

## FIRST READINGS.

Bill (No. 2) to amend the Railway Act of 1903.—Mr. E. A. Lancaster.

Bill (No. 3) to amend the Act respecting Certificates to Masters and Mates of Ships.—Mr. E. A. Lancaster.

Bill (No. 4) to amend the Railway Act of 1903.—Mr. W. F. Maclean.

## CONTROVERTED ELECTION—LISGAR.

Mr. SPEAKER. I have the honour to inform the House that I have received from the registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada a judgment of the said court in the matter of the appeal from the Lower Court respecting the controverted election for the electoral district of Lisgar, declaring that the said petition had abated consequent upon the dissolution of the parliament to which the respondent in the said case had been elected.

## ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH.

The House proceeded to the consideration of His Excellency's speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD (Pictou). Mr. Speaker, permit me, before proceeding to discuss the motion which I am about to make, to extend to you my congratulations, and I may say also the congratulations of this House, upon your elevation to the honourable position of first commoner of this Dominion of Canada; and the evident expressions of satisfaction and confidence in your appointment which have come from all quarters indicate the belief that you will fill that honourable position with honour to yourself and in keeping with the manner in which the distinguished men who have gone before you have filled it in previous parliaments. I desire, Mr. Speaker, to move that an humble address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the speech with which he has been pleased to open this session of parliament; and, I may be permitted first to express to the right hon. gentleman who leads this House my appreciation of the high honour he has paid to me in committing to me the task of making this motion. You will also permit me to say that I believe that honour is not one intended for myself personally, but rather for that famous and historic county which I have the honour to represent, and which to-day for the first time in a great many years has seen fit to extend its confidence to the distinguished gentleman who leads this House. Permit me also, sir, to ask from this House that consideration which always in the past has been freely extended to hon. gentlemen who venture to address it for the first time, as I am doing to-day.

Coming to the address, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that this House and this country

generally, will reciprocate, His Excellency's expression of satisfaction upon his appointment as Governor General of Canada. The expressions upon public questions and the evident intelligent appreciation of the importance and greatness of this country, which have marked the utterances of His Excellency both in the mother country and since he has come to Canada, have warranted the cordial welcome with which he has already been received, and bespeak an equal reception from all classes of our people and from all parts of the country when His Excellency visits them in the performance of the duties of his office.

Let me say at once that it is evident the speech with which this parliament has been opened is one optimistic in every line. It indicates the happening in Canada of a number of new events. First, we have the advent of a new Governor General. Then the speech announces the inauguration of a new railway. Next in order we have the announcement of the creation of a new province and the coming into Canada of a new and large population, in fact, the general tone of the speech is essentially cheerful as befits the declaration of a government and a people who have confidence in themselves, who appreciate the vastness and greatness of the resources of the country, and who are full of self reliance and of hope in the future as being teeming with promise.

Let me say at the start that I do not propose to weary the House with any figures regarding trade returns, because these can easily be obtained from the blue-books, but, it must be eminently satisfactory to know that the trade increases which have characterized every step of our career during the past eight years show no signs of diminution but rather of continued steady improvement. Those among us who have been frightened by the bogey of an adverse balance of trade will be glad to hear that in the month of December last, the exports of Canada exceeded by two million dollars the exports during the same month of the previous year, and the additional fact that our revenue shows continual growth must of course be a matter of the greatest possible satisfaction to all. Then, with regard to surpluses, it would indeed be a great disappointment if the speech from the Throne did not, as it has done during the past eight years, announce an increase in that respect also. All signs point to the fact that the Canadian people are weary of discussions on theories of political economy. For a great number of years some hon. gentlemen have fancied that there was some virtue in the assertion of this or that or the other theory of political economy, but the business people of Canada have come to accept the idea that the making of a tariff is a business proposition and calls for dealing with conditions and not theories, and, as a consequence the tariff requires to be adjusted