

will have a favorable influence upon those gentlemen who think that in the State of New York the farmers are more prosperous than they are in our good Province of Ontario :

" On the whole, New York farmers are more in debt than they were ten years ago. There are a large number of farms which were purchased a few years ago and mortgaged, which now would not sell for more than the face of the mortgages, owing to the depreciation of the farming lands, which, on an average, is fully 33 per cent. in ten years. Probably one-third of the farms in the State would not sell for more than the cost of the buildings and other improvements, owing to the shrinkage."

Now, then, Sir, hon. gentlemen may say that this large sum of mortgages has been placed on the farms of various States of the Union for the purpose of making improvements, or of purchasing new land. Well, I will not give my own opinion upon that question, but I will give the opinion of the *New York Times*, which deals with that question, lately, in a long article. It says :

" The greater portion of the money represented by the faces of these mortgages has not been expended in improving farms, because the larger portion of the farms were equipped with buildings before the mortgages were laid. The money has been spent to enable the farmers to live. Ten States mortgaged for \$3,422,000,000, and twenty-eight States and eight Territories to hear from. We personally know that all the agricultural Territories are heavily mortgaged. The total of the farm mortgages of America undoubtedly closely approximates \$9,000,000,000."

Now, Sir, it may be said that whilst our farms are not as largely mortgaged as the farms of the United States, at the same time our people seem less able to meet their engagements, and the property taken by the mortgage societies is increasing. Well, let me say that the Erie and Huron Loan and Investment Society, whose headquarters are in London, Ont., report that the arrearages are to-day only 4 per cent. of the capital invested, and that they are 22 per cent. less than they were on the 21st January, 1887; that only two-thirds of the 1 per cent. on the capital employed comes back in property to the company; and the farmers of the vicinity have placed in their hands over one million of dollars for the purpose of investment. Then, Sir, taking the report of the various loan societies in this Province I see that, in 1880, the mortgages in default amounted to over 8 per cent. of the whole. In 1886 only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the whole. The foreclosed mortgages in 1880 amounted to 4 per cent. of the whole, and in 1886 only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the whole. From these facts it may easily be seen that the condition of our farmers, unlike their brethren of the Empire State, is growing more prosperous as the years pass by. Another fact, and I leave this matter, feeling certain, Sir, that I have demonstrated to this House that our agriculturists occupy a position which might well be envied by their fellow farmers in whatever country. In Ontario the value of mortgaged property in 1886 increased, as compared with 1883, by \$34,000,000, whilst the amount of mortgages only increased by \$12,000,000. Now, I have dealt with the evidences of prosperity at home, let me deal for a moment with the evidences abroad. Hon. gentlemen need not be told that our Provincial securities are high in the foreign markets, nor need they be told that Dominion bonds, which a few years ago were only worth 88, are to-day worth 103. Let me, however, refer for a moment to the decrease in the rate of interest which we are compelled to pay, and to compare that with the decrease in the interest paid by other colonies. Since 1869 the interest upon British consols £100, has decreased 6s., that upon India bonds 11s. 3d., upon Cape Colony bonds £1 5s. 9d., New South Wales £1 12s. 9d., Victoria £1 10s. 9d., whilst the interest upon Canadian bonds has decreased £1 19s. 9d. This state of facts calls forth from the *Toronto Globe*, a paper which is not in the habit of painting too bright a picture with regard to Canada, the following expression :—

" Thus not only has the credit of Canada risen more than that of any other colony, or than that even of England herself, but the credit of Canada actually stands to-day on the British market next to that of India, which is, to some extent, guaranteed by Britain."

Mr. MONTAGUE.

So, when we come to consider all these facts, we see that His Excellency is abundantly justified in congratulating us in this country upon the prosperity we enjoy. But I may be told that, notwithstanding our seeming prosperity, we have a great debt hanging over our heads which is bringing to us impending ruin. I can only say that, looking at the figures, with regard to our credit in the money markets of the world, the financial kings of those markets must have adopted the idea of the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), when he presented to those people the silver lining of the shield, and explained, quite properly, that our public debt stood for the large amount of development that we have made and the large amount of public works which we have constructed in this country. Now, Sir, in face of all these facts, in face of the prosperity that we are enjoying, in face of the development that we have made in the few years since Confederation, we have no reason to be discouraged in the work we have undertaken, namely, to rear upon the foundations laid by the fathers, the framers of our Confederation, a great national superstructure, and I trust that, in this House, and at this hour, in view of our achievements in the past, are to be found none who would discourage us in the work we have undertaken. There was a time in this country when, under less favorable circumstances, the pioneers might have become discouraged in the struggle in which they were engaged, but they manfully continued the struggle, and the result of their labors is seen in the great heritage which we enjoy at the present time. I think, Sir, it ill becomes us, their successors, to weary in the struggle we have taken up, where they have dropped the implements of toil. It is, at the present time, encouraging to see that this feeling is widespread, and that everywhere there is a feeling of hopefulness, a feeling of confidence from end to end of the country. It is pleasant to know that among the younger members of our population is being developed a feeling of Canadian nationalism, and it is that feeling only which can assist us in fulfilling the great destiny which is reserved to us. This feeling should pervade all classes of our population. No matter what blood flows in our veins, we are Canadians; no matter to what country we look with pride as the home of our fathers, it is to this country that we owe first and last our devotion. No matter to what Province we may turn with loving thoughts of home, true patriotism will impel us to remember that we are citizens of a country stretching from the shores of one ocean and reaching to the shores of another. I say, Sir, if we are to fulfil our destiny, it can only be by this feeling increasing, by the fusion of the various parts into one great and harmonious whole; it can only be by the Provinces uniting one with the other, giving up the individual for the general weal; it can only be by section joining section, by sect vying with sect in loyalty to the Constitution under which we all enjoy the perfection of Christian liberty; it can only be by the representatives of the various nationalities which go to form our five millions of people joining their hearts and their hands in promoting the welfare of the land, upon whose hospitable shores all find a welcome to full, free citizenship, the enjoyment of political liberties and happy homes. Sir, I beg to thank hon. members on both sides of this House for the kindness and consideration they have extended to me, and to conclude by moving :

That a humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General to thank His Excellency for his gracious Speech at the commencement of the present Session, and further to assure His Excellency :—

1. That we receive with much pleasure His Excellency's expression of gratification at meeting us once more at the commencement of the Parliamentary Session, and of congratulation upon the general prosperity of the country.

2. That we are glad to learn that, although the labors of the husbandman have not been rewarded in some portions of the Dominion by an adequate return, the harvest of last year has, on the whole, been