

The House was adjourned during pleasure.

After some time the House was resumed.

His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Gilbert John Elliott Murray-Kynynmond, Earl of Minto and Viscount Melgund of Melgund, County of Forfar, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, Baron Minto of Minto, County of Roxburgh, in the Peerage of Great Britain, Baronet of Nova Scotia, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, etc., etc., Governor General of Canada, being seated 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 :*

In meeting you for the first time since entering upon my duties, as the representative of Her Majesty in this Dominion, it affords me great pleasure to be able to congratulate you on the large degree of prosperity which the people of Canada at present enjoy, as evidenced by the expansion of trade and commerce, the flourishing condition of the public revenues and the increased number of immigrants who have become permanent settlers amongst us. To these evidences may be added another which is even more gratifying, the almost total cessation of the considerable exodus of our population which at one time was a regrettable feature of our affairs.

The negotiations which were set on foot during the recess between Her Majesty’s Government and that of the United States in reference to the settlement of certain questions in dispute between Canada and the latter country were, I grieve to say, greatly delayed by the illness and subsequent death of two of the most eminent members of the Commission appointed for that purpose. Considerable progress had been made on several of the subjects submitted, but a serious disagreement arose between Her Majesty’s Commissioners and the Commissioners of the United States on the question of the delimitation of the Boundary between Canada and Alaska ; the question was referred by the Commissioners to their respective Governments, the Commission being adjourned to the second day of August next, in the hope that, in the meantime, the difficulty might be overcome.

In compliance with the Act passed last session a Plebiscite was held on the question of prohibition ; the official figures of the vote will be placed before you.

I observe with pleasure that the Mother Country, Canada and other British possessions have recently adopted a Penny Postage letter rate. The satisfaction with which this action has been received by the Canadian people is a further proof of the general desire existing amongst our people for closer relations with the Mother Country and the rest of the Empire.

I am also glad to be able to state that the satisfactory condition of the finances of the country permitted a reduction, on the first of January last, of the Canadian domestic letter rate, from three to two cents, and although such reduction involves a temporary loss of revenue, it is nevertheless confidently expected that the cheapened rate will prove of such service in the promotion of trade and in the general interchange of correspondence that, within a reasonable time, the revenue of the Post Office Department will be restored to its former figure.

Much information has been obtained since you last met relative to the extent and value of the deposits of gold and valuable minerals in the Yukon and other parts of