

HISTORY OF CANADA.

Britain, and gradually extended to the great majority of the British colonies. It should be mentioned that under the former Liberal Government Canada had joined the Universal Postal Union (August 1, 1878) by which a general though not universal postage rate of five cents per half ounce was established between the different signatory countries.

In a general election which took place on December 7, 1900, the Government was sustained. Parliament met on February 6, and on the 8th passed an address of condolence to King Edward VII. on the death of Queen Victoria (January 22, 1901). In September of the same year, the Duke and Duchess of York (now King George V and Queen Mary) visited Canada and were enthusiastically received. The date fixed for the Coronation of King Edward was June 26, 1902, but the sudden and alarming illness of His Majesty made a postponement necessary, and the ceremony was performed on August 9. It had been suggested by the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Chamberlain) in the previous month of January that advantage should be taken of the presence in London of the Premiers and probably other Ministers of the self-governing colonies of the Empire on this occasion to discuss various matters of Imperial import, and a Conference at which he presided, was opened on June 30 and remained in session till August 11. At this Conference a number of important resolutions were adopted, including one recognizing the principle of preferential trade within the Empire and favouring its extension, and another recommending the reduction of postage on newspapers and periodicals between different parts of the Empire, to which effect has since been given.

The development of Canada during the last twenty years, in population, commerce and industry has been very marked, and has been especially conspicuous in her western provinces. The Northwest Territories, which at first were governed from Winnipeg—the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba being also Lieutenant Governor of those territories—were organized as the provisional districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Athabaska (May 17, 1882), under a Lieutenant Governor of their own, with the seat of government at Regina. With the growth of population they rapidly advanced towards provincial status, and on September 1, 1905, the four territories were organized as the two provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, the capital of the first being fixed at Regina, and of the second at Edmonton. Their subsequent progress has been even more remarkable owing to the large volume of population they have annually received both from the United States and from European countries. The discovery of gold in the Yukon country led to its organization as the Yukon Territory (June 13, 1898), and as such it returns a member to the Dominion Parliament. The mining of gold and silver in Canada led to the establishment at Ottawa (January 2, 1908) of a Branch of the Royal Mint, where gold, silver and copper coins are now struck for circulation in the Dominion. Another interesting branch of the public service which has recently assumed much importance, being now organized as a separate department, is the Dominion Archives, where an ever-increasing mass of papers, manuscript and printed, is being daily made available for consultation and study.