

great and powerful British Empire; and our loyalty towards England is only equalled by the hearty sympathy of the Mother Country for us. As a mark of esteem and friendship, unprecedented in the history of her colonies, England has associated us with her glory and her power by giving us a noble member of the Royal family to represent in Canada the well beloved authority and the majesty of Our Most Gracious Sovereign. The obtaining of the right to settle our own affairs, and to adopt a National Policy in accordance with our wants, and the aspirations of the country was, no doubt, a splendid victory, and the accrediting of a Canadian Minister with the foreign powers in Europe was another not less brilliant. Thus we effect the conquest of our rights, one after the other, peacefully, thanks to the friendly relations that exist between Canada and the Mother Country; thanks also to the skill, the broad views, the patriotism of the distinguished men who preside over the destinies of these two Empires. And it is thus, Mr. Speaker, that we will obtain the full possession of our rights and acquire, at the same time, national wealth and prosperity. It is with pleasure that I second the motion of the hon. member for Toronto.

Mr. BLAKE. I think everyone will be thankful to the Mover and Seconder of the reply to the Speech from the Throne, for being disposed to attribute some share of that measure of returning prosperity, which we all know exists, to causes on which we can agree with them; but we consider that the returning prosperity is in spite of legislative obstruction. It is pleasant to know that the harvest is an element, at any rate, however slight and modest it may be, and that the increased demand for our exports in foreign countries, and the larger prices those exports have realized, are elements, however modest and slight they may be, as described by the hon. gentleman, that have contributed to the prosperity upon which he desires us to congratulate ourselves. Allow me, before I go further, to correct the hon. member for West Toronto, upon a subject on which he is a little misinformed. He was not content with that just measure of congratulation which he might fairly take to himself, as to the results of the late elections, but he also claimed North Oxford. I may inform him that there was a pleasant little family contention in that constituency, where there is a very numerous family of Reformers, but that the candidates were all out-and-out Reformers. If he is not disposed to accept what I say in preference to the gentleman who may have given him the information, let me read an extract from the statement of Mr. Sutherland, the present member for North Oxford. He says: "Upon the great questions of the day, he, as well as myself, is an out-and-out Reformer." The circumstances of North Oxford are these: That while there were two out-and-out Reformers contesting the seat, each of whom had a very large measure of support among the Reformers of that constituency, no Tory was found bold enough to go to the polls. With reference to the hon. member's own victory, let me tell him, as that has been alluded to, that it was of the Pyrrhic order. Although the West Division of Toronto had returned by an overwhelming majority its old member, yet the hon. gentleman (Mr. Beaty) was returned by only a greatly reduced majority. If the condition of affairs in West Toronto continues to spread, the same proportionate change in the relative strength of parties which was exhibited at that election, as compared with the preceding one, would at the next election give us as the result of that change 64 seats which were taken by the Conservatives in the elections of 1878, thus giving a majority to the Reformers. Now, Sir, the great subject which has been brought before us, and the necessities of which are the justification of this unusually early Session of Parliament, is of course, that which will be most largely discussed upon this occasion. The policy of this Administration since its re-

turn to power upon that question, has been, from time to time, very seriously modified. In the first Session of this Parliament the Government proposed to the House a grand scheme involving substantial Imperial aid and countenance in the construction of the Pacific Railway. They included, in effect, the giving of an Imperial character to that work, it being held that as the road was in the interests of the Empire, it should give substantial assistance in its prosecution. In the second Session of this Parliament we heard no more of that glorious scheme, but we were brought face to face with a programme for the construction of portions of the road upon another basis from that which in former times had been suggested. The line was to be degraded into a cheap colonization line, built with sharp curves and steep gradients, and in the cheapest manner consistent with the safety of passengers travelling over it. In that shape it was to be built in detached portions, and a section in British Columbia, and 200 miles on the prairies, were at once to be laid. Now, we find another very serious change in the policy. Instead of that mode of prosecuting the work, the proposal is made that our liabilities—which, so long as the work was to be constructed by the Government, were limited by the different engagements which each Session we might authorize to be made—shall be once and for ever defined so far as a contract can define them, and that, through the medium of a company, the road shall be constructed from end to end, and that we shall be placed in a position which, whatever this obligation may involve, will be beyond recall. With reference to the eastern connection there is also a very serious change in the policy involved in the propositions of to-day. It is well known that, if not from the beginning, yet at an early date, that line on the north shore of Lake Superior was placed in abeyance, and was indefinitely postponed. At different times different suggestions have been made for obtaining a more or less satisfactory connection with the east. Last Session that subject underwent some ventilation here, and some more in the other Chamber. It was admitted by the hon. Minister, who has special charge of the subject of railways, that a good line valuable for Canadian purposes, and extremely important in point, not only of national but international commerce, could be found by Sault Ste. Marie, and that it would be for the interest of this country that that line should be built at the speediest moment. The question of what the Administration were doing was alluded to by me in this House, and it was adverted to in the other Chamber, and the Government were asked as to their intentions. The answer at that time was that the subject was under consideration. Later on, after they had had that period for anxious consideration, the question was renewed in the third week of the month of April, and the answer then was on the part of the Administration, that it was their intention to take steps to procure surveys for the line to Sault Ste. Marie, and to aid, this Session, in its construction. Now, we hear that this line on the north shore of Lake Superior is to be built, and therefore that part of the policy of the Administration is seriously changed. Now, Sir, for these changes, simply as changes, I have no word of complaint or rebuke to utter. In carrying out the arrangements for a great enterprise of this kind, it is not merely right, but it is the bounden duty of the Administration, observing changed conditions, to mould their policy with a view of providing what the best interests of the country may require, and the time for action necessitates. Therefore, I say, I am not complaining of these changes simply as changes, but solely for a purpose that I will point out in a moment, a purpose which requires that we should observe that there are serious changes, for we find that though as the Speech tells us there is a recurrence to an old policy yet there are serious changes from the policy defined and announced and assented to by Parliament in the two first Sessions of this Administration. It is, of course, impossible for us to express an opinion upon the terms or upon the propriety of a bargain which is