

TUESDAY, Feb. 13th.

The House met at 3 o'clock.

After routine,

Hon. Mr. McLELAN resumed the debate on the Address. He said:—I don't remember that I have ever troubled the House with any observations upon the Address previous to this, and I do not know that I should now, but that circumstances over which I have no control may cause my absence in that period of the session when most of the public questions come up for discussion. In taking up this Address we do not find it very cheering in its tone. The Government anticipates the suspension of certain public works of this country, considered important and necessary at the time of Confederation. The preceding clause relates to canals, and the inference we draw is that the work on those canals is to be suspended. It appears to me unless those works which have been commenced are completed, it is only under the most urgent necessity their construction should be suspended, until the whole channel of communication is finished, because it is only then you can have any advantage for the expenditure. It may be, however, that the revenue necessities are so great as to render this impossible. The honorable gentleman from Fredericton seems to think that by the adoption of his plan of an issue of Dominion notes there would be no difficulty in providing the necessary funds to carry on all the works contemplated. He expressed little hope the Government would do this inasmuch as they were bound by golden shackles and would not issue notes without a metallic basis. It occurs to me that there might be a compromise effected between himself and his friends of the Government, by their issuing eight or ten millions of dollars in paper upon that very permanent metallic basis which they have in the steel rails deposited throughout the country. Congratulation is expressed here at the opening of the Intercolonial Railway, and we who have to travel from the Lower Provinces over that road are, I think, all ready to join in these congratulations, and I may add, from my own knowledge of that work, that when this winter will have passed away, and the rails adjusted after the first year's frost, it will be a perfect luxury to ride over that line, amidst some of the finest scenery of America. And I may add, for the satisfaction of my honorable friend who spoke yesterday, I believe that road will develop such a trade as will leave very little burden on the revenues of this country to sustain it. In the next paragraph, satisfaction is expressed at the po-

action that this Dominion occupied at the great Centennial Exhibition of our neighbors. I am sure it must be pleasant to us and gratifying to the country to know that we made so creditable a comparison, ten years after our union, of products with the products of our neighbors, who are celebrating the hundredth year of their union. This paragraph suggests a theme. We are now in the tenth year since the four original provinces were united. In the married life it is customary at the tenth year to have a wedding anniversary. I don't know whether it is called the tin or the wooden wedding. In this case we are certainly unable to take up this Speech and say it is a tin wedding, because some of our public works are to be held in abeyance for want of tin. I do not know that we can call it a wooden wedding inasmuch as the Government have never yet been able to construct a platform. My honorable friend from Belleville reminded me yesterday that they have one plank—No. 1, self—and he gives us an idea that that plank is enlarging and strengthening, although it is worn smooth by the footsteps of those who are tramping across it to havens of peace and plenty. But although they have that one plank, and although it may be enlarging and strengthening, and although a variety of articles, useful and fancy, have been offered by Boards of Trade, I do not like to call this the wooden period of our union, for fear that some honorable gentleman whose imaginations are not under proper discipline might say I was associating the word "wooden" with the occupants of the Treasury Benches. We have before us the fact that we are near the completion of the tenth year of the union of these Provinces. In married life it is customary for the united, in these periods, to take a kind of matrimonial stock to see what has been the measure of their prosperity and happiness, and what have been their reverses, and in the light of that experience to form their course of action, in order, if possible, that the measure of their prosperity and happiness may be largely increased. It appears to me it would have been desirable if some one who had the materials under his hand had given us such a review of the period over which we have just passed, to have presented in a concise form a history of those ten years to lay before the constituencies of this Dominion for their benefit in the appeal which, I take it, will soon be made to them. I do not refer to that appeal of a general election, which must come under the statute, but to that appeal which I believe the Gov-