

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HIS EXCEL- LENCY'S SPEECH.

The House proceeded to the consideration of His Excellency's speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. WM. F. TODD (Charlotte, N.B.). Mr. Speaker, in rising to move the Address in reply to the speech from the Throne, I think it is befitting in me first to ask for the time-honoured indulgence of this House to a new member. I have heard, since I have arrived here, of the kind courtesy and consideration which is always extended to new members who address this House for the first time, and I trust that I may receive to-day from both sides of the House consideration and patience in the few remarks that I have to make. I am deeply conscious of the honour that has been conferred upon me and the county that I have the pleasure to represent in moving this address, and I hope that I shall make a speech that will be satisfactory to the members of this side of the House at least; for I feel that I come here to take my part as one of the young workers of this House. My desire is, Mr. Speaker, that in all my course in this House, I shall always bear with me the feeling that I have ever been courteous and gentlemanly to my fellow-members on both sides. I have come here to take part with my friends on the Government side in endeavouring to solve the great problems that will come up in our effort to make of this Canada of ours such a nation as she is destined to be, and to march forward with them in that progress as a nation which we and those who follow us during the years of the century to come, have to undertake.

The first clause in the speech from the Throne refers to the abundant harvest which a kind Providence has granted us. Mr. Speaker, a kind Providence will always grant us a bountiful harvest, because the agricultural industry of this country, as of any large country, is the one that represents the largest population and the largest business interest in the country. It is the only creative industry that Canada or any other country possesses, because, as we are well aware, while the manufacturing industries transform raw materials into the manufactured products, there is in agriculture that divine impress upon the soil which nourishes the seed from which grows the immense crops which are so gratifying to us, and which add so much to the wealth of the country.

In giving agriculture the first place among our national interests, we are only following the natural order and giving to that great industry the rank to which it is entitled. Among our great interests that of agriculture comes first in importance, the lumbering second, then the mining and then the fisheries. When I speak of agri-

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culture as the only creative industry, what other industry, I would ask, is there which as in agriculture out of itself, out of the mere seed that is put in the ground and out of the four elements added to the soil, gives a return of ten for one? When we consider that ninety-three per cent of what goes into these crops is given by the air and the sun, when we consider that the immense power thus given, is estimated at 2,000 horse-power per acre, and when we consider further that the creative power thus given, equal to ninety-three parts out of the hundred, will ever be at our hands to furnish those countless crops, we can well say that Canada may look to the reaping of countless wealth from the cultivation of her soil. It is estimated that we have in the Northwest Territories 171,000,000 acres well adapted for agriculture, and, according to the reports during the past year, nearly 100,000,000 bushels of wheat were grown in the Dominion, most of it in the western country. The great wealth which is in store for this Dominion we know will spring in a great measure from the virgin soil of the west. It is by means of the wealth which we expect to derive from these western prairie lands that we hope to enlarge our transportation facilities and thus give impetus to all our commercial interests. When we consider that the great west of Canada, with a population estimated at 6,500,000 for the whole Dominion, raised nearly one hundred million bushels of wheat last year, we can well feel proud and assured of our future. The great republic to the south, with its population of 90,000,000, and which claims to be the richest country under the sun, only raised last year a crop of 660,000,000 bushels, small in comparison with ours, when we consider the difference in population. With her soil in the western states largely depleted, her farmers are travelling over to our country and taking up lands in our territory, which is the best tribute possible to our superiority as a storehouse of agricultural wealth.

I come from the far east, from a country bordering upon the sea, I come from New Brunswick, where we have also rich farming lands, still we know that the immigrants from the old world are more likely to be attracted by these western prairie lands, which have lain fallow for centuries, and which will give the farmer the maximum of profit without subjecting him to the expense of adding to that soil the fertilizers which are found necessary in the east. But no doubt the day will come when the immigrants from the mother country will see in the eastern provinces lands which, scientifically cultivated, will give a handsome return on the investment besides enjoying the advantages of being nearer the central market and having cheaper transportation facilities. From the