

taking all the Provinces into consideration. This method to my mind is rather a dangerous one. About the year 1912 there was a readjustment of subsidies to some of the Provinces. Manitoba was the largest beneficiary at that time. The Province of Prince Edward Island, the Garden of the Gulf, by reason of its often importunities, received an extra \$100,000. Other Provinces thought they had good claims, but I have never discovered that they were even consulted. Extensions of boundaries have been made in the case of both Ontario and Quebec, and I wonder if there was any conference at that time. There are no doubt many questions which various Provinces will want to have discussed at this interprovincial Dominion gathering. I have in mind some problems which I know are in the minds of some of the Provinces, and a thorough discussion ought to do a whole lot of good.

As to the reform of the Senate, my length of service in that body does not fit me very well to proffer any advice. I should suppose that no great harm could come from following the experience of the mother country in the reformation of the House of Lords. From observation during my short experience in this Chamber I have been struck with the conspicuous ability displayed by the leaders and many of the supporters on both sides, if there are really two sides in this Chamber. I suppose it is hardly possible to expect experienced politicians to at once lay aside every suspicion of partizanship upon passing through the portals of the Senate, but the more successful we are in doing so the more we will no doubt contribute to establish our position in the country as an honourable and useful body. Like the emergency brake on the automobile, the time for independent action may not often arise, but when it does it may avoid a catastrophe.

Democratic government under the aegis of the British Crown is probably the best this old world has ever devised, and the bicameral system has never yet been successfully supplanted by any other scheme. There are weaknesses of many kinds in that system and no doubt there always will be. If we could institute a reform in the qualification of the members of both Houses, so as to have only real students of political economy eligible, it might be a good thing.

In dealing with the body politic, there is an analogy in the method of dealing with the human body. In a way we are a college of political physicians and surgeons attempting to diagnose and to cure without any special qualifications in many cases. If we

Hon. Mr. ROBINSON.

were to establish some such qualifications and compel all who would be politicians to pass a proper test before being enrolled upon the register, what a change there would be in the methods of conducting Parliament, what a reduction there would be in the pages of Hansard, and how the demagogues would scream—but why indulge in idle dreams about reformation?

I have the honour to move, seconded by the Honourable Mr. Tessier:

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General to offer the humble thanks of this House to His Excellency for the gracious Speech which he has been pleased to make to both Houses of Parliament; namely:—

To General His Excellency the Right Honourable Julian Hedworth George, Baron Byng of Vimy, General on the Retired List and in the Reserve of Officers of the Army; Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath; Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George; Member of the Royal Victorian Order, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of the Dominion of Canada.

May it Please Your Excellency:

We, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Senate of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. JULES TESSIER (Translation): I have the honour to second the motion for an Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency, and I request the indulgence of this honourable House.

After the difficult years through which we have passed, it is gratifying to hear His Excellency announce that progress has been made in our foreign trade; that we have considerably decreased our imports and increased our exports, and have an excess in our favour of \$260,000,000. All economists predict that business will improve in 1925.

This opinion is shared in New York and London. A crisis has been experienced in the textile industry in Canada, but it has been less acute than that which has prevailed in England and the United States, where some of the cotton factories have been closed, while ours are working under better conditions. We now see that Canadians, who for a few years have been attracted to the United States by the inducement of higher wages, are returning in rather large numbers.

The condition of the farmers, in the West as well as in the East, is improved, and if only there is a good crop this year the purchasing power of our people will restore the activity of our industries.

If industrial and agricultural prosperity prevails, it will be of great advantage to our railways and our seaports.