

appearance before this House as the leader of the Opposition for the time being, I think it is only proper that I should explain briefly my position. Those of you who read the newspapers, and you all read the newspapers, I suppose, saw what was done yesterday—that by a unanimous vote I was asked for the time being to lead the Opposition in this House until a proper opportunity is given in the most democratic way possible for the Liberals of all Canada to choose their leader. Until that is done, I am by the request of my friends the recognized leader of the Opposition in this House and responsible for the sayings and doings of that body to some extent. I do not think it is out of place for me to thank my friends on this side of the House for the great honour they have conferred on me. I fully appreciate it, and can only promise that whatever ability I possess will be placed at their disposal, and in a proper way at the disposal of the House. I am now getting to be an old member. I have always had the greatest regard for this institution, which is the highest institution in our country, and I trust that in the future and particularly while I occupy this position of responsibility, I shall so demean myself as to do credit and respect to this institution of which we are all so proud. If there was one characteristic which more than another distinguished the great leader into whose shoes I have stepped it was his great respect for Parliament, for the rules of this House and for everything that went to the upbuilding and maintaining of the best parliamentary traditions. As his successor for the time being, I hope that as far as my capacity will permit me, I shall follow in his footsteps. I feel assured of the sympathy and respect of hon. gentlemen on this side of the House. I hope I shall do justice to the position which I occupy, and shall conduct myself in such a way as to command the sympathy and respect of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House as well.

Let me, Mr. Speaker, at once address my hearty and earnest congratulations to the two young hon. gentlemen who moved and seconded the Address. I am particularly proud of the way in which they have acquitted themselves. Their speeches were not too long, but they covered the ground very well; they were full of good material, and well expressed. We are glad to recognize that each of these young men is full of promise for the future. It is a great thing to know that coming up behind us, who are beginning to get old, are young

men offering such talent and promise to the service of this country. The part of the speech which particularly attracted my attention was the reference to the returned soldier. These two gentlemen, as I understand it, are themselves returned soldiers. Let me say for the Opposition and for the people generally, that we have in our hearts a very warm spot and the greatest respect for every returned soldier of this country. They have done great things for us, for which we are proud and glad and thankful. I hope we shall not be remiss in our duty to show a proper appreciation of what they have done for us by looking after their interest in a proper and becoming manner. These two young gentlemen were bold enough to rather find fault with the way in which things were done. They may not have meant that, but I, as an ordinary plain blunt person sitting on this side of the House and watching the performance rather closely, reached the conclusion that they were not quite satisfied with the way in which the Government was moving, and rather suggested that a little speed should be put on, if that could possibly be done. To my hon. young friends, who no doubt are alert to their own interests and to the interests of the country, and full of youthful animation and ambition, let me say—not by way of discouragement at all, but by way of helping them along,—that if they have any stimulant to stir up this Government to do something within the life of any man that is living to-day I shall be very glad indeed if they will apply it. We on this side of the House, in our own mild way, have been coaxing them along; we have been offering them every inducement and every promise that we can offer, consistent with our position in opposition, but they do not seem to take our bait. But our good friends are returned soldiers, and possibly the Government had better beware lest some of the means which soldiers use to produce results may be used in their case. There is a warning given to them to-day, and I trust that something will be forthcoming before very long.

I do not wish on this, the first occasion of my addressing the House as leader of the Opposition, to be unduly critical, but the Government has thought proper to place in the Address the subject of dealing with returned soldiers. We heard of the Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment Department last winter. We were very hopeful that something would come of it, but so far I have not been able to hear of any particular establishment, except, forsooth, the salary of the minister—I suppose that is

[Mr. McKenzie.]