

House of Commons Debates

FOURTH SESSION—SIXTH PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, 27th March, 1890.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN moved :

That as the time for the reception of the reports of the Committee on Private Bills expires to-day, the same be extended until Thursday, 17th April next.

Motion agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY.

Mr. FOSTER presented a Message from His Excellency the Governor General.

Mr. SPEAKER read the Message as follows :—

S ANLEY OF PRESTON.

The Governor General transmits to the House of Commons Supplementary Estimates of sums required for the Service of the Dominion, for the year ending 30th June, 1890; and in accordance with the provisions of "The British North America Act, 1867," he recommends these Estimates to the House of Commons.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

OTTAWA, 26th March, 1890.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE BUDGET.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, in rising to-day to present my second annual statement to the House respecting the financial operations of the completed year 1888-89, of the current year and my estimates for the year succeeding, I think I may congratulate the House and the country upon the satisfactory nature of one and all of these three. I think I may also congratulate the House and the country upon the results of the past twelve months. They have not disappointed the hopes which were expressed concerning them when I made my annual statement a little more than a year ago. The general state of the business of the country has been reasonably good, and although a deficiency of harvest in

some portions, and the unseasonable state of the weather, and the somewhat low prices which ranged for some of the staple articles, have had their depressing effects, on the whole the year has been, as I have stated, a fairly average one. The general trade of the country has kept up, and in fact somewhat exceeded that of the preceding year, and, as a consequence, the returns which were anticipated have been fully, or very nearly fully realised. The railway building during the past year has been vigorous, as will be shown later when I come to speak of the sums which have been taken from the public treasury in the way of payment on construction of railways which have been subsidised, and the volume of traffic which has been moved in our country has been larger than in any preceding year of its history. Ocean freights have continued high, and the vessel owners of the maritime portions of the Dominion have reaped a rich and well-merited reward from the vessels which they have owned, while upon the great lakes and rivers of Canada the tonnage has been well employed and the season has been fairly remunerative. I find that the immigration of this year has been superior in numbers and superior in class to that of many preceding years, and there are indications that that is now taking place, which is to be, I believe, the strongest factor in drawing people into this country; namely, the formation of a nucleus of people in our country, especially in the North-West, who having passed the earliest and severest stages of settlement, and having come into prosperous and settled conditions, are writing home to their friends and spreading information, which is the strongest and best means of drawing immigrants from those far-off countries to our own shores. Not only have those interests of which I have spoken been prosperous, but, I think I may say, from a general review, that the lumber interests have had, on the whole, a satisfactory year. The farmers and the fishermen have probably had not more, if not something less, than an average year; but, taken on the whole, their condition is one of reasonable prosperity, and without the want