

AN IRREGULAR PETITION.

THE SPEAKER having called for the reading of petitions,

The petition of Daniel Shanks and others of the Division of De Salaberry, Province of Quebec, praying the Senate to hear and determine upon the qualification of the Hon. F. X. A. Trudel was taken up.

HON. MR. DEBOUCHERVILLE said:—I object to the receiving of this petition on account of its irregularity. I am ready to show that it is irregular, unless hon. members think it better to put off until a future day the discussion on this question.

HON. MR. PELLETIER—This is a very important matter, in which I believe all the members of the Senate are interested. The seat of a member of this House is in question. I only learned a few moments ago that an objection was to be raised, and as very few members of this House have had an opportunity to see the petition, I ask to have the consideration of it postponed until Wednesday or Thursday next.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—This is a matter which interests every man in the Senate. Anyone one of us might be assailed in a similar way, and every one would desire, no matter against whom the petition may be (especially when it is against an old member like the hon. gentleman from De Salaberry) to have it disposed of at once. I do not see exactly the necessity of postponing the matter: I understand the point is one of order. If it is, I daresay it could be disposed of in a few moments, and while of course we must consider the position of the hon. member against whom the petition is presented, on the other hand we must consider the position of anyone who wishes to petition against him. We are so near the end of the session that the postponement of this matter until Thursday would be practically postponing it until next session. If there is a point of order raised, I would suggest that it is better to take it up now, and probably we can dispose of it in a few moments.

HON. MR. PELLETIER—Perhaps it would be better to postpone it until the hon. gentlemen have an opportunity to see the petition.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—The point of order appears to me to be a sound one and well taken, and, if so, why should we postpone the consideration of the matter at this stage of the session?

HON. MR. DEBOUCHERVILLE—In support of my objection to the reception of the petition, I will refer to May, edition of 1863, page 507:—

“It must be free from interlineations or erasures; it must be signed; it must have original signatures or marks, and not copies from the original, nor signatures of agents on behalf of others, except in case of incapacity by sickness; and it must not have letters, affidavits, appendices or other documents annexed.”

If hon. gentlemen will look at the petition they will see that there are many documents annexed to it, and therefore I think it is out of order.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I have examined this petition, and from the opinion expressed by May, which is endorsed by Bourinot, I think the petition out of order.

HON. MR. DEBOUCHERVILLE—I move that the petition be not received.

THE SPEAKER—I have no doubt that the point of order is properly taken. The conditions upon which petitions can be presented to this House are particularly clear and explicit. A petition, according to May and Bourinot,

“May be printed, but it must be free from erasures or interlineations, and the signature must be written, not printed, pasted upon, or otherwise transferred. It must not have appendices attached thereto, whether in the shape of letters, affidavits, certificates, statisticals, statements or documents of any character.”

I am informed that this petition has every one of those objections. I think it has an appendix: it has affidavits, certificates and statistical statements, any one of which is sufficient to prevent the reception of the petition under our rules.