

*Canadian Centennial*

The young people were dissatisfied with the administration of ancient Rome and they had gone, by the thousands, to live on a hill nearby; they refused to do any work and to contribute their spirit of enterprise and neophyte zeal to the good administration of Rome. Menenius Agrippa told these young people about the legend of the limbs revolting against the stomach.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it often happens that certain members of the Canadian confederation are inclined, not to revolt perhaps, but to indulge in severe criticism which is liable to weaken the central power, in other words, the stomach of our confederation. It is for this reason that I say we should get rid of a certain regional turn of mind, which is based on a shaky principle.

I also remember, because of a certain analogy, the story of Cato the Censor. Whenever he spoke in the forum he invariably ended his speeches by these words: "Hoc censeo", meaning I so decide and "delenda est Carthago", meaning, Carthage must be destroyed. So, I believe that we should avoid adopting the spirit of Cato the Censor and strive to keep the stomach of the nation, the central power, solid and strong, without giving up the idea that we must preserve the strength of the provinces. However, there must be a certain equilibrium. I believe that if the members refuse to supply the Canadian stomach with the required food, the stomach will not be able to distribute what is required for the strength of the limbs and the limbs will find themselves in a dire predicament. They will be weakened because of the loss of strength of the stomach.

Mr. Speaker, the central government must be maintained. We should not try to destroy it by accusing it of overly centralizing tendencies and by repeating statements which sound like medicine taken out of a drawer, not only in the federal field, but in the provincial field as well. We should get rid of that parochial mentality which weakens and hurts us, not only at home but abroad.

We should get rid of that parochial outlook, not only so that we will be able to celebrate in a glorious fashion this confederation centennial, but also to maintain our association in strength and hardiness until the end of time.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other things which could maintain the strength of confederation. Among other things, the satisfaction from the intellectual and sentimental point of view as well as from the point of view of the soul of its inhabitants. The Canadian nation is made up of many races whose

number will increase. The more they learn to understand one another the more they shall agree among themselves and the more they understand one another the stronger will that community become. Each one of the races which make up the Canadian community has its traditions which must be safeguarded, which must be maintained so that each may remain strong and preserve its identity.

In the province of Quebec, we have traditions which unfortunately we often neglect. I heard some one the other day speak about men meeting for combined work to help out a neighbour making a "bee". Well, that is a tradition that we French Canadians must preserve. There is also the "guignolée", a group of people who go out to collect donations. And I come finally to the tradition which is perhaps the most significant, the oldest, and in any case the holiest of all, that of the paternal blessing on New Year's day. If I mention that one, it is because I feel that the house might very well be sitting until New Year's eve. The families of the province of Quebec wish to maintain this tradition and are looking forward to receiving the paternal blessing; so, how will they react to the absence of the father at the time of this most important ceremony which we are anxious to maintain among French Canadian families?

There is some reason for concern, for us and certainly also for our people. I do not want to criticize at this time, but I hope that we French Canadians may again this year go home and give our blessing to our children, as has been the custom of our forefathers since Canada has been Canada.

I shall stop now, Mr. Speaker. Other hon. members may want to speak now. I wanted to strike another note in discussing the motion of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, whom I shall commend again. I wanted to strike another note, because I thought the motion was much more serious. If we go on at the present speed with our industrial, labour, agricultural and professional improvements, there might be no reason for accelerating. However, I believe we should call our people's attention to the intellectual, spiritual and moral aspects of the matter. The more we strengthen our confederation, the stronger we shall be to fight any outside enemy.

We must also keep on making sacrifices and show devotion to duty, in order to be stronger intellectually and morally.

I am sure that everything that has been done until today—and I refer in particular to our Canada Council—is bound to instil in our people a genuinely Canadian character,