

all people. But I want to say that probably his entry into politics as the leader of a group will have a very good effect in this country, because it is an excellent thing for a number of people or a party to forge strongly ahead in the direction of lower tariffs; it cannot fail to have its effect upon those who are inclined to go the other way.

Mr. C. A. GAUVREAU (Temiscouata) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I should have abstained from joining in the debate on the Address, had not the Acting Prime Minister answered as he did to my question concerning Mr. Albert Sévigny.

I considered that the occasion was favourable for discussing that matter, and that the time had come to raise the question before its final settlement. But, Mr. Speaker, before broaching that subject, let me confess that the speech from the Throne at this session is a document quite in keeping with the Lenten season which is now on.

Never has anything so poor from the legislative viewpoint been submitted to the consideration of the House. It is true that this poor bill of fare comprises a joint of magnificent proportions: the Franchise Bill. However, while ignorant of its contents and judging solely from the record of its promoters I well foresee that only those members of Parliament favoured with the strongest constitution will be able to swallow that measure, while they must have the stomach of an ostrich to digest it.

In unison with my friend from Rimouski (Mr. d'Anjou), I raise my voice to protest in the name of the French race, against the forsaking of that admirable practice of calling on a French-speaking member to be the seconder of the Address in answer to the speech from the Throne.

From the earliest days, that ancient usage has always been held in honour in this House, and had it not been for the advent to power of a Union Government, the outcome of the wholesale theft of ballots, that practice would still hold good.

But, there is nothing to surprise us coming from an administration which has ignored the Constitution as well as old traditions and we would wonder how it is that they did not repeal that usage by Order in Council, as they have done for so many other things.

As a consolation we may reflect that in so doing they have saved our beautiful language the humiliating task of defending something which is indefensible—namely: the policy of this Government.

True, the Senate has been privileged as compared with the House of Commons, since the hon. gentlemen of that High Chamber were afforded the opportunity of listening to an eloquent speaker, the honourable Mr. Chapais. But there is satisfaction to be derived from the fact that the appointment of the Honourable Mr. Chapais to the Senate, is in itself a humiliation for the present Government. The Honourable Mr. Chapais was a recognized adversary of conscription; it is even stated that a year or two ago, he rejected indignantly an offer emanating from the then ministers of a seat in the Senate, as a protest against the almost devilish Bill of conscription which had been brought up before Parliament, not with a view to help win the war but for the purpose of stirring up in the English-speaking provinces an ill-feeling against Quebec.

The Government have thus partially confessed its blunder, by appointing to the Senate the very man who openly opposed conscription a few years ago.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is another aspect of this question to which I cannot refrain from calling the attention of this House. It is this: Mr. Chapais' appointment to the Senate consecrates a return as it were to the old practice of the double mandate, which we all believed to have been discarded forever.

I blame the Government for allowing Mr. Chapais, an accomplished and cultured scholar as he is, to occupy at the same time the position of legislative councillor for Quebec and that of Senator at Ottawa.

We heard the other day, the hon. member for Frontenac championing in this House the cause of the hon. Postmaster General. And involuntarily the well-known line penned by the poet occurred to my mind and I started exclaiming:

"How into pure gold was the vile metal transmuted?"

Comment en un or pur le vil métal s'est-il changé?

I shall not pick up a quarrel with the Postmaster General about that. It is the crowning honour for the hon. minister to have his cause championed by the member for Frontenac, the relentless slanderer of the French race in this House, and with such a certificate, the minister may give up his senatorship and have himself returned to the House in any constituency, but never in the province of Quebec.

In Ontario perhaps? We harbour strong doubts about it.