

THE PROVINCIAL HOUSE.

FROM THE DAILY COLONIST FEBRUARY 15.

Business Well Under Way With Debate of the Address in Reply.

The Premier Speaks With Pride of Marvellous Development in Recent Years.

The fourth session of the seventh parliament of British Columbia commenced in earnest Monday afternoon, when the debate upon the address in reply to the speech from the throne proceeded, for upwards of three and a half hours, to be again continued at the sitting of the house to-day. The Speaker took the chair yesterday at 2 o'clock, prayers being read by the Bishop of Columbia. Several petitions were presented.

On the order for the address in reply to the speech being called:

Mr. Williams (Vancouver) objected that the questions on the order paper should be answered prior to the debate on the speech, as members would then be able to give the subject matter of the sessional programme more intelligent consideration.

Mr. Speaker ruled that this was contrary to practice.

Major Muter then moved the address. Upon rising, the senior member for Cowichan-Alberni first expressed the diffidence he felt in attempting to do justice to the demands of the great occasion of the first meeting for the transference of ordinary business in the new and magnificent buildings. He warmly congratulated the architect and clerk of works for the fidelity with which the artist's designs have been carried on to completion, for the faithfulness of the work and the remarkable ingenuity with which all difficulties have been met by him as they have arisen; "so that we have buildings which for absolute honesty of construction are perhaps unique on the continent of America, and which are the wonder of all visitors from other lands for the moderate cost at which they have been erected, as well as for their beauty and their substantial character."

"Touching upon the next subject of the address he proceeded: "That the revenue of the country has been expanding is undoubted, as the following figures will show: I find that the revenue for the ten years, 1878-88, 1889-97, 1898-06, increased from \$608,678 to \$1,383,048 from all sources; excluding Dominion subsidies from \$396,527 to \$1,450,359, and exclusive of Dominion subsidy and land sales, from \$317,654 to \$1,054,145, as more fully shown in the statement which I beg leave to submit:

	Revenue.	Exclusive of Dominion Subsidies.	Excluding Dominion Subsidy and Land Sales.
1878-79	\$608,678	\$396,527	\$317,654
1879-80	706,739	494,628	351,510
1880-81	845,552	538,371	388,542
1881-82	964,943	572,732	508,241
1882-83	1,030,927	720,513	627,078
1883-84	1,019,216	775,088	693,080
1884-85	1,211,960	878,075	844,158
1885-86	1,383,048	1,140,359	1,054,145

Land sales in the successive years dealt with are set down as below: 1878-79, \$80,373; 1879-80, \$189,507; 1880-81, \$244,839; 1881-82, \$240,870; 1882-83, \$213,419; 1883-84, \$179,990; 1884-85, \$303,917; 1885-86, \$255,890; 1886-87, \$44,003; and 1890-97, \$86,214. The difference in income thus shown from the year 1878-79 to the fiscal year 1890-97 is \$738,491, or an average increase of \$82,054. The increase of revenue, exclusive of Dominion subsidies, is \$549,830, or an average of \$62,478; and the increase of revenue from all sources appears at \$774,370, or an average of \$86,041.

Having presented this significant table, Major Muter continued: "The construction of the line from Penticton to the Boundary country, within eighteen months, opening up the far-famed Okanagan valley and throwing a large amount of freight on to the Shuswap & Okanagan railway will make it a paying branch, and eventually the line will be carried on to the Coast by way of Chilliwack. It is likely that early construction of the Chilliwack line will be made, and herein again is cause found for congratulation to the government. It must be a source of undoubted satisfaction to this house and the province that the recovery of gold and other metals has given such an impetus to the general prosperity of the province, as also the important fact that the coal fields in the Crow's Nest Pass are likely to be available by the building of the Crow's Nest Pass railway within a reasonable time. The increase in the population of the province in certain localities indicates that they are fairly entitled to increased representation at once, but a full survey of redistribution should naturally come after the census of 1901. There are such vast changes taking place in the province at the present time that Kootenay, which a few years ago was sparsely inhabited, is now probably the most populous part of the entire province. In the far North similar causes are at work, in the Cassiar and Omineca districts, which are likely to introduce large populations to these sections. Then comes the Lillooet in the centre, on the coast of the mainland and of the island, similar developments at work, all of which indicate clearly that the population in these districts will also be largely augmented. I am pleased to observe that attention is to be paid to agriculture, which I trust will be of a liberal and enlightened character. Although the timber industry was for some time depressed, I trust that it will, through the industry of the province, feel the benefit of the expected revival we are now anticipating, and that the improvement which has been experienced is only the beginning of a long period of prosperity. It is satisfactory to note that the fisheries of the province are in a productive condition, and that this industry it is in the power of the house to foster in a judicious manner. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I can only echo the desire of the people of the province that we may do justice to their aspirations and high hopes for the future so far as it lies in the power of the acts which we pass; and that

the discussions which we may enter into may redound to the character of the legislative assembly of British Columbia. And that we may keep constantly before us the refrain to his Jubilee ode by our great British writer: "Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet—lest we forget—lest we forget."

Mr. Adams (Cariboo), in seconding the reply, took occasion first of all to add his congratulations to the government and the house on the completion of the handsome new buildings in which the legislature found its home. The impression the buildings would make was a good thing for the country, and for it as well as the completion of the buildings the country deserved congratulation. The expansion of the revenue, alluded to in the speech, was certainly very encouraging to all having the interests of the province at heart, and in this connection he had been able to make few comparisons which would show her rivalling the most advanced of the provinces of the continent. He found that the revenue for the year ending 1st of June 1890 was \$989,766.22, which for the succeeding year it was \$1,383,048.24, a very substantial increase of \$393,282.02. The period of the year ending 1st of June 1890, on the contrary, showed a decrease of \$45,651.99, the figures being \$1,614,723.62 for 1890 and but \$1,569,071.63 for the following year. As to the sections of the province showing revenue increase, he pointed to with an advance of \$32,113.26; Cowichan-Alberni, \$2,589.50; North Nanaimo, \$6,487.61; South Nanaimo, \$3,410.44; Comox, \$11,950.20; Westminster, \$2,207.80; Vancouver, \$2,583.28; Kelowna, \$7,453.39; Lillooet, \$7,453.39; East Kootenay, \$9,962.99; West Kootenay, \$187,993.76; Cariboo, \$8,861.94; and Cassiar, \$160.11. The hon. member for Cariboo considered this an exceptional year, showing a good average of increase, and he took occasion to point out that the revenue for the year ending 1st of June 1890 was \$989,766.22, which for the succeeding year it was \$1,383,048.24, a very substantial increase of \$393,282.02. 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