

before concluding the business of the late session, in accordance with parliamentary procedure I announced to the house certain changes which had taken place in the ministry since this house had adjourned some six months earlier. To-day I take it as a part of my duty as leader of the house to draw attention, not to changes in the ministry, but to changes which have taken place in the opposition, in particular in the position of leader of the opposition.

May I say that had my hon. friend the former leader of the opposition, the member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson), not told me personally on Tuesday evening last that he had definitely made up his mind that he would insist upon asking his followers in this house to relieve him immediately of the duty of leadership of the opposition and that his followers were meeting the day following to consider the situation, I certainly would have been very greatly surprised at the announcement which came over the radio last night and which also must have surprised all hon. members of this house. However, as we now know, the members of the official opposition met yesterday and, very reluctantly I am sure, accepted the resignation of the then leader of the opposition and later on selected for appointment as leader of the official opposition in this house my hon. friend the member for Peel (Mr. Graydon). I should like, therefore, immediately to extend to the new leader of the opposition my warmest personal congratulations and to extend to him in equal measure the heartiest congratulations not only of all members on this side of the house but, may I say, of all hon. members of this House of Commons. My hon. friend is to be greatly congratulated on the expression of confidence which the members of his party have given him in the choice which they have made. May I say I think the choice is one which members of the House of Commons of all parties will greatly welcome.

The hon. member for Peel has been in parliament now for some seven years, if I am not mistaken. He came into the house in 1935 and has been here continuously ever since. He has been a whip of his party. He has also been the chairman of the national committee of his party. He has a wide experience not only in political life generally but particularly in this house, and he brings to his position as leader of the opposition exceptional qualifications. He has—perhaps he will allow me to say it—great charm of manner, a pleasing disposition, also fine intellectual attainments. He has participated in the debates freely and always in a manner

which I think has met with the general approval of the house. I can say to him with very great confidence that I am sure he will do honour to himself in the position which he is now holding.

I must say to him that I wonder now that, when the convention of his party was held at Winnipeg recently, he was not made the choice of his party at once, instead of the party taking two or three bites of the cherry—in this case it might perhaps be called a plum. For its own reasons the party thought best to make other arrangements.

My hon. friend has this also certainly to his credit, that he is neither too young nor too old for the position. May I say to him that I can speak with some degree of authority as to the position of leader of the opposition, because I held the post which he now occupies, for a period of some seven years and the experience which I had at that time gave me a very full understanding not only of the great responsibilities of the position but of its anxieties as well. I say to him immediately that I shall welcome opportunities of conference with him concerning matters which pertain to the business of the house. I hope in that connection he will not hesitate to make any demands upon me which at any time he may find advisable.

While I am speaking of the change of position in the leadership of the opposition of this house I think it might not be inappropriate for me also to make reference to the change in the leadership of the party of which my hon. friend is a member. When we met in this house at the beginning of a new session a little over a year ago the party of which my hon. friend is so distinguished a member, had just chosen a leader who, however, never made an appearance in the House of Commons, and for a year my hon. friend the member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson) was in the position of having to lead the opposition and his party in the House of Commons but of not being the leader of the party in the larger sense of the word. I notice that at the convention of the party in Winnipeg that same procedure has been repeated. As a result we have to-day my hon. friend the member for Peel leading the opposition in this house while the chosen leader of the party is without a seat in the house. I mention this because in connection with our parliamentary institutions I hope that such a practice is not going to be permitted to grow into a custom. I take no exception to the compliment which the party of my hon. friend pays us on this side of