

HON. MR. ABBOTT—My hon. friend quoted from a volume in support of his proposition which, I think, laid down the doctrine that there were numerous instances of the introduction of Bills before the completion of the debate on the Address to the Crown.

HON. MR. POWER—Yes.

HON. MR. ABBOTT.—Whether the introduction of those Bills is at one particular stage of the debate or at another particular stage does not seem to me to be of any importance at all. The rule which my hon. friend has read to us from our own rules, and elsewhere, deals with the first day of the Session, as to the immediate proceedings after the Governor has delivered his Speech. The rules refer to that period, not to the period after the first day after the Address has been received and an order has been made as to when it shall be debated. There is no rule which applies to an act of that description. The rule says:

“On the first day of the meeting of a new Parliament, or of any subsequent Session, His Excellency having opened the Session by a gracious Speech to both Houses, and Prayers been said, some Bill is read *pro formâ*; the Speech from the Throne is reported by the Speaker, and a Committee of Privileges, consisting of all the Senators present during the Session, is appointed.”

Now, that was all done exactly as this rule prescribes. On the first day of the Session His Honor the Speaker reported His Excellency the Governor's Speech, and upon that a Bill *pro formâ* was introduced and read the first time, a Committee of Privileges was appointed, and upon His Honor the Speaker reporting to the House His Excellency's Speech it was moved that the Speech from the Throne be taken into consideration the following day. So that this rule had no application to the question before us; it does not bear upon it at all. It provides what are to be the proceedings up to the time when His Excellency's Speech is ordered, but there is not a word here about what is to be done after the Governor's Speech is ordered to be discussed on a future occasion, or as to what shall be done on the second day of the Session. The rule of the House of Lords is precisely the same—almost the same language—that at the beginning of the Session, after prayers said, some Bill

*pro formâ* is to be read; then Her Majesty's Speech is to be reported, and then a committee of privileges it to be appointed. I take this from “Hatsell.” It is a standing rule of the House of Lords, made some time ago, and I suppose that something of the same substance is still in force. There is nothing, therefore, in those rules which my hon. friend has read which prevents any ordinary routine business from being taken up, or any business at all, for that matter, being taken up by the House after those three proceedings have been taken—the presentation of the report by His Honor the Speaker; the presentation of the Bill *pro formâ*, and then doing something or other with the Address—whether it be that the Address is immediately moved, or whether it be that an order is made to take it up on the following day.

Now, what do the writers say on that subject? I think that to some extent the proposition is—and the practice seems to sustain the proposition—that routine business may be gone on with after those preliminary steps have been taken, at any stage of the debate on His Excellency's Speech, whether before or during the debate on the Address. I quote from Bourinot, page 232, which my hon. friend read, in order to show what was considered courteous and what was considered in accordance with precedent and practice in the House:

“It is not deemed courteous to the Crown in the Canadian House to discuss any matter of public policy before considering the Speech.”

Now, how does that affect this case? There was no question of public policy discussed, no question of public policy was proposed to be discussed; there was simply a matter of routine which could not in any way interrupt or retard the discussion of His Excellency's Speech, and it was not within the limits of the rule which my hon. friend read from Bourinot's book. It was not a discussion of any matter of public policy. There was no discussion, and no discussion at all could take place. In the Barthe case there was a discussion going on on a matter of public policy—the repeal of the insolvency law, which applied to the whole Dominion. There, on the suggestion of the Speaker, followed by Sir John Macdonald, the motion was allowed to stand on this ground. But that does not apply to this