

respects payment in the field, would be opposed to their wishes. But Canada is doing something more. The Imperial rates of pay are less than those of the Canadian service. Our government is providing the difference between the Imperial pay and the Canadian pay. The amount so provided is not to be paid to the men in the field, for the reason already given, but it will be used for the benefit of their families at home, or placed to their credit, to be paid to them on their return.

Just a word more, Mr. Speaker. I wish to express my satisfaction and the satisfaction of the great majority of my constituents, as shown by my election by acclamation, with the general course pursued by this government. I believe it to have been in the best interests of the people. Mistakes there may have been, but on the whole the policy has been dictated by prudence, wisdom, and good business judgment. The reforms inaugurated have been striking and beneficial. The reform of the tariff; the reduction in the postal rates brought about by economical and efficient administration of the department; the extension of the Intercolonial Railway to Montreal; the development of the Kootenay country by the construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway; the abolition of the Franchise Act; the sturdy patriotism maintained by our leaders in negotiations with foreign governments, and their steadfast loyalty to our motherland, have all tended for good. The expressed aim of our leader is inspiring. Surely no greater ambition could be held by any Canadian statesman than to make the Canadian family a united family under the same flag, and I am satisfied that for many years to come the destinies of the country will be in his hands.

I thank the members of the House for their kind indulgence, and I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by moving that an humble address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the speech from the Throne.

Mr. VICTOR GEOFFRION. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to second the proposition of the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Gould) that an address be voted by this House in reply to the speech from the Throne.

It would seem, Mr. Speaker, that I ought to have contented myself strictly with declaring that I support the proposition of the hon. gentleman, thus leaving the House under the agreeable impression created by the judicious and eloquent remarks just fallen from the lips of the hon. gentleman. However, let the House allow me to add a few personal remarks on certain portions of the speech from the Throne, to which I desire in a particular manner to draw the attention of this House.

First, as to the prosperity of the country, referred to in the speech from the Throne,

Mr. GOULD.

a point which has been so eloquently dwelt upon by the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat. I may say that such prosperity is patent and undeniable, and I am not aware of the fact being called in question by any hon. gentleman on the other side of the House. Prosperity, as a matter of fact, prevails from one end of the country to the other, an unprecedented fact in the annals of Canada.

Never were the farming community so prosperous; never were their products disposed of under more favourable conditions and at more satisfactory prices. The farmers have money to loan; and the price of farming lands has increased in proportion to the profits yielded by those lands.

Ask the farming community what they think of the present regime and they will answer your query by pointing at their improved farms, no longer burdened with debts, while cheese and butter factories are springing up in almost every parish and running the year through. They will give you the same answer as that just given by those numerous rural constituencies who, having been appealed to within the few last months, did give their support to and endorsed the government policy. Every branch of industry is also in a flourishing state. The manufacturers who, at the time of the general elections of 1896, had felt some anxiety when listening to the alarming prophecies of the Conservative speakers and newspapers, now acknowledge that they were fully justified in trusting in the declarations of the leaders of the party who now ruin the country. Every branch of trade from the bottom to the top of the ladder is doing a rushing business as shown by the reports of the various commercial agencies. Failures have decreased by one-fourth within the last three years and forced sales are now the exception, things having reached such a pass that in some districts sheriffs are forced to give up their offices and to carve out for themselves new positions.

The improvement of our canals and of our navigable streams has given a new impetus to our merchant shipping. I have the honour of representing here a rural constituency in the district of Montreal, and one in the immediate neighbourhood of the great commercial metropolis where I live. I had the opportunity, as well as several other hon. gentlemen sitting in this House, to watch the enormous development, from a commercial standpoint, of that great district and more particularly, that of the city of Montreal.

To ascribe to chance alone the enormous impetus given to our trade and industries, since the coming into power of the Liberal party, would offer no reasonable explanation of that phenomenon. Four or five years ago, business in the city of Montreal was in a state of depression; the failures