

*The Address*

really meant nothing in the world; it was only the text of a sermon at his hands—made it his boast that he was going to abandon Orders in Council and restore responsible government to a waiting people. Yes, my hon. friend is in office.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I am quite aware that hon. gentlemen opposite conceive that to have been really the only thing they ever had in mind. I must say their conduct through the campaign made it only too evident that the mere triumph of party was their ultimate ambition. They conceived that to be the whole purpose of politics. No principle can be said to have been decided in the late contest; if so, what was it? I pause for a reply; does anyone penetrate the silence? Was the principle of our railway policy decided? If so, will the hon. Minister of Justice tell us what the verdict was? Was the principle of our tariff policy decided? If so, will the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the hon. Minister of Justice just confer with the hon. Minister of Militia and tell us what the verdict was? No; carrying a campaign on in that way does go to the very roots of responsible government. The course pursued by hon. gentlemen opposite was that of adopting a platform in every constituency—any platform in any constituency moulded to suit what they believed would best appeal to that special district. Following a course of that kind in a campaign puts it above the power of any people to declare their will on any definite subject that comes before them. No; hon. gentlemen are there because, assisted by the influences that I described before the House rose, they succeeded in raising a veritable deluge of misinformation and misrepresentation a deluge that submerged the deliberate judgment of the people of this country. Hon. gentlemen rejoice in glee because of that success. Ah, let them rejoice; but those practices cannot be indulged in without thought of the penalty to come, without remembrance that the day of reckoning is sure to follow. I venture to suggest that as the hours of this session advance, still more as the weeks and months of this Parliament pass by, hon. gentlemen will come very definitely to the conclusion that more and more surely the day of reckoning is at hand. The people of this country, witnessing from every quarter of the Dominion how they have been deceived and how infamously pledges made to them have been broken—

[Mr. Meighen.]

because no matter what this Government does its pledges are bound to be broken—witnessing, I say, how they have been deceived and betrayed, will visit upon the heads of hon. gentlemen opposite the penalty that they have earned and from which I assure them they shall not escape.

Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my first word must be one of congratulation to you, Sir, upon having received the unanimous election of this House as its presiding officer. I only re-echo the sentiments we heard expressed on Thursday last when I say that hon. members, irrespective of party, feel confident that you will discharge the great responsibilities and obligations of this important position in a manner worthy of its highest traditions.

May I at once thank my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen) for the kind personal words at the beginning of his address. It is a pleasure to me to recall that some twenty-five or thirty years ago we were associated as fellow undergraduates of the same alma mater, and that since then, notwithstanding the severe strain that the differences of public life and opinion sometimes place upon personal relationships, we have continued our friendship unbroken. I reciprocate the good wishes he has expressed in reference to myself; indeed, I will go further than my right hon. friend and say that I hope he may be spared many years to fill the position which he now occupies.

I am very happy, Mr. Speaker, to join with my right hon. friend in the words of congratulation which he extended to the mover (Mr. McMurray) and to the seconder (Mr. Mercier) of the Address. As the right hon. gentleman has said, it is never an easy matter to address Parliament; it is always a difficult matter for one to speak in Parliament for the first time. But when that effort comes at the beginning of a new Parliament, it is indeed under circumstances the most trying and the most difficult with which a new member can possibly be faced. I think that all of us who have had the privilege of hearing the hon. member for North Winnipeg and the hon. member for Westmount-St. Henri this afternoon will feel that they were singularly fortunate in their broad grasp of public questions and in the vision they manifested in presenting their views. They bring to this House not only wide