

The Honourable the Speaker commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House that,—It is His Royal Highness the Governor General's pleasure that they attend him immediately in the Senate.

Who being come with their Speaker, the Honourable Albert Sévigny, who said:—

May it please Your Royal Highness,—

The House of Commons have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfill the important duties thus assigned to me.

If in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall in error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons, whose servant I am.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate then said:—

Mr. Speaker,—I am commanded by His Royal Highness the Governor General to assure you that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

His Royal Highness the Governor General was then pleased to open the Session by a Gracious Speech to both Houses, as follows:—

*Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons:*

Since I last addressed you the war in which we are engaged has been continued with unabated vigour and varying fortunes.

The Empire's part therein has been amply maintained at sea by the inspiring achievements of the Navy, and on land by the distinguished valour of the great armies which have enrolled themselves in all parts of His Majesty's Dominions for the common defence of our liberties.

In a spirit of splendid loyalty and unfaltering devotion, India and the Overseas Dominions have vied with each other in co-operating with the Mother Country to achieve this great purpose.

The call to service has evoked a widespread and notable response in Canada. Already 120,000 men have crossed the seas, an equal number is now being actively trained and equipped for service abroad, and a call extending the authorized enlistment to half a million men has been received with warm enthusiasm.

At the front our gallant soldiers have met the enemy in repeated contests, and by their pre-eminent courage and heroic endurance have shed lustre upon their country and upheld its highest traditions.

Equally praiseworthy and impressive has been the self-sacrificing and loyal spirit shown by all the Canadian people who have freely dedicated their manhood and substance to the common defence of the Empire.

The life of the present Parliament expires in the autumn of this year, and, under existing legislation, a dissolution and election would be necessary in the early future. My advisers, however, are of the opinion that the wishes of the Canadian people and the present requirements of the war would be best met by avoiding the distraction and confusion consequent upon a general election at so critical a time.

That purpose can only be effected through the medium of legislation by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. A resolution authorizing and requesting the enactment of such legislation as will extend the life of this Parliament for the period of one year will be presented to you.