

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire, and the House of Commons withdrew.

The Honourable Sir Oliver Mowat, Minister of Justice, presented to the House a Bill intituled: "An Act relating to Railways."

The said Bill was read a first time.

The Honourable the Speaker reported His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, and the same was then read by the Clerk.

On motion of the Honourable Sir Oliver Mowat, seconded by the Honourable Mr. Scott, it was

Ordered, That the Senate do take into consideration the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General, on Tuesday next, at eight o'clock in the evening.

The Honourable the Speaker presented to the Senate,—The Report of the Joint Librarians on the state of the Library of Parliament for the Second Session, 1896.

#### TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER OF THE SENATE.

The shortness of the recess necessarily renders the catalogue of accessions small, and the questions the Librarians have to submit to the Committee few in number.

The Librarians recall with the greatest satisfaction, for the information of a new Parliament, the final decision of the Library Committee regarding "Exchanges."

In 1890, the Committee decided that "the grant for the Library is not large enough to justify the purchase of books for the purpose of encouraging native literature, and that the purchase of exchanges should be confined to books of a character similar to that of the exchanges received from other countries."

The above very proper regulation having been departed from in practice, the Committee, in 1895, resolved that "when the Joint Committee is disposed to encourage the circulation of any valuable native work, it shall recommend such work to the notice of the Government, in order that a sum might be placed in the Estimates for the purchase of a certain number of copies."

In 1896, the Committee recommended, as a final decision on the subject, that "a sum be placed in the Estimates to be at their disposal for the purpose of encouraging, by purchase for Library exchanges, such works of Canadian writers as might be deemed worthy of such recognition."

The Librarians desire to express their cordial agreement in the opinion of the Committee. The practice of providing "exchanges" out of funds voted for the purchase of books for the Library of Parliament was injurious to the interests of the Library; and the Librarians hope that it may not be resumed, even should the sum asked for from the Government be not granted. The amount voted annually for the Library is sufficient for its purpose, if the money is strictly devoted to its proper and usual object; but it is not sufficient to support an annual demand for the purchase of "Library exchanges," an expression which has been rather freely interpreted.

Among the additions to the "American Section" must be mentioned a valuable collection of the portraits of a number of the governors, intendants and noted men under the French Regime. The collection, which comprises over 100 portraits, was bought in Paris, and will be made into albums for reference.

"The Military Operations in Canada under Sir John Colborne, illustrated by Lord Beauclerk," a volume of great rarity, has been added to the Canadian section, and some valuable and expensive works relating to the discovery of America have also been provided.

During the recess, the Librarians were enabled to procure for the first time the Journals of the Province of Nova Scotia for the years from 1802 to 1840, and it is expected that volumes of the records of other provinces, hitherto wanting, will be collected during the current year.