

Mr. Borden's Response.

Mr. R. L. Borden, who was the first to respond, was received with great cheering. He said that if those present would only work as hard as they had cheered, there would be no doubt as to who would be the next Premier of Ontario. (Cheers.) Such demonstrations were but a part of the loyalty and affection and enthusiasm which all good Conservatives had ever manifested for this great country. We called ourselves a nation. Our national feeling had grown in recent years, not the least cause of which was the presence of our sons on the battle fields of Africa, alongside the best troops in the world. We believed that the work of national unity which had been in progress during the past thirty-four years was bound to go forward in the future even more rapidly than in the past. We wanted, first, greater confidence in our own country,

confidence in her resources, confidence in her people, confidence in ourselves, and, above all, confidence and trust in each other. (Applause.) We knew that we were not without our difficulties in working out our destiny in this country. We had elements in this country which led to difficulty and to doubt sometimes in dealing with public questions, but we knew and believed that the more the people of the different Provinces knew each other, and understood the point of view in the different Provinces, upon the attitude and standpoint of those who might entertain opposing views, the more that that intercourse prevailed among our people the better it would be for the people, and the greater moderation would prevail among the public men of the country in discussing public questions. (Applause.)

The Ontario Fortress.

He knew, Mr. Borden went on, turning to Ontario politics, how difficult it was for him to lead the attack on a Government which had been entrenched in power for the last thirty years. "I suppose," he said, "it attributes to itself all the prosperity which has prevailed throughout the world for the last few years. We have to meet that at Ottawa. I may say in dealing with it in passing, that while Providence is denied any credit whatever for that prosperity, we have admonitions from our friends in Ottawa that by-and-bye bad times are coming, and so far as I can gather from the members of the Government at Ottawa, when the bad times do come Providence is to get the sole credit for them. (Laughter.) Looked

at in that aspect, the Liberal Administration is entirely the superior of Providence, so far as beneficence and benevolence are concerned, because good times come from the Liberal Administration and all bad times are to be credited to Providence." (Renewed laughter.)

Mr. Borden, continuing, referred to the act of last session in the Ontario Legislature by which the life of Parliament was extended. "I do not know that I can congratulate the Province upon that innovation," he said. "It seems from a statement in the House of Com-

mons yesterday that that legislation has not been disallowed, and therefore it is left to the sweet will of any Legislature in the future to indefinitely prolong its own existence. If it can be done for the reason that has been assigned, if it is all right and constitutional to prolong for a few months, why not for three or four or five years or a dozen years? (Hear, hear.) It seems to me, with deference to the view of the statesmen who initiated this legislation, that even if the Legislature has the power to prolong its existence in this way, no one will pretend that it has the constitutional right to do so. The King in England has the technical right to disallow any legislation, but the King has not exercised that right for nearly 200 years. If he did it would result in very grave constitutional changes in England. Why should a Legislature attempt to exercise this right in this unconstitutional way? We have, too, confided rights in the expectation that they will be exercised in a constitutional manner. (Applause.)

The Prohibition Issue.

"One other point to which I would like to refer, a word upon the progress which this great Province—to which every other Province looks up in the way of legislation—has made in regard to prohibition in the last twelve years. Certainly you have had no lack of opportunities to vote upon this subject during the last ten or twelve years, and I understand you are to be afforded a further opportunity of depositing your ballots upon that subject during the present year. I understand you have not only enjoyed the benefit of a Dominion plebiscite, but also enjoyed the comfort and advantage of a Provincial plebiscite some years ago, and when the referendum comes I do not know how many of you will be disposed to avail yourselves of it." The position, Mr. Borden said, reminded him of what took place once at a tenantry dinner in England, when a party of farmers, accustomed to somewhat stronger stuff, were

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