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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 at the commencement of another session of Parliament, it affords me pleasure to congratulate you on the continued progress which the history of the past year unfolds with regard to Canada.

The increase in trade, as illustrated by the exports and imports during the period for which the official returns have been prepared, has been most gratifying, and that increase has continued down to the present time, with promise that the volume of trade during the current year will exceed that of any year in the history of the Dominion.

The revenues of the country have likewise provided for all the services for which Parliament has made appropriation, and the operation of the Government railways has been less burdensome, as regards the difference between income and expenditure, than has been the case for a long term of years previously.

In Manitoba and the North-west Territories the increase in immigration has been decidedly encouraging, both as regards the number of persons who have come from other countries and as regards the number of homestead entries made by settlers of all nationalities.

Measures have been taken to carry into effect the agreements arrived at with the United States on the subjects of the boundary of Alaska, the boundary line in Passamaquoddy Bay, and the prevention of destructive methods of fishing and the preservation and increase of fish life. With regard to reciprocity in wrecking and towing, a correspondence has taken place which indicates that privileges are demanded for United States vessels in Canadian canals, which were not anticipated, but it is not impossible that a satisfactory conclusion of the discussion may yet be reached.

During the recess a friendly conference took place between delegates from my Government and from the Government of Newfoundland on the questions which were pending between the two countries. It is hoped and expected that the interchange of views which then took place will be productive of beneficial results and lead to an amicable adjustment of those questions.

The Statutes of 1887 relative to a Department of Trade and Commerce and to the office of Solicitor-General having been brought into force, the appointments were made which were contemplated by these Acts.

It is to be regretted that the Government of the United States were unable to accept the suggestions made by my Government on the subject of canal tolls, and that the President should have thought it necessary to impose exceptional tolls on Canadians using the Sault Sainte Marie Canal, which has so long been free to the people of both countries. My Government, while ready to consider in a friendly spirit any proposals which may be made by the Government of the United States, have caused efforts to be made to hasten the completion of the Canadian canal works, which will soon afford to the commerce of the Dominion a highway within our own country.

Measures will be laid before you for the improvement of the Franchise Act, for the amendment of the laws relating to the Civil Service, and the superannuation of civil servants, for regulating the admission of evidence in causes and matters under the control of the Parliament of Canada, for extending the system of voting by ballot to the North-west Territories, and for simplifying the laws relating to lands and land transfers in the Territories.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons :*

The Public Accounts of the past year and the Estimates for the ensuing year will be laid before you without delay, and I trust it will be seen that ample provision may be made for the public service without increasing taxation.