

to be on the basis of population they could only claim that every third or fourth speaker should be a French Canadian. Those considerations, I am sure, have been forgotten by the hon. gentlemen, and I desire to bring them forward not in any spirit of hostility to the object which he may have in view, or which the hon. gentlemen from DeSalaberry may have in view, but merely as stating a fact, that we are at all times willing to see those gentlemen fairly represented on the floor of this House and in the Government of the Dominion, and to show that there is a wish to give them a fair representation. How is it possible that a Province represented by sixty-five members in the popular branch of the legislature, and which has great influence in the Commons should be slighted by the Government; it is an element which every Government must consider for its own peace and for its own safety, and must not be neglected. It is idle to say that they are neglected; it is utterly impossible that any Government on this side of politics or on that side of politics can overlook that energetic, intelligent, and strong-minded people.

I hope my hon. friends from the Province of Quebec, will believe that as far as this Government is concerned, nothing would give them greater pleasure, and personally nobody could derive more satisfaction and comfort and assistance, than I could, in having in this House, a French Canadian colleague, who would address the French members in their own language, and I am sure that I quite speak the sentiments of my colleagues when I say that if other things permitted, nothing would give us greater pleasure than to have a French Canadian member of this House in the Government.

I desire also to say this in replying to the remarks made in reference to the hon. gentleman who presides over this House as Speaker, that that hon. gentleman occupies his seat at the earnest instance of his colleagues during the present Parliament. The House will bear in mind that during the four years of the existence of the previous Parliament, for the first session of this House, the chair was occupied by the hon. Mr. Wilmot. During the second session, the hon. gentleman who now occupies the chair was, unhappily ill, and his place was filled for the

time being by the hon. gentleman who now sits behind me (Mr. Botsford,) and it is only during the last two sessions that we have had the advantage of the commanding presence and the dignity of demeanor of the hon. gentleman who so worthily fills the chair. But it is not only in reference to the services the hon. gentleman has rendered the country in presiding over this House, but more particularly in reference to his services in the capacity with which he has for some time past presided over the Department of the Interior, that we were so anxious to see him continue his position as Speaker of this House. That is our feeling, and I hope that is the feeling of the Senate generally, and that the House does not participate in the criticism of the hon. gentleman from DeLanaudiere, for I do not think he intended it in that light, and I hope that every member in this House is glad to welcome the hon. gentleman again as their Speaker.

The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition paid a tribute, which I heartily join in, to the mover and seconder of the Address. The duty which they have discharged, and discharged so well, is one that is supposed by many to be very easy and simple, but it is not my opinion. It has always seemed to me to be a very difficult duty, and when it has been discharged so successfully as it has been on the present occasion, it is always worthy of the tribute which the hon. leader of the Opposition has paid, and in which I heartily concur.

The hon. gentleman criticised that part of the Speech which says that the country is prosperous and contented, and that commerce and immigration are increasing, and so on, and apparently almost regretted that he did not find that we attributed those great advantages to our own exertions. Could my hon. friend have found any paragraph that would have carried with it the impression that the Government assumed that they had of themselves brought about all those advantages, no doubt he would have been more contented than he is at present. The Government are not so foolish as to lay claim to being the cause of all the prosperity which is undoubtedly to be found at present throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion, for the country, perhaps with a few exceptions