

The House was adjourned during pleasure.

After some time the House was resumed.

His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Arthur Stanley, Baron Stanley of Preston, in the County of Lancaster, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Governor General of Canada, being seated in the Chair on the Throne.

The Honourable the Speaker commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House,—“It is His Excellency’s pleasure they attend him immediately in this House.”

Who being come with their Speaker,

His Excellency the Governor General was then pleased to open the Session by a gracious Speech to both Houses.

*Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate :*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons :*

It affords me much gratification to meet you at the commencement of the Parliamentary Session, and to be able to congratulate you upon the general prosperity of the Dominion, and upon the abundant harvest with which Providence has blessed all parts of the country.

The lamented and untimely death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale has aroused a feeling of profound sorrow. The 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, has found expression in respectful messages of condolence from my Ministers, from the Provincial Governments, and from many other representative bodies.

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. 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. The Commissioners are proceeding with their deliberations in Washington, and the results will shortly be communicated to Her Majesty’s Government. I 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.

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. But, in compliance with a more recent intimation from that Government, three of my Ministers proceeded to Washington, and conferred with representatives of the Administration of the United States on those subjects. 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. 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. A valuable and friendly interchange of views respecting other important matters also took place.

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. The report of this Commission will be laid before you during the present session.