

shall regard the contents as known to you. In that letter, I pointed out the immediate advantages to the people of the Dominion which would result from carrying into effect the resolution which you passed, I desire on this occasion to go a little farther and indicate that, beyond the direct benefits to Canada, there is a great ulterior purpose to be served by the adoption by Parliament of the policy laid down by you. This ulterior purpose, I shall with your kind permission endeavour to explain. Let me first, however, say a word respecting the marvelous system of telegraphy introduced by Marconi.

#### THE MARCONI SYSTEM.

The distinguished inventor, before visiting Ottawa a few weeks ago, startled the world by his successful efforts to transmit electric wave signals across the Atlantic. I had the great satisfaction to have several interviews with Signor Marconi, who is of opinion that only a few months will be required to develop and fully reveal the possibilities of his system. He confidently expects to be able to send telegraph messages between the two continents without the intervention of submarine cables, and that, in consequence of the comparatively small initial cost of apparatus, the charge for the transmission of messages will be very low, compared with the present rates. If this proves to be the case, we may certainly regard the Marconi system, not as an opponent of, but as an ally of cheap telegraphy. Negotiations opened by the Government resulted as stated in the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament, "in an arrangement through which, should the project prove a successful one, as is hoped for, the Government and people of Canada will enjoy the benefits of the invention on very favourable terms, including rates for trans-Atlantic messages very much below those now existing."

While it is greatly to be wished that the highest expectations will be realized, we must recognise that doubts have been raised and, notwithstanding the splendid results already achieved by the inventor of wireless telegraphy, some of the leading English authorities on electrical science, such as Professor Oliver Lodge, Sir William Preece, Dr. Muirhead, Lord Kelvin and others, are of opinion that the system will be found to have its limitations, and that the greatest success possible for it will not suffice to render submarine cables unnecessary.

Marconi himself, when on this side of the Atlantic, entertained no fear of failure, he was full of hope that he would prove his invention to be a complete commercial success, and he expressed the belief that he would be able to transmit messages across the Atlantic with ample profit, at one or two cents per word. The impression formed in my own mind was that of admiration for the great inventor, who had already done marvelous things in wireless telegraphy, and whose hopes for success in spanning the ocean, if realized, would pass his name on to future generations as that of a world benefactor.

It appears, however, that there is a Marconi company to be reckoned with, and that in financial matters the distinguished inventor has not I fear all his own way. I would infer from what has come to light that the over-ruling company in this case—like other com-