

Provinces. Civilization has driven back the Indian tribes, and the whites are filling the places of their dusky brethren; but the Indians seem to understand the course of events, and expressed to His Excellency, during his trip, their confidence in the Canadian Government. We might, perhaps, enquire why we must still feed these savages in a country which enjoys the reputation of being so rich. We must not overlook the fact, Mr. Speaker, that these sons of the woods, who scarcely know of any other means of subsistence but the chase, will have some difficulty in adopting our mode of life, and we can trace their instincts through what has taken place during the few past years. When the buffalo had almost disappeared, they commenced to cultivate the soil on a small scale, like the white people; but last year, having learnt that the buffalo had made his appearance on our side of the line, they immediately gave up their crops and fields to return to their favorite pastime. This explains the paragraph in the Speech from the Throne, wherein it is said that food will have to be provided for them for some years to come. The Indians, not having harvested their crops, and the yield of the chase having been insufficient, it is necessary now, and will be for some time in the future, to provide food for them. The Government has done everything in its power to teach these savages to cultivate the soil, so that they might support themselves; but there is not a member of this House, nor is there any one in the country, who is ignorant of the fact that it will take long years to civilize the 30,000 savages who still inhabit our northern possessions. It has also become necessary to propose an increase in the number of the Mounted Police. An explanation is necessary, Mr. Speaker, as to the reason which has prompted the Government to incur this increase of expenditure. The whites residing in the North-West, who have brought with them the horses and cattle required for agriculture, have, at times, seen the savages, when pressed by hunger, hunt their domestic animals for the sake of food, in lieu of the buffalo and other wild animals which they were in the habit of hunting. Under these circumstances, the whites have sometimes taken the law into their own hands, and the result might be a general uprising of the Indians. It is in order to avoid such conflicts that the Government has seen fit to propose an increase of the little army of the North-West. I notice with pleasure, Mr. Speaker, and I am certain that the whole country will be glad to learn, that a measure will be submitted to the consideration of this House for the reorganization of the Civil Service. I do not know what the measure will be, but I feel certain that the Government is actuated by the best intentions in presenting it. I will not say that patronage is a great advantage for Ministers or Members of Parliament, nor, on the other hand, would I ask that all patronage should be taken from the hands of those who were responsible to the people, to place it in entirely irresponsible hands; but I believe that a system compelling candidates for the Civil Service to pass an examination, which would prove them reliable employes, would be a great advantage and would meet with the approval of the public. The Census taken last year shows a considerable increase of the population during the past decade. It is unnecessary to say that this increase means wealth for the country, for that would be a truism. We are, moreover, in hopes of seeing our population increased still more in the next decade, owing to the fostering care of the National Policy. The need had begun to be felt of a measure concerning the liquidation of insolvent banking, insurance and commercial companies. The Government has met this demand in the Speech addressed to us yesterday, and I feel sure that, during the present Session, measures of a nature to satisfy the commercial community will be passed. There will be a codification and amendment of certain laws relating to the Dominion Lands, necessitated by the extensive operations which have taken place in lands in the North-West during

Mr. BERGERON.

the last two years. The Government has also been true to its promises to the members of the Province of Quebec anent the Supreme Court. We justly complain that to us the Supreme Court is not such as we were justified in expecting it would be. There are, as you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, but two judges sitting in that court who are perfectly familiar with our civil laws, and when one unfortunate litigant from the Province of Quebec, after having gone through all the courts of the Province, comes before the Supreme Court, he sometimes loses his case when he has in his favor a greater number of judges thoroughly acquainted with our civil laws than are sitting in the Supreme Court. I feel certain that the Government, mindful of its promise, will amend the Acts having reference to that court, in such a manner as to redress existing grievances. It is impossible, Mr. Speaker, to notice the rapid progress made in the North-West without speaking of the great iron road, which more than any other cause has contributed to its development. Who is there who does not remember the anxious times through which the country has passed in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway? And when, last winter, a measure was brought before this House to place the construction of that road in the hands of a company, people understood then, and we have the proof thereof to-day, that we were right in stating it would be a gain to the country, and that it was taking a heavy load off the shoulders of the Government. The sincerity of the Syndicate has been demonstrated during the past year by the immense amount of work done on the line; and we can announce in this House, to-day, in presence of the representatives of the people, and to the country which gathers our words through the columns of the press, that by next July we shall have a direct line of railroad between Quebec and Sarnia or Collingwood on Lake Superior; travelling thence, by steamer, to Thunder Bay, and from there, by rail, to Winnipeg, with the usual rapidity of transit. The Syndicate has graded 161 miles west of Winnipeg during the year; and it is proposed to build 500 miles more next season. It should be remembered that work is also being done from Callander Station, on the east end of the line; not only has the Syndicate fulfilled its contract, but it is endeavoring to construct the road as rapidly as possible in advance of it; it is its interest, as well as that of the country, to accomplish this. In 1881, i.e., for the year just run out, they have graded and built 218 miles of road on the main line, and 89 miles on the branches, which are now in a condition to receive rails. No one could suppose that so much could be accomplished in such a difficult country. In British Columbia, in spite of numerous difficulties, the Government feels certain that the work will be completed within the prescribed time of ten years. Moreover, to assist colonization and encourage immigration to these far-off lands, the Government has assumed the responsibility not only of proceeding with the construction of the 127 miles which it had entered into the obligations of constructing between Savona's Ferry and Emory Bar, but had decided to construct also the 89 miles of road from the latter place to Port Moody, on the shores of the Pacific, which work it is not compelled to carry out at present. Basing their opinion on past operations, the Syndicate state that the whole Pacific road will be constructed in five or six years instead of in the ten years which had been expected to elapse, and in this short space of time we will be able to start from the Atlantic Ocean and cross on British soil to the Pacific shore. If, Mr. Speaker, one wishes to have an idea of the immense amount of work carried out on that line, one has but to remember that 218 miles were constructed previous to 1878, and that since then 653 miles have been built, or an increase of 435 miles. It will not be a difficult thing for the people to believe in the ultimate success of the Pacific Railway, when they have before them that of the Intercolonial Railway. It is not so long ago that