

I had intended to occupy has gone by. I shall therefore not refer to the other matters mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. I must apologize to this House for having taken up so much of its valuable time, and shall conclude by simply making the usual motion for the adoption of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. P. R. L. MARTINEAU (Montmagny). (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, when asked by the leader of the House to second the motion which my hon. friend from East Prince (Mr. Bell) has just introduced in such able and eloquent terms, I felt that a compliment was being paid to my constituency, and at the same time that I was also entitled to crave the indulgence and the kind attention which all members on both sides of the House are wont to bestow on a new member speaking under such circumstances.

Although merely a representative of the French-speaking minority, still I stand here to-day as the mouth-piece of the majority of the electorate of this country, whose feelings and political creed I am voicing; while at the same time, I am justly proud to be the mouth-piece of a province wherein loyalty to the British Crown displays itself in deeds still more than in words. And although the most humble of the members of this House be a French Canadian, I cannot forget that one of the most illustrious members of Parliament, the leader of this House, claims the same origin, and notwithstanding that, his name, throughout the length and breadth of the land, and among all classes of the community, is a rallying-word and but another name for victory. In him are to be found the distinguishing characteristics of his race, and of his people who are justly proud of him. And he is a living illustration of this fact, namely, that if the rights of the French Canadians are now recognized and respected in this country, it is owing to their having known how to use them in the public interest with firmness, tempered with discretion and tact, for the greatest good of the state. We contribute, Sir, our own quota of labour; we contribute our own share of energy towards the wealth and welfare of the country in the spheres of trade, of industry, of agriculture, as also in the realm of the fine arts; but also, I am glad to say, nobody ever bargains with us about our share of credit. Therefore, Sir, I confidently, on behalf of the French-speaking minority, offer these few remarks in seconding the address in reply to the Speech from the representative of our Gracious Sovereign.

Let me say, at the outset, that within the year that has just passed, two very important events have transpired: we have parted with one representative of Her Majesty and have received the nobleman who recently arrived amongst us as the representative of Her Majesty in the Dominion. It is no flattery, but the sober truth to say that the Imperial Government, in the pre-

sent incumbent of this high office could not have made a more judicious selection, and one best calculated to attenuate the universal regret experienced by our population at the departure of Lord Aberdeen. In this fortunate selection the mother country could not give us a more tactful illustration of the watchful interest she ever takes in our welfare. From the very first moment of their arrival in our midst, it was our privilege to admire the graceful urbanity displayed by their Excellencies in the discharge of their august role as representatives of Her Imperial Majesty in this wide Dominion. Still, we cannot pass under silence the fact that it was under the high administration of Lord Aberdeen and also during the beneficent sojourn of Lady Aberdeen in our midst that Canada did, thanks to the enlightened policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and of his colleagues, enter upon a new era of progress and unheard of prosperity. But, on the other hand, the return of Lord Minto has been hailed with enthusiasm by the Canadian people, so much the more as he has brought back a just appreciation of the advantages and resources of Canada already acquired in his previous sojourn in this Dominion, and an accurate knowledge of the needs of our country, which is a token of still greater success and perhaps also the happy omen of the ratification of a new Washington treaty.

As this is the first time that I address this House, I avail myself of the opportunity to loudly proclaim in the name of my constituents the confidence which we repose in the men who now preside over the destinies of this Dominion.

Already, in the course of the previous sessions of this Parliament, since the electorate of this country has endorsed the Liberal policy, the present Administration have through their conciliating methods, achieved truly astonishing results. Scarcely does one remember now that but a few years ago the school question was threatening to kindle a creed and racial war. What costly law suits and imprudent appeals to religious and national prejudices failed to accomplish for years, this Administration achieved at the end of a few months through conciliation and by appeals to the sense of justice, without provincial autonomy being in the least sacrificed. It is also within the recollection of this House that a tariff war, carried to its extreme limits, was threatening our national prosperity and overburdening our people. Here again progressive reforms and clever negotiations with the mother country have given a new impetus to our trade and our industry and are stimulating business to an un hoped for degree. One of the most happy results of that policy has been to put a stop to the exodus which, in years past, had proved the curse of our country and to induce our immigrants to settle down in our midst, instead of finding their way over the border to strengthen our rivals.