

The commission was kind enough to recommend, and the government was good enough to accept the recommendation, that in the first instance this plan should be put into operation in Essex county. That was appreciated, sir, not only by the members from Essex county but by all those who saw in that gesture definite evidence of the government's desire to help the progress and prosperity of that important part of Canada.

Behind it all is this thought, that added confidence is given by the fact that the government has expressed its willingness to guarantee, even to a limited amount, loans for the purpose of repairing and modernizing the homes of its citizens. After all, sir, one of the primary functions of government is to promote the morale of the people.

There is one other matter mentioned in the speech from the throne which, because of its high humanitarian aspects, I believe will receive the unanimous approval not only of this house but of all the citizens of this country. I refer, sir, to the promised legislation to provide for pensions for the blind at a lower age than seventy years.

I have referred with pride to distinguished men in high places who, by doing their duty well, have helped this country through. May I, from my place here and at this time, pay my highest tribute to the undaunted spirit of the people of Canada, which is triumphing over all resistance—the hundreds of instances of industries carrying on for years at a loss to maintain their employees so that eventually all might survive; the thousands upon thousands of employees who divided their working hours with others and who, when their earnings were down, took barely a living wage so that things might carry on: the all too many tragic thousands who earnestly sought and are still earnestly seeking the opportunity to labour and to earn—I trust their seeking will be over long before the term of this parliament is run; the myriads of persons on the land who, at shrunken prices and with failing yields, in the face of drought and disaster, re-sowed their fields each spring and each spring looked hopefully once more to the skies to send the rain, all with a fortitude quite unsurpassed in any land in times of peace.

It is this stoutness of the heart, this determined integrity of the mind, this "ils ne passeront pas" of the soul, that will conquer all.

The rains may beat us and the great mists  
blind us,  
The lightning rend the pine tree on the  
hill;  
Yet are we strong and yet shall the morning  
find us  
Children of tempest, all unshaken still.

Mr. J. C. VENIOT (Gloucester) (Translation): The house will doubtless understand the emotion I feel in undertaking the task I have had the honour of being entrusted with. Indeed, I could not but be deeply moved by the recollections of mingled joy and sadness evoked by the words of praise uttered Friday last by the right hon. the Prime Minister and many other hon. colleagues in speaking of the man who was at once my predecessor my father and my closest friend. For these kind and touching words of praise and sympathy I am profoundly grateful. I also thank from the bottom of my heart my honourable colleagues for the most cordial reception extended to me from all sides, without distinction of political parties.

The house will readily understand the delicate position of a member who, after listening to the funeral oration of his distinguished predecessor, is, two days later, called upon to speak for the first time in this parliament the threshold of which he has crossed by passing the tomb of his father, and who every day realizes more and more how serious an undertaking it is to try to replace the man who has just been so highly praised.

I am conscious that I shall never be blessed with the great mental capacity, the experience or the political judgment of the late member for Gloucester, but I shall at least have in common with him my devotion to the service of my country and my fidelity to the party he has so well served for half a century.

It was no doubt in order to pay a last tribute to the man for whom we mourn together that I was chosen to second the address in reply to the speech from the throne. It was also to pay homage to the electors of the county of Gloucester who, ever since the election of my venerable friend Senator Onésiphore Turgeon, have for thirty-six years, without interruption, sent Liberal representatives to the parliament of Canada and who, I hope, will long continue this fine tradition. But it was likewise to do honour to the 200,000 Acadians of the maritime provinces who bear living testimony to the tenacity and vitality of our race, and of which 137,000 are residents of New Brunswick, forming one-third of its population, with 34,000 in my own beautiful county of Gloucester.

I do not intend, Mr. Speaker, to delay by a long speech the more important business of the house. Too frequently have I heard deplored, and with some right, I think, the useless prolonging of certain debates, such as the one we listened to Friday afternoon on the oath of allegiance to the King, to allow myself to fall into the same error at this time when a short session is desired. Indeed it is the