

or to enjoy at least as much freedom as is accorded to later arrivals.

We, the colonizers of this country who have dwelt three centuries on this soil steeped in the blood of our missionaries and of our fathers who died in its defence, do we not deserve a happier lot? Our English fellow-citizens of Quebec realize this. So do a good many others.

If the Ottawa Parliament wishes to give an example of moderation and justice in insisting that all chief clerks possess at least some knowledge of French, we would soon see in all the English provinces a speedy end put to this unjust persecution of our language.

Confronted by the predicament in which we are placed by the arbitrary laws of Manitoba, of Ontario and elsewhere, is it possible to believe that a French Canadian can make the sacrifices asked of him to-day with the same heartiness and courage as does the English Canadians?

I think I have said enough about this and I return to my first question relative to the speech of the hon. member for Laprairie-Napierville.

There are several points on which I totally differ in opinion from the hon. member, and I do not wish to have everything he has said taken as Gospel-truth. First and foremost I disagree with him when he says: "The present Minister of Finance never having been a minister or even a member of Parliament, could not have had any experience."

To this I would answer, as the poet says:

To those to the manner born, valour need not wait on years.

It was not necessary that the Minister of Finance should spend all his life in Parliament in order to properly administer his department. He has recently demonstrated this to us in a masterly speech explaining the situation, and I think even the Opposition members were thoroughly convinced of this.

The hon. member for Laprairie-Napierville also said we had increased the public debt by 200 millions. I do not hesitate to say he has uttered an evident falsehood. On consulting the Canadian Year Book for 1913, I find the following on page 520: In 1911 at the date the Conservative party assumed office, we had a net debt of \$340,042,052. On March 31, 1914, the net debt was \$339,000,000. We had therefore decreased the debt by one million. These facts cannot be controverted.

The hon. member has also accused us of being the authors of the present war. It seems to me that had he looked at the facts

and the situation as it really is, he would have been forced to admit, as we do, that even had his party been in power the war must have broken out notwithstanding. The Liberal party could have neither prevented its breaking out, nor stopped it when once begun. The uselessness of these warships is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the fleets of England and France do not confine their efforts to holding the German navy in check, but have bottled it up completely.

The hon. member for Laprairie thinks it a crime that Mr. Bergeron should draw a salary from the Government. The hon. member for L'Islet (Mr. Paquet) who has just spoken has fully explained the matter and set it right.

I do not know whether the hon. member did it purposely, or that he misunderstood what he read. I am rather inclined to think he wished to falsify the figures in order to mislead the public. Mr. Bergeron received \$30 a day, which sum included salary and expenses.

The hon. member said, moreover, that besides his expenses Mr. Bergeron had charged up the cost of a secretary, of an automobile, etc. I do not know where the hon. gentleman obtained his information, but the expenses charged to the account of Mr. Bergeron are ten dollars a day, which sum pays the cost of vehicles, automobile, and of a secretary. All this is shown in the report of the Auditor General on page 48 of Hansard.

As regards Honourable Judge Doherty, the member for Laprairie has again misrepresented the facts. He claims that Judge Doherty draws an allowance of \$7,000 a year, whereas it is only \$4,666. I understand that ever since 1868 retiring allowances have been granted judges. The Opposition were in power for fifteen years. If this enactment regarding retiring allowances was unjust—and I must admit that I am not greatly enamoured of it, I am even strongly opposed to it—it seems to me his party should have abolished it. From the answer by the Minister of Finance to an interpellation by the member for Prescott (Mr. Proulx) on the 8th of March of the present year, it will be seen that in 1879, just as the Conservative party was coming back to power, the total amount of allowances paid retired judges was \$44,888.92, and in 1896, the closing year of the Conservative regime, the total had reached \$52,759.75. It will be noted, therefore, that in eighteen years the Conservatives had increased this allowance by not more than approximately eight thousand dollars. Things were therefore in statu quo. In 1911,