

ceedings, and a Bill to make the Speedy Trials Act applicable throughout Canada, and that all such measures will be willingly considered by us.

That we assure His Excellency that any Bills relating to the inspection of timber and lumber, for the improvement of the Postal System, and for increasing the efficiency of the North-West Mounted Police, which are submitted for our consideration, will receive our earnest attention.

That we thank His Excellency for informing us that the Royal Commissioners on Labor having concluded their inquiries, he hopes to be able to lay before us at an early day their report with the important evidence collected by them in various parts of Canada.

That our thanks are due to His Excellency for informing us that the accounts for the past and the Estimates for the ensuing year will be laid before us, and that we will respectfully consider these Estimates, which will, we trust, be found to have been prepared with a due regard to economy and the efficiency of the public service.

That His Excellency may rest assured that these several subjects and any others which may be brought before us will receive our earnest consideration, and that with him we trust that the result of our deliberations may, under the Divine Blessing, tend to promote the well-being and prosperity of Canada.

Mr. LÉPINE. (Translation.) It is with a feeling of gratitude, Mr. Speaker, but at the same time with much diffidence, that I rise to support the resolution, which has just been moved in such eloquent language by the hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White). With much hesitancy, I say, because I feel that I am incapable of accomplishing satisfactorily the task which has been set me. Nevertheless, without desiring to occupy the attention of the House for any great length of time, I will presume to make some remarks on the matters which have been laid before Parliament in the Speech from the Throne. Allow me to premise by saying that I experienced a lively pleasure in hearing the representative of our Sovereign express himself in the French language with as much ease, with as much eloquence as an academician could have done. French Canadians ought to be proud to see the representative of our Sovereign speaking so fluently our beautiful language. He has set a noble example which all Canadians ought to follow, no matter to what nationality they may belong, in becoming conversant with the French and English languages, in order that all may work together, with a common agreement, for the prosperity, the increase, the wealth, and the future of our magnificent and extensive country. His Excellency regrets that the Fishery Treaty has not been ratified by the American Senate. As a fact it is much to be regretted, Mr. Speaker, that this Fishery Treaty has been attacked, that it has been fought against with so much ferocity, not only in the Senate of the United States but during the entire presidential election campaign. It was alleged that the Fishery Treaty had been drawn up in the exclusive interest of those in Canada, that the rights of the Americans had been absolutely sacrificed. Notwithstanding this, however, Mr. Speaker, if reference is made to the Debates of this House, it will be found that our Government was also found fault with in the matter of this Fisheries Treaty; it will be found that this treaty was vigorously attacked; that the Government was accused of having been too generous towards the United States, of having disregarded the interests of Canada, of having sacrificed her rights, and of having surrendered a property which was one of the chief resources of the country. Does not such conduct on the part of the Americans show that the action of our Government, at this juncture, was most praiseworthy? Future events showed that those who prepared this treaty, Mr. Speaker, had done so while inspired with a most profound love of their native country; that they had been most jealous for the interests of Canada. This question of the fisheries is, in fact, one of the most important, and deserves the most undivided attention on the part of this honorable House. This branch of industry is carried on to a very considerable extent; it gives employment to an immense population, to thousands of workmen engaged in an employment arduous and exposed to many dangers. I am happy to see that the Government is endeavoring to enact measures to protect this vast number of people, by causing

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell).

the treaties signed in the past to be respected. The Governor General tells us also that there will be submitted a measure having for its effect the amendment of the Electoral Franchise Act. This is a very important measure. I am sure that both sides of this House will give it equal attention, and that the members on the Government side will approve of its conduct in thus endeavoring to improve the law of elections by making it as inclusive as possible, while at the same time keeping out all persons who are not worthy to enjoy the privilege of the suffrage. During the recess, the Government has considered the subject of ocean steamship service. The result demands that we should place ourselves in more direct communication with the countries with which we have already established relations. Such a course has also in view the opening of new outlets and new markets, by means of which the trade and industries of Canada will be greatly benefited. A Bill will be submitted for the prevention of certain offences in connection with municipal councils, and to give greater facilities for making inquiries as to such matters. Most certainly such a proposed law will be well received, for it will ensure a better administration of municipal matters, and will re-establish public confidence. For several years nothing has been heard of but inquiries and boodle, and never as yet has a law been suggested to render more effective these inquiries, and to allow of the arm of the law being placed on those municipal representatives who engage in dishonest practices. Several measures will also be presented for improving the law of procedure in criminal cases. Among these will be a Bill to permit the release on probation of persons convicted of first offences. For a long time back Canada ought to have possessed such a law. Many persons who have been convicted of a first offence and who have been committed to prison, have, in consequence, become irreclaimable criminals; while we see in other countries where such a law exists, persons convicted of a first offence and set at liberty on probation, make excellent citizens. I doubt not but that this measure will produce the same results in Canada. It will not cause you surprise, Mr. Speaker, if I attach much importance to that portion of the Speech referring to the Labor Commission. The laborious and very lengthy inquiry made by this commission, is the most convincing answer that can be made to those who persist in regarding this commission to be a political engine. By the creation of this commission, the Government has shown itself to be a staunch friend of the working classes; it has given substantial proof of the interest with which it regards the working classes, and of its determination to render justice to all ranks in the community, without distinction. Before this inquiry, open as it was to all persons, and during which masters as well as workmen came forward to make their respective grievances heard, to pronounce their opinions and express their hopes, no one in the country had an exact knowledge, a positive knowledge, of the labor question. The revelations made before this commission have excited the indignation of all men of feeling, and voices of men of more weight than myself, have, even in this House, denounced in forcible terms the guilty employers. It is in great part owing to this inquiry that I have the honor of sitting in this House; and I believe it to be my duty to set forth plainly and honestly the object aimed at by the electors who have given me their trust. The population of the electoral division of Montreal East, the largest division in the Dominion of Canada, which has been represented of late years by a very intelligent man, by a distinguished legislator, by an upright citizen, by a good patriot,—had no object of an aggressive nature, when it selected its candidate. Those who are acquainted with our noble workmen know that they are absolutely devoid of all revolutionary ideas; they only desire one thing, to live peacefully and honestly on the