

*Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate.*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons.*

I recur, with confidence, to your advice, and have much satisfaction in being enabled, on the present occasion, to summon you to the discharge of your public duties at the period of the year most convenient to yourselves.

The circumstances under which we meet are, in many respects, auspicious. The Bounty of Providence crowned the Harvest with abundance, and made the Fisheries unusually productive; in many districts, existing industries have been enlarged, and new enterprises have started into activity, furnishing fresh avenues for Commerce, and additional employment for our people; whilst, every day, new sections of the country are being opened to the labors of the husbandman. The trade and wealth of the Dominion are on the increase, and the equal administration of the Laws maintains, as heretofore, the enjoyment of a general sense of security.

I have watched, with much anxiety, the course of events, in the North West Territories, Unfortunate misapprehensions of the intentions with which the country was sought to be acquired by *Canada*, have led to complications of a grave character. With a view to their removal, I have thought it desirable to exhaust every means of conciliation, before adopting other measures; and the latest advices lead me to expect that the groundless alarms entertained by a portion of the inhabitants, have given place to a desire to listen to the explanations, which I have caused to be made to them. Efforts made in the spirit, which has animated my Government throughout, can scarcely fail to accomplish an equitable and peaceful solution of the existing difficulty, and, thereby, secure the speedy incorporation of the North West Territories with *Canada*, an object so earnestly desired by the Empire and the Dominion.

As the Act, for the temporary Government of the Territories when united with *Canada*, will expire at the close of the present session, a measure, providing for their Government will be submitted for your consideration.

The Charters of most of the Banks of the Dominion were, last Session, extended for a limited period, with the view that during the interval the questions of Banking and Currency should receive the consideration which their importance demands. A measure intended to ensure safety to the community, without interfering with the legitimate operations of the Banks, will be submitted for your consideration, and will, I trust, be found calculated to place those important interests upon a sound and stable basis.

The Laws in force on the subject of Elective Franchise, and the regulation of Parliamentary Elections in the several Provinces of the Dominion, vary much in their operations, and it is important that uniform provision should be made, settling the Franchise, and regulating Elections to the House of Commons. A measure upon this subject will be submitted for your consideration.

Under the operation of an Act of the Imperial Parliament, passed in the year 1869, to amend the Laws relating to the Coasting Trade and Merchant Shipping in British Possessions, a period of two years is given to the Legislatures of the several Colonies of the Empire to make provision for the regulation of their Coasting Trade. In the absence of legislation on the subject, within the period named, the provisions of the Imperial Law will be in force. The extent and value of our internal commerce render legislation on this subject desirable, and a measure with regard to it will be submitted for your consideration.

The creation of a Court of Appeal, under the powers conferred upon you by the Union Act, is a matter deserving your attention. A measure will be submitted to you for the establishment of such a court, and for conferring upon it certain original jurisdiction.

The Year 1871 is that in which the next decennial census is fixed by law to take place. As there are different laws on the subject in the several Provinces, it will, therefore, be necessary to pass a General Act, to establish a uniform and accurate system throughout the Dominion. Steps have already been taken to secure the co-operation of *Newfoundland* and *Prince Edward Island*; and, I trust, a census upon one system will be made simultaneously in all Her Majesty's British North American Possessions. I need not expatiate on the importance of the information which the tables of the Census are calculated to afford,