

lieutenant to the leader of the Senate. It is only just to say, and it gives me very great pleasure to say it, that the hon. gentleman, while presiding over the deliberations of this Chamber, illustrated very clearly the possibility of one going up from the field of battle, so to speak, to occupy a position involving the holding of the scales fairly, in dealing out equal treatment to friend and foe. We shall all look back with pleasure upon his term of office while occupying the high position as Speaker of this Chamber. I am sure we can extend our congratulations to the present Speaker on his appointment. His broad and varied experience during many years not altogether of public life but of semi-public life, peculiarly qualify him for the position in which he has been placed, and I am satisfied that he will preside over the deliberations of this chamber as acceptably as did his predecessor.

It is usual to congratulate the mover and seconder of the address in language indicative of their being new members, but circumstances are such that older members have been called upon to move and second the address. I congratulate the hon. senator from Mille Isles upon his cultured and finished address to the House and my hon. friend from Brockville upon his very practical views on the material interests of the Dominion.

In looking over the address, and its many subjects of interest it must be said they are not of a controversial nature and scarcely suggest a discussion at this time. There is, however, one particular clause upon which a few observations may appropriately be made in opposition to the position taken by the government in former years. The clause to which I refer is :

A little more than a year ago, the whole civilized world entered into a period of commercial and financial depression, which may not yet have completely spent its force; signs there are, however, that it is generally passing away.

It did occur to me that it was impossible in the Dominion of Canada that such a condition of affairs should arise without the government of the country being a party to it. Where was the magic wand of the present administration when this un-

fortunate condition of affairs presented itself before the people of Canada? I understood some years ago that the present administration raised their wand of magic, brought in prosperous times and announced to the people of Canada that for all time while they were in office this prosperity would continue. It seems to me it might have been dispelled to some advantage if they possessed the magic which the people of Canada for some years have been educated to believe rested with the government. In this connection it might not be out of place to look back upon the financial administration of the country, with a view to ascertaining to what extent the government may have been culpable in not being in a position to meet the financial depression and the results which naturally flow from that depression. It does not require very great business sagacity to make preparation in prosperous times for periods of commercial depression; but my hon. friends seem to have overlooked entirely the changes which take place in trade, and we have gone into this depression as a country in a very much worse position than could possibly have been anticipated. I ask the House to consider a few figures which are obtainable from the blue book, and which indicate the unfortunate position in which we find ourselves to-day at a time of falling revenue and rising expenditures. I find in the official 'Gazette' of the 31st December that the decrease in the revenue during the nine months of the current year, which ended 31st December, reached \$11,475,000. I think we might safely say that by the 31st March, which will be the end of our financial year, the decrease in revenue from that of last year will have reached the enormous sum of \$15,000,000. I recall when the Minister of Finance presented his budget at the last session of parliament he announced that the revenue for the then ending year was \$96,000,000; that the estimated decrease in the revenue would not be more than \$6,000,000, thus estimating that we should have a revenue of \$90,000,000. It must be quite apparent to hon. gentlemen that the revenue for the current financial year ending on the 31st March next will not much exceed \$80,000,000, and yet, notwithstanding the estimated decrease