

Then His Excellency was pleased to open the Session with the following Speech :—

“ Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council,

“ Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,

“YOUR Addresses of Condolence on the death of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort, were duly laid at the foot of the Throne; and I am commanded to assure you that the Queen is deeply sensible of your loyal attachment and sympathy.

“War continues to rage in the United States, and humanity has still to deplore the spectacle of a sanguinary struggle, which inflicts misery on a large portion of the human race, and of which, though so long protracted, it is impossible as yet to foretell the issue. You will, I am confident, share my earnest hope that these calamitous hostilities may speedily reach their termination.

“I informed you at the close of the last Session, that the negotiations with the Imperial Government on the subject of the Inter-Colonial Railroad, were still pending. Those negotiations have been subsequently continued.

“The propositions which the Delegates of Canada, New-Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, were in 1861 empowered to make, were not acceded to by Her Majesty's Government; but, whilst declining to become parties to the arrangement then suggested, a proposal to guarantee the payment of the interest on a loan for Railway purposes was made on behalf of the Imperial Government; and at a meeting of Representatives of the Provinces interested held at Quebec, at the request of the Governor General of Canada, in the month of September last, it was resolved to accept that offer.

“Early in October I despatched a member of my Executive Council to England to confer with Her Majesty's Government upon the terms of their guarantee, in concert with Delegates from Canada and Nova Scotia.

“The Papers relating to these negotiations will immediately be laid before you, and will, I have no doubt, receive from you that attentive consideration which the paramount importance of the subject to which they relate demands.

“Whatever difficulties of a temporary nature may arise in carrying out this scheme, I trust it will be found that no insuperable obstacle exists to the accomplishment of an undertaking calculated to bind together more closely the different Provinces of British North America, to promote their prosperity in time of peace, and ensure their security in time of war.

“The conduct of the Imperial Government has throughout these negotiations been marked by frankness and a desire to meet, when possible, the wishes of the Colonies; and I have no doubt will be fully appreciated by Her Majesty's American subjects.

“My attention has been devoted to the reorganization of the Provincial Militia. The long period which has elapsed since that force was last enrolled, and the entire disorganization which had consequently ensued, have rendered this task one of considerable difficulty, although that difficulty has been materially diminished by the ready and cheerful assistance and co-operation which I have everywhere met.

“I have directed the Report of the Adjutant General of Militia to be laid before you, from which you will learn in detail, the steps which have been taken to effect this re-organization, and perceive that the funds voted by you for Militia purposes, have been expended with a careful regard to economy.

“By the Act passed during the last Session, the Active Militia Force was fixed at not less than one thousand men; I am happy to inform you that the public spirit of the population has called into existence a body of Volunteers