

After creating a scene which those who witnessed it described as disgraceful, and which attracted the attention of all the guests present, visibly embarrassing them, the irate senator turned on his heel and left the grounds of Spencerwood, protesting as he went against the shocking affront on his standing as a senator.

All Quebec is talking about his conduct

I do not want to discuss the article itself. I have given my lawyer the necessary orders to appear before the courts, but to disabuse the minds of those who think I did not behave on that occasion as a senator should and that I made a scene, I think it my duty to put the facts before the House. There had been an exchange of letters between the Lieutenant Governor's A.D.C. and myself. I received an invitation on the 23rd of October to a state function, and on that occasion wrote a letter. In order that the House may understand why I wrote it, I may explain that in the beginning of the present year a similar experience had presented itself on the occasion of the opening of the Quebec legislature. I had received a letter in answer to two letters written by myself, and which is signed by the Usher of the Black Rod of the Legislative Council. The reply to my letters was as follows:

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your two letters, first dated 24th February and the second 18th of March. In this last one you manifest your desire to know the decision arrived at—that is to say, does the Deputy Chief Justice, for the province of Quebec rank before senators. In reply, let me tell you: first, that I kept your letter of the 24th last month as a protest against the error imputed to me in giving precedence to the Deputy Chief Justice over senators at the opening of parliament on the 2nd of March. Secondly, that I will hand over that letter of protest of the 24th February last to the members of a committee to be formed at a very near date and which will comprise, I understand, the Hon. the Prime Minister of the province, the Speakers of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly, and members of both Houses, with the object of deciding some cases concerning precedence to be observed in these large gatherings, where etiquette should be observed. Thirdly, that as soon as I receive the report of that committee, I will send you a copy of the decision arrived at by those hon. gentlemen on the particular subject in which you are concerned.

Believe me, Mr. Senator,

Yours truly,

ARTHUR ST. JACQUES,

Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod.

Quebec, March 22, 1909.

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The idea of forming a committee of a provincial character to amend the laws of precedence which we hold from the imperial government. The fact is this, they had decided to form a committee and that is the reason why, in my first letter, I asked a question which I should not have asked if those facts had not been known to me and to the Lieutenant Governor. On the day I received the invitation, I wrote to the A.D.C. of the Lieutenant Governor under date of 23rd of October:

(Translation.)

Quebec, 23rd October, 1909.

Mr. Victor Pelletier,

Aide de Camp to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Quebec.

Sir, before answering you whether I can accept the invitation of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Quebec to a state dinner to be given on the 9th day of next month, permit me to inquire whether the question of precedence which has been raised in the course of the present year between the Honourable Judge Langelier and myself has been settled authoritatively. If so, who rendered the decision and what is the nature of it?

If no decision has been asked for or obtained, what are the respective places reserved for senators and for the Honourable Judge Langelier?

Believe me, sir, your humble servant,

(Signed) P. LANDRY.

To this letter I received the following reply, dated October 26:

(Translation.)

Government House, Quebec
26th October, 1909.

Mr. Senator, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 23rd instant and to inform you that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor does not intend to change the order of precedence which has always been followed at Spencerwood.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Senator, your obedient servant,

(Signed) Victor Pelletier,

Captain, A.D.C.

The Honourable P. Landry,
Senator, Quebec.

In reply I forwarded the following letter of October 27:

(Translation.)

Quebec, October 27, 1909.

Capt. Victor Pelletier,

Aide de Camp to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Quebec.

Sir,—Your answer of yesterday does not give me the information which I asked for. You say indeed, in a general manner, that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor does not intend to change the order of precedence which has always been followed at Spencerwood, but you do not indicate to me in any way what is the order followed.