

The Honorable 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,

The Honorable *James Cockburn* 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 favorable interpretation.

The Honorable the Speaker of this House 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 recognise 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 :

*Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate ;*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons :*

1. In addressing for the first time the Parliament of *Canada*, I desire to express the satisfaction I feel in resorting to your advice and assistance, as well as my deep sense of my own good fortune in being permitted to associate myself with you in your labours and aspirations for the welfare of this Dominion.

I rejoice to think that my assumption of office should have taken place at a period when the prospects of the country appear so full of promise, when peace and amity prevail amongst all neighbouring nations, and when so many indications are afforded of the success with which *Canada* herself is consolidating her political unity and developing her material resources.

2. In accordance with the decision of Parliament, and to carry into effect the legislation of last Session, I have caused a Charter to be granted to a body of Canadian capitalists for the construction of the *Pacific* Railway. The Company now formed has given assurances that this great work will be vigorously prosecuted, and a favorable state of the money market in *England* affords every hope that satisfactory arrangements may be made for the required capital. The papers and correspondence relating to this subject will be laid before you.

3. During the past year the surveys for the improvement and extension of our system of Canals, for which appropriations were made last Session, have been in active preparation ; and I am glad to inform you that the plans and specifications for the enlargement of the *Welland*, and the construction of the *Baie Verte* Canals, have been completed, and that the works can now be put under contract.