

of the resolutions. I may, without affectation, admit my consciousness of inability to meet the demands of this occasion in a satisfactory manner; and, in endeavouring to acquit myself of the responsibility, I shall aim only at a succinct rehearsal and review of those subjects which His Excellency has commended for the deliberations of this Legislature. I rejoice that the very first utterance in that Speech to which it seems proper to direct attention is that which acknowledges the beneficent Providence which has watched over this country during the past year, and vouchsafed to the husbandman an abundant harvest. The Providence of God has smiled upon and crowned with success the providence of man. This has been more conspicuous in connection with the agriculture of our country; but it is cause for thankfulness that it has not been restricted to that alone. We are enabled to rejoice also in increased development and activity in commercial and industrial pursuits. I know, Sir, and I do not think it is any subject for regret, that that prosperity has not flowed in upon us in as vast a volume as some have seemed to expect. I know that the right hon. gentleman who leads the Government of this country and those who are associated with him have been taunted because that prosperity has not seemed to flow in in the manner in which those who have brought the accusation and taunt have thought fit to assume was predicted regarding it. But there is abundant evidence that the tide has turned, and those who have read Macaulay's History of England will recall the simile by which he endeavoured to illustrate the advance of civilisation: likening it to the tide which, whilst it is rolling upwards and onwards, may seem to the casual observer at times to recede, but, with every fresh wave, marks a higher point upon the shore. Such a simile, I think, may be well applied to our position at the present time and the advance which this country is at this moment making. Mr. Speaker, whilst we are enabled to felicitate ourselves upon the advantages which we possess and that degree of prosperity which has been granted to us, it is matter for regret that other portions of the Empire have suffered distress. In England itself, the very seat and centre

of this vast Empire, the last season has, like others preceding it, been marked by agricultural failure. But it is from Ireland—that home of a noble race which has contributed so largely to the glory of the Empire, giving valiant soldiers and generals to fight her battles and eloquent statesmen to adorn her legislation, and which has done so much for the colonisation of the Empire—that land to which, I presume, many may be found within these walls who can trace their ancestry, and also hundreds of thousands throughout this Dominion—it is from that land that the wail of distress is borne to us across the ocean; and I feel quite sure that there is no one in this assembly who will not respond fully, heartily and completely to the suggestion which His Excellency has thrown out, that we should consider the best means to be adopted to contribute our quota of relief to that suffering people. And, if I may appropriate an idea of which I do not claim to be the originator, I might ask what better means could be adopted of manifesting our sympathy than contributions in kind? If Providence has been so gracious to us that our barns are filled with plenty, why not send forward by the railways which we control to the sea, a portion of our surplus produce, and, at the sea, our own vessels are waiting to convey it to the shores of Ireland? I am quite sure that, when the flag of the Dominion is unfurled within the harbours of that island, a feeling will be excited exceeding far any that could be called forth by mere contributions in money. There I may advert to another portion of His Excellency's Speech, in which he refers to the distress of the Indians in the North-West. I cannot question that this House will cheerfully endorse the action of the Government, which has been induced by necessity to expend a large sum in order to save those aborigines from starvation. Whilst we congratulate Ministers upon the means which are being adopted for the settlement of those Indians in the country, and the turning of their attention to industrial pursuits, we look forward to the settlement of that country by a different class of people. During the past year, there have been a large number from the old country, from the older colonies, and from the United States, who have settled in the North-