

nounced, with the view of completing a treaty at Washington, the House was called together on the 29th April after the elections had been held. In 1892 we went back to the normal period 25th February; in 1893 it was the 26th January. Last year it was later than it has been any year previously, the 15th of March. In that year the Premier felt it his duty to explain the reasons that had induced His Excellency's advisers to summon Parliament at so late a date. The reason assigned was that they were revising the tariff, and it was necessary for a committee of the Government to meet the people of Canada, that it was quite impossible to prepare the reports of that committee any earlier, as it involved the revision of no less than 900 or 1,000 items of the tariff. That was perhaps a good reason, but the instance shows that it was recognized by the then leader of the political party at present in power, that Parliament ought to be called at an earlier period. Now, it is no secret, I think, that this Parliament was somewhat unexpectedly summoned. It was pretty thoroughly discussed by the journals which had the ear of the Government, and we even had intimations given by some members of the Government themselves that there would be a general election. We all know that the voters' lists were being hurriedly prepared, that the Printing Bureau, here, was extremely busy, that all the staff that could be obtained was employed in getting the lists ready for a particular day. So great was the hurry that the lists of Toronto and Montreal had to be sent to local newspapers. Suddenly, from some cause or another, of which we are not informed, instead of dissolution we have a session. I think it would have been only fair that the people of Canada, and more particularly the people's representatives, should have been taken into the confidence of the government and some explanation offered them, why it was that dissolution did not take place and that Parliament has been summoned at so late a date. I am quite aware, however, when I read the explanations made elsewhere, that excuses have been found for this state of affairs. These excuses refer to a number of subjects, the much discussed Manitoba school question being one of them. Another was that the conference with Newfoundland was taking place, but I would point out that the conference did not begin till long after the time for summoning Parliament had passed

by. Long after the period when the Parliament should have been called together, the delegates came up from Newfoundland to discuss the question of that colony's entering the Dominion. I really think it is due to this House that some explanation should be given of the reasons for the late meeting of Parliament.

We all share in the very touching and beautiful observations made by the hon. member from Pictou (Mr. Primrose) in reference to the second paragraph of the Speech of the Throne, that relating to the death of Sir John Thompson. We all share in the feeling that animated him in making those observations respecting the tragic event. There can be no doubt whatever that Sir John Thompson's sudden death evoked an extraordinary feeling of deep sorrow and sympathy over the length and breadth of Canada, which I feel safe in saying was shared in by all parties irrespective of race, religion or politics. Sir John Thompson was no ordinary man. Highly endowed by nature, he was possessed of those other qualifications which are so essential to success in life. In his early years he was favoured by no extraordinary or adventitious circumstances. His rise in life was due entirely to his own probity of character, his talents and industry. He occupied the first position as a reporter in the chamber of the legislature of Nova Scotia. It was not many years after, that he became a member of that House, rising rapidly to become one of the Executive Council of his native province, and stepping on from that position to the premiership of the province. Few men had as rapid a rise, and he occupied the highest position by the universal consent of his fellow-citizens. Soon after that he was appointed to the Supreme Court of the province of Nova Scotia. During the few years that he was a member of that body, he elevated the judicial tribunal to a very high standard. Ten years ago he was comparatively a stranger outside of the province of Nova Scotia. It was due to his marvellous knowledge of men that the late Sir John Macdonald selected him as the very best man to fill the position of Minister of Justice. At the time, the selection was carpied at. People asked who was John Thompson. Sir John Macdonald's answer was "wait until you know him." He had been in Ottawa but a comparatively short time when the wisdom of the selection was