

will be practically on an equal footing with the English language in this House. It affords me no little pleasure to feel that, in addressing myself to you, Mr. Speaker, in the language which I learned from my mother, that I am thoroughly understood by you who, as President of this hon. body, represent in your person the whole House. I also congratulate the House on the incident which has brought about your promotion—an incident which gave to your predecessor a still more exalted position. It enables me to express, without reserve, my unqualified appreciation of the appointment of yourself as our presiding officer. But, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing perfect in this world; in the most beautiful pictures there are always shadows; in the brightest sky there is always a cloud. There exists in this Chamber an excellent tradition that it is the privilege of every member, even under the circumstances in which I have the honor to be now, to state his views freely and fully. Permit me, then, to express my inmost thoughts upon this subject without reserve. While I congratulate the Government and this Chamber in having made such an excellent choice in the person of our new Speaker, I cannot help expressing the apprehensions which, in some quarters, have been aroused by that appointment. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the well-known modesty of yourself and your hon. colleagues in this House, the Minister of Militia and the Secretary of State, prevents you from seeing what a preponderance is given in the Council of the nation to the fortunate section of Ontario which has the advantage of possessing men of such superior ability, large influence and force of character as yourself and your two colleagues in this House, over other parts of Canada less favored and not represented in the Senate by such distinguished men. I repeat, Sir, that this has awakened in the minds of some of your brother senators' apprehensions that the equilibrium and equality which should be preserved as far as possible between the different provinces, would no longer exist. The Senate, it is well known, was designed to protect minorities; but what becomes of that equilibrium when the whole weight of such an enormous

influence as is represented by the three members of the Cabinet in this House is thrown into one scale of the balance? No other influence can counterbalance it, and this is why apprehensions are felt. I am sure that when the Speaker, and his two hon. colleagues in this House devoted their whole lives and their great talents to acquiring the knowledge and experience necessary to qualify them for the service of their country and to fit them to respond to the dictates of patriotism, they little dreamed that those very attainments would be a source of apprehension on the part of their brother Senators. But, as I have already said, there is nothing perfect in this world; there is always a cloud in the brightest sky, and what I have alluded to is but a cloud after all. In the Speech which it has pleased His Excellency to deliver to us, he states that he is happy to meet again the Parliament of Canada. It is pleasant to know that there exists between the representative of Our Gracious Queen and the representatives of our people perfect harmony. It is certainly a great advantage to any country when the representative of authority is in perfect unity of sentiment with the people. I have no doubt that this hon. House is equally happy to meet His Excellency at the opening of Parliament. The second paragraph of the Speech expresses a sentiment of gratitude to Providence for the abundant harvest of last year. I believe that it is a faithful interpretation of the sentiment of our people. Providence has blessed us with an abundant harvest, and prosperity is returning to the country. In this paragraph will be found, I hope (indeed I am confident), enough to relieve some of our hon. friends from the anxiety in which they were, that Sir John A. Macdonald's Government would encroach upon the rights of Divine Providence, and attribute the return of prosperity to his advent to power. That returning prosperity I do not attribute wholly to the policy of the Government, but I believe that they deserve a share of credit for having pursued a course which has enabled the people to avail themselves of every opportunity to relieve the country of the depression. Instead of folding their arms and leaving everything to Providence,