

Your Excellency is able to congratulate us upon the general prosperity of the Dominion, and upon the abundant harvest with which Providence has blessed all parts of the country.

We share in the most heartfelt manner the feeling of profound sorrow which the lamented and untimely death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale has aroused, and we feel most sincerely the same sympathy with Her Majesty and Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, in their bereavement, which has prevailed in the Dominion on this melancholy occasion and has found expression in respectful messages of condolence from Your Excellency's Ministers, from the Provincial Governments, and from many other representative bodies.

We thank Your Excellency for informing us that the negotiations with respect to seal fishing in Behring Sea have been continued, with a view to the adjustment, by arbitration, of the difficulties which have arisen between Her Majesty's Government and that of the United States on that subject. We are pleased to learn that Commissioners have been appointed by both Governments, to investigate the circumstances of seal life in Behring Sea; to report thereon; and to suggest the measures, if any, which they may deem necessary for its proper protection and preservation. We are glad to be informed that the Commissioners are proceeding with their deliberations in Washington, and that the results will shortly be communicated to Her Majesty's Government. We trust that their investigations, and the determination of the Arbitrators who are to be appointed, may lead to a just and equitable settlement of this long pending difficulty.

We receive with a deep sense of its importance Your Excellency's announcement that though the meeting which had been arranged with the United States Government for a day in October last, for an informal discussion on the extension of trade between the two countries, and on other international matters requiring adjustment, was postponed at their request, yet, that, in compliance with a more recent intimation from that Government, three of Your Excellency's Ministers proceeded to Washington, and conferred with representatives of the Administration of the United States on those subjects. We are glad to learn that an amicable understanding was arrived at respecting the steps to be taken for the establishment of the boundary of Alaska, and for reciprocity of services in cases of wreck and salvage. We are gratified to know that arrangements were also reached for the appointment of an International Commission to report on the regulations which may be adopted by the United States and Canada for the prevention of destructive methods of fishing and the pollution of streams, and for establishing uniformity of close seasons, and other means for the preservation and increase of fish; and we rejoice to hear that a valuable and friendly interchange of views respecting other important matters also took place.

We receive with gratification the announcements that in accordance with the promise given at the close of the last Session a Commission has been issued to investigate the working of the Civil Service Act, and other matters connected with the Civil Service generally, and that the report of this Commission will be laid before us during the present Session. We beg leave to assure Your Excellency that the report shall receive our best consideration.

We thank Your Excellency for informing us that the conclusion of the Commission on the manufacture of beet-root sugar will also be laid before us. We are also pleased to learn that, in as much as it is desirable that the fishery regulations in British Columbia should be examined and revised so as to adapt them better to the requirements of the fisheries in that Province, a Commission has been issued with that object.

We are glad to learn that the important measure respecting the Criminal Law, which was laid before us last Session, has been revised and improved, as a result of the expression of views elicited by its presentation to Parliament, and will be submitted to us. We bear with interest that our attention will also be directed to measures for returns; the redistribution of seats consequent upon the Census returns; the establishment of the boundaries of the Territories; and the amalgamation of the Departments of the Marine and Fisheries; and that Bills will also be presented to us for the amendment of the Civil Service Act, and of the Acts relating to real property in the Territories, and of those respecting the fisheries.

Your Excellency, having been graciously pleased to commend these important subjects, and all matters affecting the public interest which may be brought before us, to our best consideration, may feel assured that we will address ourselves to them with earnestness and assiduity.

He said :—

Les traditions de cette honorable chambre, les usages parlementaires m'imposent le devoir d'apporter à l'appui de cette motion quelques remarques que je ferai aussi courtes que possible. Ne pas fatiguer son auditoire est bien ce que l'on peut désirer de mieux quand on n'a pas la prétention de le retenir captif sous le charme de sa parole ou de l'intéresser vivement par une exposition savante du sujet à traiter, par une diction entraînante, par ces hardiesses de pensée et d'expression qui décèlent l'orateur véritable et l'imposent à l'admiration de ceux qui l'écoutent. Si je ne puis, et pour cause, provoquer cette admiration, il m'est du moins permis, et c'est mon devoir, de réclamer votre bienveillance que je suis sûr d'obtenir, si mon humble discours, réalisant les promesses de mon exorde, ne franchit pas les limites que lui trace ma prudence de vieillard. Car, il ne faut pas se le dissimuler, je suis arrivé à un âge où le positivisme le plus absolu chasse les illusions poétiques de la jeunesse, où les fleurs aimées, même celles du style, disparaissent et sont remplacées par les fruits mûrs de la pensée.

Vous n'avez donc rien à craindre, je n'abuserai pas de votre patience.

Si j'ai accepté l'honneur de vous adresser la parole et de proposer la réponse à l'adresse du Trône c'est que j'ai compté non seulement sur votre bienveillance mais sur ce calme esprit de justice dont tout l'atmosphère de cette enceinte est imprégné et qui est comme l'émanation des heureuses qualités qui vous distinguent.

C'est cet esprit de justice qui s'est affirmé sans ambages quand l'honorable premier m'a gracieusement offert l'honneur de proposer la réponse à l'adresse. J'appartiens à une race actuellement en minorité dans ce pays, pays que nos pères ont conquis à la civilisation, que nos missionnaires ont arrosé du plus pur de leur sang, que nous avons longtemps disputé à un ennemi finalement victorieux et que nous partageons aujourd'hui, en frères, avec ceux qui unissent leurs efforts aux nôtres, pour que tous nous contribuions, dans un commun et patriotique effort, à faire du Canada une terre que bénissent ses enfants et qu'admirent les étrangers.

Si ce n'est pas une loi écrite dans nos statuts, elle est du moins consacrée par l'usage et gravée dans le cœur de la popu-