

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

FOURTH PARLIAMENT—THIRD SESSION.

(By Our Own Reporters.)

FRIDAY, Jan. 13.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

Mr. Wells—Petition of the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, praying for an Act to amend their Act of incorporation.

Mr. Baskerville—Petition of the Ottawa Ladies' College, praying for an Act to amend their Act of incorporation.

Mr. Meredith—Petition of the City Council of London, praying for an Act to incorporate the London Junction Railway Company.

Mr. Young—Petition of the Town Council of Paris, praying for an Act to enable them to construct water-works; also the petition of the Canada Landed Credit Co., praying for an Act to amend their Act of incorporation.

Mr. Ferris—Petition of the Toronto and Ottawa Railway Co.; also of the Midland Railway Co.; also of the Whitby, Port Perry, and Lindsay Ry. Co.; also of the Toronto & Nipissing Railway Co.; also of the Victoria Railway Co.; also of the Grand Junction Railway Co., severally praying that an Act may pass to confirm a certain agreement between the Toronto and Nipissing and other railways.

THE ADDRESS.

Mr. HAY, in moving the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, congratulated the House, in the first place, upon the prosperous condition of the country, to which reference is made in the opening paragraph. There were those who professed to entertain the idea that the fiscal policy of the Dominion Government had a great deal to do with this prosperity, ignoring in a large measure the real causes, which were to be found in the abundant harvests of the past two years, the revival of foreign trade, and the increased demand for the products of the forest and field. In dealing with this subject he quoted from the Trade and Navigation returns for the last three years in support of the self-evident proposition that the condition of the country is to be attributed almost entirely to these causes. The returns showed that in 1879 the exports from the Dominion amounted to \$50,083,571, in 1880 they had increased to \$70,096,191, and in 1881 to \$81,291,000. During the same years the exports of products of the forest were, in 1879, \$13,261,459; in 1880, \$16,859,507; and in 1881 they amounted to \$25,016,000. In agricultural products the following were the exports for the years named:—For 1879, \$19,623,464; for 1880, \$22,294,358; and for 1881 they were \$21,243,000. Of animals and their products there were exported in 1879 \$14,064,000; in 1880, \$17,607,579; and in 1881, \$21,344,000. In exports of products of the forest there was an increase in 1881 over those of 1879 of \$11,754,541; in animals and their products there was an increase of \$7,345,396; and in agricultural products the returns showed an increase of \$1,619,535, making a grand total excess in the several branches of export in 1881 over 1879 of \$20,717,473. (Applause.) The production by the population of the entire Dominion during the same time showed an increase of \$5 25 per head, or \$25 per family; that of the Province of Ontario alone being \$7 per capita and \$35 per family. It was absurd to say that the fiscal policy of the Dominion Government had anything to do with the revival of trade in the United States, or with the late abundant harvests, or the increased demand for agricultural products. It was contended, too, by the advocates of protection, that by the adoption of that policy the farmers of Canada had regained possession of their own markets, a condition of things which he believed to be a national calamity instead of a national blessing. By the operation of this policy the volume of traffic on our waterways and canals had largely decreased, making them less valuable as a medium of transportation from the West and North-West. The returns for the port of Montreal indicate a large decrease in exports of grain and flour, and the Corn Exchange of that city was at present appealing to the Government for a repeal of the wheat duty. It was obvious from this that instead of seeking to exclude American products from our markets we should rather endeavour to secure as large a share as possible of the export trade of the United States, and thus create a source of national wealth in the employment given to our railways and canals. He thought no one would deny that had it not been for the revival of the agricultural interest the Province would have been in a worse position today than it was four years ago, owing to the largely diminished purchasing power of the people consequent upon the introduction of a protective policy. Coming to the Ontario Boundary Award, he detailed at considerable length the attempts which had been made from time to time to effect a settlement of that question. The award made in 1878 gave Ontario a little more than double the area which the Dominion Government was willing to grant to it, or an acreage of about 128,000,000 acres. He called their attention for a few minutes to the character of the disputed territory. It was said that it was a worthless tract of land. Even admitting that, they were still entitled to it as a matter of justice and right. The soil, it was true, was rough, yet they found in such localities a large tract of arable land, fit for settlement, and capable of producing in large quantities such crops as were produced in Ontario. A country about one hundred miles in extent called the Rainy River district, situated within the disputed territory, could accommodate a population of 200,000 people. There was a society formed in the city represented by the leader of the Opposition, for the purpose of colonizing that district, but he presumed that the uncertain state of things deterred a number from going to that beautiful portion of Ontario. The timber resources of that district were immense, being estimated at 26,000,000,000 feet B.M. That