

gentlemen find themselves in a very embarrassing position in relation to a policy or a platform. Their political following is made up of such heterogeneous materials. The views and declarations of their policy have been so dissimilar and antagonistic. The hon. leader of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition in his public utterances has evidently been feeling about for a policy. Like the young lady whom Bliffens declared played the piano with a great deal of feeling,—after the keys, he has played on the country with a great deal of feeling,—after a policy. What does the hon. gentleman propose—of what does the Opposition platform consist? They have no fixed policy for the Dominion. There is a policy of contradictions, a policy of sectionalism and provincialism. Their appeal is to sections and classes in strangely inconsistent language. The part and every part in turn is to the Opposition greater than the whole. They build little narrow platforms in each Province and among different classes. Among Free Traders they take up the parable of Adam Smith, and to Protectionists they talk of protection to vested interests. They tell the farmers his wool is insufficiently protected, and in the next breath ridicule agricultural protection and declare it cannot affect prices or improve the home market. They appeal to the mechanic and laborer, the carter and cab-driver, with the cry that they are taxed by this policy on their flour, bacon, corn and oats. In the Maritime Provinces they denounce the duty on breadstuffs. In Ontario they assail the duty on coal. These specimen planks are surely not the material out of which to build a platform calculated to sustain the cause of union, to broaden the views and sympathies of the people, and elevate their hopes and aspirations. Surely, if they are unequal to the work of constructing such a platform upon which the Nova Scotian, the New Brunswicker, the Prince Edward Islander, the chivalrous French Canadian, the citizens of Ontario, of Manitoba, and of British Columbia can unite and work together with a common impulse of patriotism, then they cannot hope to be entrusted with the weighty task of upbuilding this wide extended Dominion to the grand proportions of its vast capabilities—of its glorious promise. I need scarcely ask, Mr. Speaker, what is the manifest duty of the Government towards this policy, which is now the policy, the property in fact of the people, rather than the Government. And I am confident the people will not readily or easily yield or abandon this possession. The duty of the Government is clear, and they are faithfully and honestly performing it. What would be the effect in the country could the Government be so infatuated as to break faith with the people and abandon this policy? Would not such a whirlwind of indignation arise as would compel the representatives of the people, elected to support the Government, to abandon it to its fate? And the hon. the leader of the Opposition would not be slow to denounce the folly and perfidy of the Government, and to trim his sail to the popular breeze. Mr. Speaker, it affords me great pleasure to second the Resolution before the House, and, in doing so, reiterate the sentiments in the closing paragraph, that His Excellency may rest assured that we shall give our best attention to the several subjects mentioned by him, and to the general business which will come before us, and that we thank His Excellency for the expression of his full confidence in our patriotic desire and our ability to forward the best interests of the country. Before resuming my seat, I desire, Mr. Speaker, to thank the House for its patient attention and kind indulgence shown to my remarks.

Mr. BLAKE. It is not my intention to interpose for more than a very brief space between the business of the House and the passage of this Address. It has become our practice, unless under very exceptional circumstances, to close the debate on the Address at the earliest possible moment, and, I think, a practice conducive to the public interest and the despatch of business; especially on an occasion

like the present, when many of the topics which are alluded to in the Speech, and many other topics—which have been attracting the attention of the public during recess, and must attract the attention of Parliament—require, for a profitable discussion, the production of the public documents and other returns which we hope shortly to find on the Table. To anticipate these discussions now would be worse than useless. I do not intend, therefore, to pursue the course which has, to some extent, been pursued by one of the hon. gentlemen who has just spoken. I may be allowed to express my congratulations to the hon. gentlemen who have moved and seconded the Address for the manner in which they have discharged that portion of their public duty. My hon. friend from Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) said he was a young man. He has that advantage, but possesses with it the rare advantage of being an old politician, for he has been some years with us here, and we have reason to know his public services did not begin with his election to Parliament. I do not think, therefore, my hon. friend was fairly entitled to claim—and I am equally bound to say my hon. friend did not stand in any need of claiming—the indulgence of the House when he stood up to express his views and sentiments on the present occasion. With reference to the hon. member for West Northumberland, he will excuse me if I decline, on this occasion, to enter into a controversy with him, either as to the accuracy of his historical retrospect or the position of the Government on the questions of the day. The proper time will arise at a later period, and the hon. gentleman will, perhaps, find reasons—if he be, as I suppose he is, open to conviction—to change his opinions on some of those subjects before the Session closes. We rejoice as heartily as any person can, on that measure of improvement and prosperity which the condition of the country exhibits, and we rejoice also upon the improved view as to the sources of that prosperity which is apparent on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite. On former days we have heard Ministers declare that that prosperity was, in some small measure, due to the condition of agricultural products, and for that they were good enough to allow some small measure of praise and thanks and blessing to Providence; but for the rest, which, they said, was a great deal more than that, they claimed the blessings for themselves. I remember that the hon. Minister of Finance disclaimed, a little while ago, the arrogation by the Government of the merit for all that had occurred, and said the proof of this was that they had not long since instituted a day of thanksgiving to Providence for its blessings. That, Sir, is about the proportion: one day to God and the other 364 to the Ministry. But this time I am glad to see that the improved prosperity in its various aspects is attributed to the Giver of all good, by which, I presume, we are not to understand the Finance Minister. Now I believe that the Trade and Navigation Returns will indicate very clearly the propriety of attributing these blessings to Providence, and will establish, as will also other circumstances, the fact that it is to those changed conditions to which we have repeatedly referred, that the substance and essence of the improved condition of this country, in common with several other communities, is to be traced. The Speech, as was natural, contains a somewhat extended reference to the North-West, and we learn that two things are essential with reference to the Indian population, which, under various synonyms, is referred to in the course of these paragraphs. We warned the Administration a couple of years ago, when they announced that, owing to the expected total failure of the food supply, it had become necessary to expend a very large sum to prevent the starvation of the Indians; although such expenditure might be necessary, the course being pursued was one which would almost inevitably lead to the reappearance of that item in our Estimates for many years to come. It did reappear the next year, but again it was stated to be an