

the Order Paper before that my hon. friend from Iberville, who also gave notice on the same day of a Bill in reference to insolvency. At the proper stage, I made my motion, and you, Mr. Speaker, asked me to send you a copy of the Bill. I sent you a copy which was a proof-sheet of the Bill, precisely as it is now distributed, both in English and in French, to all the members of this House. By some unaccountable means—by some blunder that Bill was not in the Clerk's possession at the time my hon. friend the member for Lambton made an enquiry in reference to it. My hon. friend from Lambton stated his entire satisfaction with the explanation I had given that the Bill had been placed in the Speaker's hands the day before. My hon. friend from Chateauguay, I believe, also expressed his entire satisfaction with it, and that the proceedings were entirely regular. On one other point, I desire simply to make a brief reference. It has been intimated in these newspapers that I was guilty of some discourtesy in taking the initiative in the introduction of a Bill for the repeal of the Insolvency Law. Now, I am quite sure that, having been a member of this House for many years, the members of this House do not consider me as one who is in the habit of infringing upon rights or wounding the feelings of other members, and, if I took an early opportunity of introducing that Bill, I was not under the impression that there was any impropriety in my so doing, after having introduced a Bill in 1871 against the Insolvency Laws, and carried it against the Government I was then supporting. I also introduced a similar Bill in 1872, and carried it by a most persistent and laborious effort against the Government I was then supporting, and I have, from time to time, in season and out of season, and on all occasions, endeavoured either to effect an entire abolition of what to my constituents and myself, is an obnoxious law, or its thorough amendment. It seemed to me that there was no unfitness in my coming forward at this early stage and introducing the Bill, which was likely to be effectual in repealing the Insolvency Laws, and if, by so doing, I have wounded the feelings of any member of the House, I sincerely regret it.

MR. COLBY.

PROCEDURE—PREMATURE PRINTING
OF PUBLIC BILLS.

REMARKS.

MR. BLAKE: I desire to call the attention of the House to a practice which is now being pursued, and which, unless some new practice has been established during last Session, is irregular. I refer to the practice of Public Bills going to the Parliamentary Printer and being printed anterior to their introduction. I never heard before that any member had the right to have his productions of that description printed. We know that Government Bills are sometimes printed before the commencement of the Session, and introduced in that way. I always understood that private members' Bills had to pass the first reading before they reached the hands of the Queen's Printer. While on this subject, I may refer to another proceeding which seems to be also irregular. We have found on our desks, during the last few days, slips printed by the Queen's Printer intimating the intention of two private members to propose amendments to the Bill for a repeal of the Insolvency Law. While it is competent and very convenient to give notice on the Notice Paper in the usual way of such amendments, it is contrary to our practice, that there should be separate fly-sheets printed and distributed in this manner.

MR. SPEAKER: It is my intention to call the attention of the Clerk to the rule and I will see that it is not disregarded again.

MR. BLAKE: You will observe that the early printing of the Bill gives to a member who is allowed the privilege the advantage over one who is not, and, in the present case, had the member for Iberville been fortunate enough to catch your eye, he would still have been postponed at the second reading by virtue of the earlier despatch in printing accorded to the member for Stanstead.

MR. COLBY: It would have made no difference in my case.

MR. BLAKE: If the hon. gentleman will look at the Notice Paper of the last few days, he will find that it might have made a difference.