

they were forced upon my attention by the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament yesterday. The first question which naturally engages the attention of hon. gentlemen is the fact that we have been called together at a time which is rather out of the natural order, looking, as we invariably do, to February as the month in which Parliament should be convened; but, as I have already stated, the grave questions to be presented for your consideration warrant this early meeting. The first subject to which His Excellency calls our attention is the fact that Canada has been blessed by a bountiful harvest. I think you will agree with me that it was right and proper that His Excellency should begin his gracious Speech by referring to such an important fact. That Canada has been blessed with a bountiful harvest is, indeed, a matter of gratification. Although not as good and bountiful as one could wish in some parts of the country, yet, taking it as a whole — looking at it from an average point of view — His Excellency is quite warranted in making the statement found in the Speech now in our hands. This has, no doubt, contributed to the prosperity on which His Excellency in the next paragraph congratulates the country. That the harvest will tend, and has tended, to bring about this desirable end is a point that will be readily conceded by every hon. gentleman who had the pleasure of listening to His Excellency, or of reading the Speech since it was delivered. Not only has there been a bountiful harvest, but, I think, taken in connection therewith, the legislation of two sessions ago has contributed in no small degree to bring about the prosperity to which His Excellency alludes. I am not going to discuss to-day whether the National Policy, as it has been termed, has brought about the prosperity with which Canada is blessed at the present moment. I think it would be, perhaps, out of place on this occasion, but I cannot help remarking that there have been during the last few years seasons in which an abundant harvest has been reaped without the prosperity ensuing which has attended the reaping of that of 1880. That policy has contributed in no small degree, in my opinion, to the prosperity which Canada

*Hon. Mr. Gibbs.*

is now enjoying. I could cite, were it necessary, the improved position of several interests which have of late years been much depressed, as evidence of the commercial prosperity alluded to. I allude to the shipping interest as one of them. Our shipping has been earning much better freights during the past year or two than in years preceding, and this has aided materially in bringing about the prosperity of the country. Then, if we look at the question of inter-provincial trade, of which we may, perhaps, judge to some extent by the returns made of the Inter-colonial Railway traffic, we find that it must have been very materially increased, and has also, to a considerable extent, contributed to restore the commercial prosperity of the country. Then again, our increased exports, I am happy to say, show that many of our industries have been stimulated by the National Policy, and, though not yet in full blast, are feeling their way into foreign markets. I make the statement advisedly that many manufactures have been exported not only to England, but to the far off colonies of Australia, as well as to one of our own provinces, Manitoba. These industries, which have been feeling their way in other countries, have met with a degree of considerable success, and I hope they will be warranted in exporting more largely than they have yet done. Not only has this contributed to the undoubted prosperity of the country, but also to the substantial development of our various industries. In this connection I may state the fact that some sugar refineries, which had been closed before the passing of the National Policy, have been stimulated so far as to be re-opened, and that operations have been recommenced with every promise of success. Not only this, but I may also point to the fact that in the city of Halifax, towns of Moncton, Tilsonbury and West Farnham, sugar refineries are also in course of construction, involving an expenditure of, perhaps, a million of dollars or upwards. I do not think that I am stretching the point, or going beyond the record, when I state that all these industries are dependent, more or less, upon the continuance of the policy which was adopted in this country in 1879. I might refer also here to many other in-