

ready left. I met man after man up there who pointed out to me that there was no possibility of his paying for his land, let alone earning sufficient to return him a good living at the present time. These men did not consider dollars and cents when they volunteered for service to the empire in the days of emergency. Indeed we could not have got one of them to go through what they went through merely for money. Therefore I submit it is not up to the government or to the people of Canada at this stage to consider the financial cost of giving those men justice and fair treatment and thus enabling them to build up homes where they are now located. In short, in considering this the government and the country should deal with these men not on a business basis at all but on a basis of justice and right. These men are not trying to live on their reputation as soldiers. They have gone up there and in spite of the natural difficulties which have existed in that district during the last four years they have hung on in the hope that they would be able to maintain homes for themselves and their families. For that reason one of the first things I should like to see this House give attention to is the revaluation of the land of our soldier settlers, otherwise many of these men will have to abandon their homes. I have seen those so-called "soulless" corporations, the banks of this Dominion, write off agreements of sale on land purchased at the high valuations which existed in the west five or six years ago, I have seen them write off all the interest and reduce the capital by almost fifty per cent, in order that those who bought land under those conditions might maintain their homes and eventually make them their own. When those so-called soulless corporations will do that as a business proposition, how much more should the Dominion be generous in its treatment of these men who are trying to maintain their homes under almost impossible circumstances?

Now, Sir, I have almost broken the rule of brevity that I imposed on myself when I rose. I think perhaps the best interests of the Dominion as a whole will be served and the business of this House will be expedited by the adoption of the amendments to the rules of the House with a view to curtail useless debate. I think our people as a whole will welcome any change that will make our work go through more rapidly and with less discussion. I can only justify my own remarks, Mr. Speaker, on two grounds: I was forced into it, and it is a matter which has to be taken up. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your kind attention.

Hon. HUGH GUTHRIE (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, let my first for-

mal utterance as leader for the time being of His Majesty's loyal opposition in this chamber be words of welcome to the shores of Canada to His Excellency the Governor General as the representative of our sovereign lord the King in this vast and important part of His Majesty's overseas dominions. The people of Canada upon looking backward to the year 1867, the year of confederation, are at all times wont to recall with pride and satisfaction the long line of distinguished statesmen and publicists who have been selected from time to time to represent their own and our sovereign in the government of this country.

In the present instance the people of Canada, without distinction of race or creed or party, will rejoice that the choice of a representative of His Majesty has fallen upon one so prominent, so well versed both in the affairs of the motherland and of the empire in general, and likewise upon one so well qualified by broad and varied experience in the intricacies of government as is His Excellency the present Governor General. To His Excellency and to his gracious spouse, Her Excellency, this House and this country will unite in according a most sincere and hearty welcome.

May I at this point pause for a moment to offer a word of congratulation to my right hon. friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and to his colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) upon their safe return to their native land, after having been participants in an Imperial conference at the ancient capital of the empire. Before concluding my remarks I may have something to say in regard to the deliberations and the conclusions of that conference, but at the moment my only wish is to convey to Canada's two distinguished representatives at the conference the pleasure which we all experience in this House in seeing them back again in apparent health, strength and vigour.

I now turn for a moment to the hon. member for Prescott (Mr. Auger) and the hon. member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. McPherson) and to the speeches to which this House has listened this afternoon from these two gentlemen. I tender them the sincere congratulations of those who sit on this side of the House upon the manner in which each of them has acquitted himself to-day and has discharged the important and honourable function which has devolved upon him. Both in this parliament and in the mother of parliaments at Westminster, the honourable and important duty of moving and seconding the address in reply to the speech from the throne usually falls to the lot of those who