

ent sections of the people; bitter enemies were turned into friends; and it so happens that nowadays the hatreds and conflicts of the past have given place to a gospel of toleration; and the citizens of this country, willing to sink their opinions for the sake of harmony, and remembering that they are Canadians first, devote all their energies to the patriotic task of making this Canada of ours a great and prosperous country.

It is with the greatest pleasure I second the motion before us.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Carleton, Ont.) Mr. Speaker. I desire most sincerely to congratulate both the mover and the seconder of this address upon the very eloquent speeches which have just been delivered. It is true that perhaps we would not be altogether inclined to agree with everything that was suggested by my hon. friend from Lambton (Mr. Pardee), more especially with regard to the public expenditure of this country. My hon. friend who moved the address is very comprehensive in his justification of the public expenditure, because I recollect very well that last year he stood up stoutly in this House and defended what we thought a very improper expenditure with regard to the steamship 'Arctic.' When he suggests that all this expenditure has been wise, economical and for the benefit of the country, we cannot but feel inclined to picture to ourselves the tremendous disaster that would have befallen this fair Dominion of ours if that expedition had never been sent, and if the three or four hundred thousand dollars spent upon it had remained in the public treasury. It would have been a national calamity against which I am sure my hon. friend who has just spoken would have raised his voice.

He has spoken also in very proper terms of the prosperity of the country. We, on this side of the House, rejoice with him that the country is prosperous, that present conditions obtain in Canada to-day. He has referred to the marvellous increase in the railway tonnage and in the amount of freight carried by the railways of this country. He very judiciously thought proper to omit the statement which he well might have made, that although the inter-colonial has participated very largely in that increased tonnage, it has been rolling up larger deficits during the last four or five years than were ever before known in its history. With similar prudence he refrained from any reference to the fact that although we have large tracts of public land in this country, the present administration seem inclined to get rid of it at the very earliest possible moment, and at prices which are very beneficial to the gentlemen who are fortunate enough to secure these grants.

I congratulate the hon. gentleman most heartily on what he has said with regard to electoral reform. I could not help noticing that that portion of his speech re-

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ceived much less applause from his friends than any other portion of it. I do not know whether there is any significance in that. I am glad indeed that the government have promised, in the speech from the Throne, to give us legislation on that question this year. I brought the matter to the attention of parliament last session. I introduced certain Bills, I moved that they be referred to a special committee. The then Minister of Justice was also prepared with one or more Bills, and all the proposed legislation went to that committee to be dealt with at that time. I note the course which the hon. gentleman has just now proposed, and which seems to me a very desirable one to follow under such circumstances. I made no partisan reference, I made no attack upon any hon. gentleman or upon the Liberal party of this country with regard to such matters; I simply brought to the attention of the House what I conceived to be very serious defects in the law with regard to elections, and in the law with regard to procedure for investigating those elections. Unfortunately, through causes for which I do not in the least reproach the government, the researches of that committee and the report of that committee were not as full as I could have wished. If a measure is brought down, as I believe one will be brought down, this session, doing that which the hon. gentleman has advocated, I am sure the government will find on this side of the House every disposition to deal with that matter from a non-partisan standpoint, and to put upon the statute-book of this country such enactments as will be sufficient to bring about a reform of the evils which have been alluded to by the hon. gentleman who moved this address. So far as I am concerned, I agree very much with what was stated by the Minister of Justice of the day in his remarks last year. The law which we have upon the statute-book at the present time is a fairly good law if we could always be sure of its enforcement. But, unfortunately, we cannot always be sure of its enforcement, and I am inclined to adhere to the attitude which I then took, that one important amendment, and perhaps the most important amendment that is necessary in that regard, is one which will establish in this country a public prosecutor beyond the reach of either political party, whether government or opposition, whose duty it would be to deal with these matters, and investigate those cases which, for any reason, it may not be the intention of one party or the other to deal with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, turning again to a subject which was alluded to by my hon. friend who moved this address, let me say that when he speaks of the prosperity of this country we agree with him; when he speaks of all the expenditure of this country as having been wise and judicious we are not much disposed to agree with him; and we are supported by the statement of a public servant of this country