

have the representation that you would desire. It cannot always be attained, and on this occasion we have not been able to accomplish it. If the leaders of the party themselves, who represent public opinion in Lower Canada, were as unreasoning as my hon. friend is — and I am glad to say they are not—we should hear from them in the same way that we hear from him — constantly in season and out of season—of there being no representative of the French Canadians in the Ministry in this Chamber. But they understand the difficulties which governments constantly have to deal with. They understand how hard it is to always have a representative of the French Canadians in the Government in this House, and they admit that it is the desire of the Government to accomplish it, and they are willing to give them credit for desiring to do so whenever a good opportunity occurs. Although, like some hon. gentlemen, I am getting advanced in years I hope to see that accomplished, and to see, as my colleague in this House, or the colleague of those representing the Government in the Senate, a French Canadian member. In that event no one will be more pleased than I shall be; no one will extend him a more hearty welcome, and no one can desire more than I do to see that object of the French Canadian representatives accomplished. That is a position entirely tenable, but the other position which the hon. gentleman assumes is quite untenable. He urges that there should be constantly a French Canadian gentleman as Speaker either in this House or in the other Chamber: I say that is quite untenable. That was a good rule in the old Parliament of Canada, where there were but two Provinces represented, and the alternation from English to French, and French to English, was quite fair and proper; but to say now that in every Parliament there must be, either in this House or in the other branch of the Legislature, a French Canadian Speaker, is to claim something which, I am sure, the majority of the French Canadian representatives in both Houses will not demand. According to the rule which the hon. gentleman would lay down, there would be constantly a French Canadian representative in the Chair here, or in the Chair in the other House, and

where would be the opportunity of putting in the Chair the gentleman who fills it now? Where would be the opportunity of appointing to that position, here or in the other House, a gentleman from the Maritime Provinces, or Manitoba, or British Columbia, if Quebec is constantly to have a Speaker in either branch of Parliament? I am quite sure that the hon. gentlemen from Lower Canada do not take that view, and that it is confined to what I must believe is the unreasoning assertion of the hon. gentleman in favor of his nationality—a nationality which we all respect, and no one more than I do, and which I am desirous, and have always been desirous of seeing fully and fairly represented in public life. And it is fairly and fully represented in public life at this moment. There may be no French Canadian gentleman on the Treasury Benches of this House, but let the hon. gentleman study the report which has been laid upon the table of the House this session and he will find that there is an abundance of French Canadians in the public service here and elsewhere. There is nothing to be said in favor of the English speaking community because they do that. They do so willingly I am sure; but if they did not do so willingly, the French Canadians are strong enough, and resolute enough, to insist upon it. But, happily for us and for the whole community, there is no necessity for asserting rights which we are most happy to yield to them; so I say one of those positions is quite tenable, and one which I will do all in my power to see maintained and carried out; but the other seems to be, and I say it with due deference to those who hold a different opinion, an untenable position, the assertion of which, I hope, is almost confined to the hon. gentleman from DeLanaudiere. The hon. member is rather apt to vaunt his courage in asserting the rights of his nationality in this Chamber. I do not know what the hon. gentleman may think on that point, but I know in the ways and habits of thought in which I have been brought up we do not consider it a proof of courage to attack absent men. We consider it rather the reverse; and we are restrained by a feeling of honor and delicacy from attacking those who have not the means of replying. We would fain see before us the men that we attack.