

JUBILEE OF CONFEDERATION

Minister of Agriculture, was seriously injured. Owing to the direction of the wind the Parliamentary Library fortunately escaped serious damage. A Royal Commission appointed on February 7, 1916, to inquire into the origin of the fire reported on May 15, 1916 [No. 72a 1916], but failed to ascertain conclusively the cause of the outbreak. The Dominion Houses of Parliament, thus destroyed, were completed in 1866, and formed one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture on the American continent. The demolition of the ruins and the rebuilding of the Houses on the same site were immediately undertaken, and considerable progress has been made with the erection of the new Houses under the control of a Parliamentary Committee, according to plans providing for improved accommodation. Meanwhile, arrangements have been made for the session of both Houses in a part of the building of the Victoria Memorial Museum at Ottawa, specially adapted for the purpose. On September 1, 1916, the ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new buildings was performed by the Governor-General (H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught), the stone being that which was laid as the corner stone of the original buildings on September 1, 1860, by the Duke's brother, the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII.

When returning from England in May, 1917, the Prime Minister brought back with him a gold Mace to replace the one destroyed by fire. The new Mace was presented to the Canadian House of Commons in 1916 by the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of the City of London (Col. the Right Hon. Sir Charles Cheers Wakefield, Lord Mayor; Sir George Alexander Touche, M.P., and Sir Samuel George Shead, Sheriffs). On May 16, 1917, a resolution accepting the gift and conveying the warm thanks of the House to the donors was adopted on the motion of Sir Robert Borden, seconded by Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Jubilee of Confederation.—Sunday, July 1, 1917, being the fiftieth anniversary of the Union of Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick under the British North America Act, 1867, a special Committee was appointed conjointly by the Senate and the House of Commons, under the Chairmanship of Sir George Foster, to consider the arrangements that should be made for celebration of the event¹. On May 31, 1917, the Committee recommended: (1) the issue of a topical pamphlet comparing and contrasting Canada of 1867 with Canada of 1917; (2) a proclamation inviting churches, Sabbath and day schools, colleges, municipal authorities, Canadian Clubs and other associations to co-operate in the working out of fitting commemorative services for the day; (3) that the provincial authorities be requested to arrange for a special official celebration of the anniversary; (4) that the Federal Government issue a commemorative postcard and postage stamp with appropriate design and legend representative of the work of the Fathers of Confederation; (5) that appropriate memorial services be held at London and Paris on July 1, 1917; (6) that upon the central

¹See House of Commons Debates, February 7, April 20 and May 31, 1917.