

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 favorable 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 :*

In addressing for the first time the Parliamentary Representatives of the Dominion of *Canada*, I desire to give expression to my own deep feeling of gratification that it has been my high privilege to occupy an official position which has made it my duty to assist at every step taken in the creation of this Great Confederation.

I congratulate you on the Legislative sanction which has been given by the Imperial Parliament to the Act of Union, under the provisions of which we are now assembled, and which has laid the foundation of a new Nationality that I trust and believe will, ere long, extend its bounds from the *Atlantic* to the *Pacific* Ocean.

In the discussions which preceded the introduction of this measure in the Imperial Parliament, between the Members of Her Majesty's Government on the one side, and the Delegates who represented the Provinces now united on the other,—it was apparent to all those who took part in those conferences, that, while Her Majesty's Ministers considered and pressed the principle of Union as a subject of great Imperial interest, they allowed the Provincial Representatives every freedom in arranging the mode in which that principle should be applied.

In a similar spirit of respect for your privileges, as a free and self-governing people, the Act of Union, as adopted by the Imperial Parliament, imposes the duty and confers upon you the right of reducing to practice the system of Government, which it has called into existence, of consolidating its institutions, harmonizing its administrative details, and of making such legislative provisions as will secure to a constitution, in some respects novel, a full, fair, and unprejudiced trial.

With the design of effecting these objects, measures will be laid before you for the amendment and assimilation of the laws now existing in the several Provinces relating to Currency, Customs, Excoise, and Revenue generally,—for the adoption of a uniform Postal System,—for the proper management and maintenance of the Public Works and Properties of the Dominion,—for the adoption of a well considered scheme of Militia Organization and Defence, for the proper administration of Indian affairs,—for the introduction of uniform Laws respecting Patents of Invention and Discovery,—the naturalization of Aliens,—and the assimilation of the Criminal Law, and the Laws relating to Bankruptcy and Insolvency.

A measure will also be submitted to you, for the performance of the duty imposed upon *Canada*, under the terms of the Union Act, of immediately constructing the Inter-colonial Railway.

This great work will add a practical and physical connection to the legislative bond which now unites the Provinces comprising the Dominion, and the liberality with which the guarantee for the cost of its construction was given by the Imperial Parliament is a new proof of the hearty interest felt by the British people in your prosperity.

Your consideration will also be invited to the important subject of Western Territorial extension, and your attention will be called to the best means for the protection and development of our Fisheries and Marine Interests.

You will also be asked to consider measures defining the privileges of Parliament and for the establishment of uniform laws relating to Elections, and the trial of Controverted Elections.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

The circumstances under which the Act of Union came into operation, rendered it