

This feeling of satisfaction is enhanced by the opportunities which I have already enjoyed of visiting, and in my official capacity renewing acquaintance with, several of the chief centres of the enterprise and activity of this Dominion; nor need I refrain from assuring you that I have been deeply impressed by the heartiness of the reception accorded to me as Her Majesty's Viceroy and Representative, a reception which has once more manifested the loyalty, the cordiality and the public spirit of the Canadian people.

My predecessor was able to express gratification to you last year on an increase in trade and on the continued progress of the Dominion. It is gratifying to me to observe that the expectation which was then formed—that the volume of trade during the then current year would exceed that of any year in the history of the Dominion—has been fully realized, and that Canada's progress continues with every mark of stability and permanence.

It may be observed with satisfaction that a large proportion of this increase is shown to have been due to an extension of our commerce with Great Britain.

It is a cause of thankfulness that our people have been spared in a very great degree from the sufferings which have visited the populations of some other countries during many months past, and that while the commercial depression prevailing abroad could not but affect the activity of business in the Dominion, we have been free from any extensive financial disaster or widespread distress.

The revenues of the year have been ample for the services which you provided for, and have met the expectations on which the appropriations of last year were based.

The peaceful conclusion, by the award of the arbitrators at Paris, of the controversy which had prevailed so long, with respect to the Seal Fisheries in the Pacific Ocean and the rights of British subjects in Behring Sea, has removed the only source of contention which existed between Great Britain and the United States with regard to Canada. There is every reason to believe that Her Majesty's Government will obtain redress for those Canadian subjects of Her Majesty who were deprived of their property and liberty without just cause while the controversy was in progress.

At an early date a measure will be laid before you having for its object a revision of the Duties of Customs with a view to meet the changes which time has effected in business operations of all kinds throughout the Dominion. While my Ministers do not propose to change the principles on which the existing enactments on this subject are based,

Mr. SPEAKER.

the amendments which will be offered for your consideration are designed to simplify the operation of the tariff and to lessen, as far as can be done, consistently with those principles and with the requirements of the Treasury, the imposts which are now in force.

There will also be laid before you a measure on the subject of Bankruptcy and Insolvency which will, it is hoped, make more adequate provision than now exists on that subject for the increasing trade and commerce of the country and for the greatly expanded trade between the several provinces of Canada.

Measures will also be submitted to you making more effective provisions for our lines of steam communication on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, for improving the law with regard to Dominion Lands and with regard to the management of Indian Affairs; also a Bill respecting Joint Stock Companies, another with respect to the Fisheries, and several less important measures which experience has suggested with regard to various matters under your control.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons:*

The Public Accounts will be submitted to you at an early date and also the Estimates of the expenditure which has been considered necessary for the ensuing year.

*Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons:*

While it is hoped that the public measures which will demand your attention will not be very numerous some of them will be of great weight and importance, and it is my earnest hope and prayer that the care and zeal which you will apply to the deliberations of the session may be aided by the abundant blessing of the Almighty.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON moved:

That the Address with which His Excellency has been pleased to open the Session be taken into consideration to-morrow.

Motion agreed to.

#### SELECT STANDING COMMITTEES.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON moved:

That Select Standing Committees of this House for the present session be appointed for the following purposes.—1. On Privileges and Elections.—2. On Expiring Laws.—3. On Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines.—4. On Miscellaneous Private Bills.—5. On Standing Orders.—6. On Printing.—7. On Public Accounts.—8. On Banking and Commerce.—9. On Agriculture and Colonization;—which said Committees shall severally be empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and