

Mr. Speaker reported His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, and read a copy thereof to the House, which is as follows:—

*Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate :*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons :*

In meeting you again at the commencement of another session of Parliament, it is my first duty to express the deep sense of our gratitude to Divine Providence for the many blessings which Canada has received during the past year, and particularly for the exceptionally bountiful harvest in Manitoba and the North-west Territories.

It was very gratifying to note the cordial reception tendered by all classes of the people, to the Prince and Princess of Wales, on the occasion of their visit in September and October last, the only regrettable feature being the limited time at their disposal, which prevented their visiting many important centres of population. It is however a great satisfaction to know that their Royal Highnesses enjoyed their tour through Canada and carried away the most pleasant recollections of their visit to this part of the Empire.

The assassination of President McKinley has elicited a universal feeling of sympathy and sorrow throughout the civilized world and, though Canada has happily so far been free from crimes of this character, the close proximity to the United States may make it advisable to join our efforts to the efforts of the United States and other nations and to provide by legislation for the adequate punishment of those who, either by speech or writing, incite fanatics to the perpetration of such horrible crimes.

The returns of the late census will be laid before you and, while the absolute increase in the number of population is not so great as might have been expected, the evidences of growth in wealth and in the general tokens of prosperous development are highly satisfactory. There is good reason also to believe that the increase of population during the latter half of the decade has been very greatly in excess of the average of former years and that in the near future we may look for a much more rapid growth than occurred during the period covered by the last two censuses.

Application having been made by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for approval of an increase of its capital, to meet the demand for additional rolling stock and other improved facilities, for handling the growing traffic, my Ministers availed themselves of the opportunity to stipulate that the long pending question of the power of the Governor in Council to regulate the tolls of the Company should be submitted to the Courts for a judicial decision. The correspondence and other papers will be laid before you.

The inventor, Mr. Marconi, having met unexpected obstacles to the carrying on of his experiments in wireless ocean telegraphy in a sister colony, my Ministers deemed it expedient to invite him to continue his operations on the coast of Nova Scotia, and they availed themselves of his presence in Canada to enter into negotiations resulting in an arrangement through which, should the project prove as successful as is hoped for, the Government and people of Canada will enjoy the benefits of the invention on very favourable terms, including rates for transatlantic messages very much below those now existing.

I am pleased to inform you that the display made by Canada of her products, at the several expositions at which they have been exhibited during the last year has attracted much attention, and has already resulted in many inquiries and orders for our goods.

I may also congratulate you on the satisfactory condition of the revenue and on the steady and continuous expansion of the general business of the country as evidenced by the increased volume of exports and imports.

With the view of still further facilitating and developing our trade with other countries, it will probably be found expedient to increase the number of our commercial agencies, and Parliament will be asked to consider the desirability of making additional provision for that purpose.