor it was this time) suggested that if the hon. baronet who leads the Opposition had lived nineteen centuries ago and practised the healing art in the city of Jerusalem, it was almost certain that Sapphira would have preferred him to Ananias every time. Similarly I may observe that I think my hon. friend opposite, the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) has come into this world about two thousand years too late. I do not think it would have been possible now, or even at that early date, to have constructed a philosopher out of him, even of the cynic kind, although he has some affinities thereto, but I am bound to say that, in my poor judgment, a most magnificent sophist has been lost in him.

Mr. FOSTER. The old sophist was a very fine gentleman.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Well, he was; and I am free to say, that the hon. gentleman, as a juggler with facts, as a deviser of innuendoes, as a twister and perverter of plain and obvious truths from their plain and obvious significance, might match any sophist of them all. He is facile princeps there.

But nevertheless, the hon. gentleman has still his moments of weakness. It was quite right of him to deny the soft impeachment levelled at him by my hon. friend from East York (Mr. Maclean), when he was charged with having produced that somewhat spicy article signed "Onlooker," in a journal of this city. But it was not discreet of him to reproach my hon. friend from East York with breach of journalistic confidence. I fear he gave himself away. Perhaps he will pardon me for making a suggestion. Of course, it is not for us to pry into the domestic secrets of the hon. gentlemen, but it is rumoured that the hon. gentleman opposite, and some parties with him, are rather disposed to dethrone the honourable baronet from his place of pride in favour of the hon. gentleman beside him. Permit me to say that I think that the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) might find that a very barren victory. He may find that the old lion is capable of being dangerous still. And, as Lord Byron remarked of