

February 15, 1871

at an early day, be extended from the shores of the *Atlantic Ocean* on the one side, to the shores of the *Pacific* on the other.

Should such an Address be adopted, it will be necessary for you to take steps to secure the early exploration and survey of a route for an Inter-oceanic Railway, with a view to its construction in accordance with the terms of Union.

The acquisition of the North West Territories throws upon the Government and Parliament of the Dominion the duty of promoting their early settlement by the encouragement of immigration. This duty can be best discharged by a liberal land policy, and by opening up communications through our own country to *Manitoba*. The means proposed for accomplishing these purposes will be submitted for your consideration.

Her Majesty's Government has decided upon referring the Fishery question, along with other questions pending between the two countries, to a joint commission to be named by Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the *United States*. On this commission *Canada* will be represented. This mode of dealing with the various matters in controversy will, I trust, lead to their satisfactory adjustment. *Canada* urges no demand beyond those to which she is plainly entitled by Treaty and the law of Nations. She has pushed no claim to an extreme assertion, and only sought to maintain the rights of her own people fairly and firmly, but in a friendly and considerate spirit and with all due respect to foreign powers and international obligations. The thanks of the country are due to the Admiral on the Station and those under his command, for the valuable and efficient aid which they rendered to our cruisers during the past season in maintaining order and protecting the inshore fisheries from encroachment.

The prospect of the adoption of an international currency seems, in the present state of *Europe*, to be so remote, that I recommend you to consider the propriety of assimilating the currency of the Dominion without further delay.

The extension to *Manitoba* of the militia and other laws of the Dominion, and their adaptation to the present circumstances of that young Province, will require your attention.

The decennial Census will be taken on the third day of April next, and it is believed that a more thorough and accurate system has been adopted than any that has hitherto obtained. It may be necessary to amend the Act of last session in some particulars.

Among other measures, Bills will be presented to you relating to Parliamentary Elections, Weights and Measures, Insurance Companies, Savings Banks, and for the Consolidation and Amendment of the Inspection Laws.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

I have given directions that the Public Accounts shall be laid before you. You will learn with satisfaction that the Revenue for the past year was in excess of what was estimated, and that the prospects for the current year are so encouraging that,

notwithstanding the extensive public improvements which are contemplated, you will probably be able to diminish the taxation of the Country.

The Estimates for the ensuing year will be submitted to you, and I feel assured that you will be of opinion that the supplies which you will be asked to vote can be granted without inconvenience to the people.

Hon. Gentlemen of the Senate, Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

I lay these various and weighty matters before you, in full confidence that they will engage your mature attention, and I pray that the result of your deliberations may, with the Divine Blessing, prove conducive in all respects to the advancement and happiness of the country.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD moved that His Excellency's speech be taken into consideration tomorrow.

The House resolved to establish the usual Standing Committees, and adjournment was moved by Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, seconded by Hon. Sir George-É. Cartier.

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THE FISHERIES

On the motion for adjournment, **Mr. MACKENZIE** asked if it was the intention of the Government to bring down any correspondence regarding the fisheries before the discussion on the address of His Excellency tomorrow. It was desirable on so important a matter, if there was any correspondence relative to the appointment of the Joint High Commission that the House should have it before them, as it was quite impossible for them to avoid discussing it during the debate tomorrow. It was a matter of far too much importance to this country, looking at it simply as one respecting our national rights, that the House should pass dumbly over this portion of His Excellency's speech without discussing, to some extent, at least, the questions that everyone could see were involved in it. The Commission, for anything they might know to the contrary, might adopt some course that this Parliament might not think consistent with the national interests in this Dominion; and it was desirable that, at the earliest possible moment some expression of the opinion of public men in the country should be had on it. He took it for granted that the correspondence would be brought down.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said it was not the intention of the government to bring down any correspondence or any papers of any kind before the answer to the address was carried. It was an unusual course and an exceedingly inconvenient one that the hon. member proposed. Care would be taken that the address to be moved should not commit any member of this House to the approval of the policy of the government on that or any other question. The government would, so soon as the House should address itself to business, bring down such portions of the