

March 11, 1873

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 11, 1873

The **SPEAKER** took the chair at 3.25 p.m.

Prayers

PETITIONS

Mr. LANTIER presented a petition for the construction of the canal on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, from Coteau Landing to the Cascades.

A petition was presented for an Act to incorporate the St. Francis and Mégantic Railway Company.

Other petitions were presented, several praying for the prohibition of the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors.

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THE ADDRESS IN REPLY TO THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Mr. TOBIN then rose to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Last year the address had been moved by a member from the Pacific coast, this year it was by a member from the Atlantic coast, which suggested the union of interest that had been brought about from east to west by wise legislation and good government; and it might be hoped that in a very short time Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland would join the Confederation. (*Cheers.*) Could he do justice to the theme he would like to speak of the grand spectacle presented by the whole country being represented in one house. (*Cheers.*)

He would speak of the Speech from the Throne and the programme laid down therein as briefly as possible, and though he could not hope to find unanimity on all subjects, there was one subject on which they would all agree, namely, the esteem in which they held the Governor General and his lady. He then referred to the exalted position Lord Dufferin held in England, to his appointment, and to the many ways in which since his arrival in Canada he had sought to identify himself with the people and the country, showing that he possessed in the most eminent degree every quality which could be desired in our Governor. He welcomed them to Canada, and trusted their career would continue as auspiciously as it had commenced, and he was sure the House would reciprocate the expressions of His Excellency in the opening paragraph of the speech.

He then referred to the contract for the Canada Pacific, and thought that the statement that the work would be prosecuted vigorously would be received with pleasure by every true and loyal Canadian. (*Cheers.*) He would not deal with the details of the charter, as it was sufficient for him that Parliament in a previous session had decided on a policy on this question, and had given the Government the extraordinary powers needed for the extraordinary undertaking, and he was satisfied that the Government had dealt with the matter in a common-sense view and with the greatest foresight.

He should turn a deaf ear to the rumours on this subject given in newspapers, and should pay no attention to them until the charges were proved in the House. He believed the Board of Directors of the Pacific Company represented the energy, enterprise and straight forward dealing of the country, and he spoke in high terms of Sir Hugh Allan, expressing the hope that the energy which had enabled that gentleman to connect two continents by his steamers would enable him to connect to oceans by the proposed railway. The railway was to be built by Canadian capital, and would be of the greatest possible benefit and advantage to the country. (*Cheers.*) Canada would become the highway of nations, and her future importance could not be over-estimated.

The Northwest ought to have been opened upon England long ago, and if this had been done that country would have now been peopled by tens of thousands of prosperous farmers. We should have another Ontario in the west. The Pacific Railway would do this, and he hoped all differences of the past would be forgotten and every exertion made to shape well our future.

He next referred to the Canal improvements, and though he was not so immediately interested in this matter as gentlemen from other provinces, yet he fully appreciated the importance of the undertaking, and should support to his utmost any action in the enlargement and improvement of the water navigation of the country. He referred more particularly to the Baie Verte Canal, the importance of which was very great. He was a great enthusiast in the construction of canals and railways, and thought all public works should receive every support, and should be pushed forward with all energy, both for our own sakes and for the sakes of those who come after us.

He was glad to see that emigrants were flocking to Canada, but, though much may have been done in Canada, very much still remained to be done. Population was what Canada wanted, and he trusted the appointment of agents, and the liberality of Parliament would produce much good in this respect. The Canadian Pacific