

The Honourable the Speaker commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House,—“It is His Excellency’s pleasure they attend him immediately in this House.”

Who being come with their Speaker,
The Honourable James David Edgar said :—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The House of Commons have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me.

If, in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons, whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and Country, humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to Your Excellency’s person at all seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from Your Excellency the most favourable interpretation.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate then said :

MR. SPEAKER,—I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the House of Commons to Her Majesty’s Person and Government ; and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper and prudence, he grants, and upon all occasions will recognize and allow their constitutional privileges. I am commanded also to assure you, that the Commons shall have ready access to His Excellency upon all seasonable occasions, and that their proceedings, as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

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 :

The necessity of making provision for the public service has compelled me to summon you together at this somewhat inconvenient season.

It is impossible to lay before you, at this session, the public accounts for the past year ; or, indeed, any of the reports usually submitted to Parliament.

Under these circumstances, and in view of the fact that you will be required to re-assemble early in the ensuing year, it does not appear expedient to invite your attention to any measures beyond the passage of the supplies.

The operation of the tariff will be made the subject of careful inquiry during the recess, with a view to the preparation of such a measure as may, without doing injustice to any interest, materially lighten the burdens of the people.

Immediate steps will be taken to effect a settlement of the Manitoba School question, and I have every confidence that, when Parliament next assembles, this important controversy will have been adjusted satisfactorily.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons :

The Estimates for the current year will be laid before you forthwith.

Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate :

Gentlemen of the House of Commons :

I hope that when you will have given the necessary attention to the consideration of the year’s supplies, I may be able to relieve you from the duty of further attendance at this session of Parliament.