

was made in the construction of the Windsor and Annapolis Railway; but it affords me much pleasure to state that by a new contract made under the provisions of the law relating thereto, this important work has been now placed in the hands of competent parties, with every prospect of satisfactory accomplishment. Great progress has been made in the construction of the Pictou Railroad, a portion of which has been already opened for the accommodation of the public, and it is fully anticipated that it will be completed at the time mentioned in the contract.

The papers and reports of the Joint Commission to Brazil and the West Indies will be laid before you, and it is hoped much good will result from the efforts thus made to extend the commerce of the British North American Colonies with those portions of the globe.

It is gratifying to me to advert to the great progress made in the important cause of Education under recent enactments.

I rejoice to be able to congratulate you upon the success which has attended the Delegation sent by me under your authority to confer with Her Majesty's Government on the Union of the Colonies. The papers relating to this important subject will be immediately laid before you. In the firm conviction that the Union of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, upon the terms provided in the Bill submitted by Her Majesty's Government to the Imperial Parliament, will largely increase the prosperity of all these Provinces, and contribute to the strength and stability of these British Institutions which it is their good fortune to enjoy, I commend to your consideration such changes and amendments in our existing laws as may be found necessary.

#### ANSWER TO THE SPEECH.

Mr. BOURINOT said:—Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hand the reply to the speech of His Excellency, which has been entrusted to me and I must here express my regret that some one better qualified for the task of making this motion has not been selected. I desire to make a few observations on some of the points referred to in His Excellency's address, and I shall do so in the order in which they appear. Before proceeding further, however, I cannot help observing, and in this particular many of those who hear me will coincide in my remark, that I was much pleased to observe the presence of His Excellency Vice Admiral Sir James Hope at the opening of the Legislature. It is an unusual circumstance for the Admiral in command on this station to be present, and I cannot help referring to it. In addition to this remark I must express my regret that Sir James Hope is about to leave our shores. He will leave behind him many pleasing reminiscences of the period of his command.

The most important topic contained in the speech was that embodied in the last clause, but to that I will not refer at this stage of my remarks. First of all our attention has been called to the fact that we have great cause for gratitude and rejoicing on account of the prosperity which this country has enjoyed, especially in view of the devastations which war has inflicted upon some of the countries of Europe. In the second portion of the address a well deserved tribute is paid to the volunteer

forces of the provinces. It will be well remembered that during last session we were much alarmed at the threatened invasion, and that the moment an appeal was made to the noble men composing the military force of the country, they responded with the utmost alacrity and hastened to fill up the positions vacated by the troops who were despatched to the frontier. This conduct was deserving of the highest praise, and I only wish I possessed the eloquence of the leader of the government, that I might use in connection with this subject such language as would be worthy of the occasion, and as the country would be pleased to hear. I would observe also that the same alacrity was evinced in every part of the province, shewing that when an emergency arrives we shall find our 50,000 militia men ready to defend their country from the invaders. Not one of them I believe will shrink from the duty that may then be imposed upon him. It is gratifying to us to know that in two or three years our Militia Force has made such improvements in organization. It is true that much remains to be done, but we may rest assured that in a short time a state of thorough efficiency will be attained.

The next clause of the address refers to the public revenue, and in connection with that I am gratified to be able to say, and it will be agreeable to those who hear me to learn that the balance in the hands of the Financial Secretary at the end of the last financial year, after paying all demands against the treasury, shews a large surplus. I must now refer to the abrogation of the reciprocity treaty and its effect upon our commercial prosperity. We all know that the country has felt that abrogation to a considerable extent, more especially in the high duties which have been imposed upon our principal exports. In relation to this subject I may say that I am of opinion that bye-and-bye the old system will be revived, and in this view I am supported by many persons of experience. Since the abrogation of the treaty this country has prospered to a degree that was not at all anticipated, and there is one circumstance in connection with it to which I would especially refer: namely, the mission to Brazil, and the West Indies, the report on which is in our hands. That report contains valuable statistics shewing new channels into which our commerce can profitably be turned. In Upper Canada alone there is a consumption of 200,000 or 300,000 tons of coal. Why cannot that market be supplied by Pictou or Cape Breton?

Then there is the other topic of the Paris Exhibition Commission. I was glad to find that the commissioners had bestowed so much attention upon their duties, and believe that at the Exhibition we will appear to great advantage, taking a place second only to Canada among the B. American colonies. Our column of coal and our specimens of gold would alone make us prominent in any exhibition. There is one circumstance in connection with this topic which rather puzzles me. I am curious to know why the commissioners selected Louisburg as a place to be represented by painting at the exhibition. Was it to remind the French that there they had sustained a defeat, or was it to shew the present nakedness and desolation of the old city? The contrast is great between the present and past condition