

indeed discourteous, to postpone all references to his speech until another day. In any event, it seemed to me that the quality which honourable members would most admire in the remarks of a new leader of this House, on a subject of such generality as that now before us, would be brevity. It will be possible for me to exercise restraint to-night. I will say just a few words on the subjects touched on by the honourable gentleman.

Before I do so, may I join with very deep sincerity indeed in the expressions of regret and sympathy on the affliction which has overtaken the former leader of this House, the honourable senator for Moose Jaw (Hon. Mr. Willoughby). With that honourable gentleman I have had a close personal association for a quarter of a century. No one could have had that association without coming to admire and to prize his character and capacity; no one could have had it, at least in recent years, without coming to respect most highly the nature and quality of his service to this country. We earnestly trust that he may be with us, and that we may enjoy the benefit of his experience and help, for many years.

I also welcome back among us—although welcome is scarcely the word for me to use—the honourable senator from Welland (Hon. Mr. Robertson). With him, in still closer relationship, I laboured over many years. No one, I think, could understand better or prize more highly than myself the intense ardour of his devotion to duty, a devotion which in great degree, if not entirely, is responsible for the collapse that he suffered. I earnestly hope that his great ability is still in reserve and will soon again be at the service of his country.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Permit me to pay my compliments, in no empty way, nor merely because it is usual, to the mover (Hon. Mr. Ballantyne) and the seconder (Hon. Mr. Marcotte) of the Address. The mover is a very distinguished man both in the business and the public life of our country, and I not only concur in the kind words towards him of the honourable gentleman from De Lorimier (Hon. Mr. Dandurand), but express my appreciation of his generous tribute. I am glad to find the honourable gentleman from Saskatchewan (Hon. Mr. Marcotte) among us. He expressed himself in French, and though I have had very little practice in that language in the city of Toronto during the last five years, I found for the first time in my life that I could follow every word of a French speech.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I venture to ask honourable members from the Province of Quebec to seek to imitate as much as they can his clearness of expression, and his careful and somewhat cautious delivery. Both honourable gentlemen have acquitted themselves creditably not only to their constituencies but to this House.

I now come more directly to the remarks of my honourable friend who, I am rejoiced to know, is not opposed to the Government. In that I think he expresses his sincere conviction. I may say that the task with which I have been honoured I approach in no boastful spirit, and perhaps with less confidence than that usually attributed to me at this time, but I approach it in the certain conviction that my course here will be followed by an honourable senator of great ability who is thoroughly competent to oppose, even though he has not the spirit of opposition; and I hasten to say at the outset that the judgment often conveyed to me by others—for I never heard him myself till this evening—the judgment as to his amplitude of information, his clearness of mind and cogency of expression has been in great degree verified by his address to us to-night.

Permit me by way of introduction to say in all earnestness that the years, five in number, or more, which have intervened between my public duties of other days and the present time have left a gap of greater extent than I had anticipated; a gap which I know must be bridged in order that I may be adequately in contact with the duties immediately before me. I hope that while I am in the process of bridging that gap honourable members will be fairly indulgent. A great deal of ground has to be overtaken; but I am quite certain that the educative activities of this House, especially on the part of honourable gentlemen opposite, are at their highest at the present time, and that I shall receive the benefit thereof.

The honourable senator from De Lorimier (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) has dealt concisely, but in a way which to me has been illuminating, with the nature and function of this Chamber as distinguished from the other, from which many of us have come. I take no exception at all to the distinction which he draws. I hope that the atmosphere of the other Chamber does not too closely pursue us, and I promise honourable gentlemen opposite that I will make an honest effort to escape from that atmosphere and to acquire, even more than in the past, the habit of addressing myself to the question instead of to the public at large. Indeed, I thank the honourable member from De Lorimier for giving me to-