

“ your fellow Members are dispersed in various directions. I should therefore only deceive myself were I to regard the present Assembly as a full Parliament.

“ Since the adjournment, indeed, circumstances have occurred which render your proximate re-assembly highly desirable, but in this country there are physical circumstances which necessarily interpose a considerable lapse of time before the representatives of the various Provinces comprising the confederated Parliament of Canada can assemble, separated as some of them are by thousands of miles from the capital of the Dominion.

“ In regulating the times and seasons when Parliament is to be called together, the Executive is bound not only to consider the reasonable convenience of these gentlemen but also to protect the federal rights of the Provinces which they represent, and under these circumstances I have concluded, on the advice of my Ministers (and even if I differed from them as to the policy of such a course, which I do not, it is a point upon which I should not hesitate to accept their recommendation,) to issue a Royal Commission of enquiry to three gentlemen of such legal standing, character and authority as will command the confidence of the public, by virtue of the powers conferred upon me by the Act, 31 Vic., cap. 38. On the other hand, I have determined in proroguing Parliament to announce to the Members of both Houses my intention of assembling them immediately after the Commission in question shall have concluded its labors. By these means an opportunity will be afforded for the preliminary expurgation of these unhappy matters before a tribunal competent to take evidence on oath; ample opportunities will be given to the Members of the more distant Provinces to make their preparations, in view of an Autumnal Session; and within two months or ten weeks from this date a full Parliament of Canada will take supreme and final cognizance of the case now pending between my Ministers and their accusers.

“ Gentlemen, the situation we have been discussing is one of great anxiety and embarrassment, but I cannot but hope that on a calm retrospect of the various considerations to be kept in view, you will come to the conclusion that in determining to be guided by the advice of my Ministers, on the present occasion—in other words, in declining to act as though the charges which have been advanced against them were already proven, and in adhering to arrangements upon the faith of which many of your colleagues are absent from their places, I have adopted the course most in accordance with the maxims of constitutional government, and with what is due to those whom the Parliament of Canada has recommended to my confidence.”

After the Members had retired, it had become time for me to proceed to the Senate Chamber, and about half-past three o'clock the Speaker appeared at the Bar, and Parliament was prorogued. Considerable excitement, I am informed, prevailed in the House of Commons, and cries of “ Privilege ” were uttered, when Black Rod made his appearance; but as far as I can learn, nothing was done or said incompatible with the dignity and self-respect of that assembly. Only the Ministerialists present, about thirty-five in number, accompanied the Speaker to the Senate Chamber. The Opposition, amongst whom, on this occasion, I suppose must be included thirteen of the ordinary supporters of my Government who had signed the Memorial, remained behind in their places. Upwards of seventy Members in a House of two hundred must have been absent—all of whom, with the exception of three, were claimed by Government as their adherents.

In the evening, what is popularly known as an “ indignation ” meeting was held, No. 6. under the presidency of Mr. *Mackenzie*. I have appended to this despatch a report of its proceedings.

I have thus recounted, in as faithful language as I can command, the various circumstances connected with the recent Prorogation. In doing so, Your Lordship will perceive that I have not attempted to discuss, still less to defend the action of my Ministers on any of the occasions referred to, except so far as the justification of their conduct follows as a corollary to the vindication of the attitude I myself have assumed. The propriety of their procedure is a matter which they will have to settle with the Canadian Parliament. My contestation would be, that the fact of their being hereafter