

I am glad to be able to stand here as the representative of the King, and to signify by my acceptance of your hospitality His Majesty's appreciation of the benefits which you, the Montreal Board of Trade, by your energy, by your spirited enterprise, and by your Imperial sympathies, have conferred not only on the Province of Quebec and the Dominion, but upon the United Kingdom and the whole of the British Empire.

I have ascertained that when you, as the Committee of Trade, first began your labours, twenty years before you received a Royal charter, the passage of a small vessel of even 250 tons was impossible between Quebec and Montreal. To-day, although the port of Montreal is approximately one thousand miles from the Straits of Belle Isle, you practically stand upon the sea; for here the ocean leviathans, drawing near thirty feet, unburden their cargoes of the surplus supply of manufactured goods that you require, receiving in return the abundant natural products of Canada, with which they hasten across the broad Atlantic to relieve the wants of your fellow-citizens in the United Kingdom.

Thanks to the energy, public spirit and sagacity with which your Board have met the requirements of a trade, borne in ever-increasing volume over your railways and great inland seas, the treasure-house of the West, containing illimitable riches, has been unlocked for the benefit of impoverished mankind.

I am aware that the proud consciousness of your past achievements has not made you indifferent to future improvements; and that in honourable emulation of your predecessors, you are still busily engaged in the promotion of plans which will further increase both the commercial strength and prosperity of Montreal, and the general well-being of the Dominion.

Gentlemen, it will be my happy duty to convey to the King and to our well beloved Queen, the assurance of your sincere attachment to British institutions, and of your readiness to stand by the Empire of which you are so proud to form a part.