

A la Claire Fontaine, Alouette, A Saint-Malo, Beau Port de Mer, En Roulant ma Boule, and so many other charming refrains brought to our shores by our forefathers. The French were the first to offer to God from this land a prayer of thanks. In all the wars in which this country has been concerned the French Canadian has fought side by side with his English Canadian comrade. With him he suffered from cold and hunger in the dismal trenches of Flanders, Artois and Picardy, for the triumph of civilization and the defeat of German oppression. Together they strove to promote peace, to develop our industries, to encourage agriculture, to foster art, literature and science. From every angle he can rightfully say of Canada, "Here is my domicile, my abode and my home." Why then, Mr. Speaker, can there not be on the door of his domicile, at the very threshold of his home, an indication, a card, a sign attesting that he shares this domicile with his fellow citizen and comrade, the English Canadian? How can this be better expressed and broadcast, both here and in foreign lands, than by a French inscription in conjunction with an English inscription on our currency, state notes and bonds? This is all we request: A simple act of justice.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Question.

Mr. ONESIME GAGNON (Dorchester): Mr. Speaker, I am really bewildered and amazed to realize that hon. gentlemen opposite are now using all their efforts to prevent us from expressing our views on this national issue.

Mr. CHEVRIER: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: With the permission of the hon. member who has the floor a question may be asked; otherwise it may not.

Mr. CHEVRIER: May I ask the hon. member how we are trying to stop him from expressing his views?

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask hon. members on my immediate left kindly to conform to the rules of the house and maintain order.

Mr. GAGNON: For the last four weeks we have heard our Liberal friends disseminating the propaganda both in and out of this house that the French Conservative members were going to betray their principles on this important question. Now that they have accused us of being deaf they want to prevent us from letting our people know our views, though hon. gentlemen opposite have expressed their

[Mr. Bourgeois.]

own convictions. The hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) said he did not want to speak for very long because he wished a vote to be taken. No members on this side of the house will prevent the taking of a vote, but this afternoon hon. gentlemen opposite voted against adjourning a debate which was taking place because they thought they might prevent us from expressing our views on that question.

I desire only about five minutes of the time of the house, Mr. Speaker, in order to say that we are all in favour of the principle underlying the motion now under consideration. Since 1907 we have had in this country bilingual money orders, postal notes, postal cards and excise and postage stamps. This act of courtesy, justice and generosity from the English speaking majority has given a great deal of satisfaction to Canadians of French descent, and I feel sure that English speaking members of the house will admit that no prejudice has ever been caused the English majority of the country in permitting revenue stamps as well as stamps of the Postmaster General's department to bear legends or inscriptions printed in the respective languages of the two great races which have founded this great dominion. The *bonne entente* between the two great races is becoming more and more cordial. Some people may think that it is not a matter of importance that stamps and bank notes issued by the dominion should have their inscriptions printed in both French and English. May I say however that stamps and coins may be more or less the outward expression of the traditions and aspirations of a nation. Ought they not therefore in a certain way to reflect the soul of the people? If they are printed in one language only, will foreigners understand that there are in Canada three million French Canadians, people of French origin and civilization? Will not strangers be led to misjudge the true characteristics of the Canadian people if the legislators have not seen fit to embody in stamps and coins the legends and inscriptions in the languages spoken by the two great races which live in Canada? Who can prevent the work of four centuries of French civilization from having impressed its stamp upon Canada? The French civilization with its old historical background is impressed upon Canada by its old Norman houses, its churches with their lofty spires, its spirit of hospitality and fraternity, its rich language, its folklore, its poetry and literature and the charming smiles of our women. The four million French speaking people in Canada ask you, sir, not to be ashamed of letting the world at large