

ite expressed strongly his opinion, while in possession of the chair as Speaker, as to the necessity of knowing that the rule should be strictly observed and the House knowing that it was strictly observed; but, whether strictly observed or not, whether the rule was set aside by universal consent or by no one taking objection to it or not, is a matter of no importance. The House could set aside and suspend the rule just as the House of Commons in England suspended the rule in the Kenealy case, and this assemblage of members—for it is not yet a House, not yet having a head, and not yet having a mouthpiece, cannot take any such duty, any such responsibility, upon itself. They have no power, they have no such authority; and if they do so, the invalidity may crop up in the most inconvenient way, at the most inconvenient season, and without any reason at all for it. Now Mr. Clerk, having spoken upon this point, I must say that I feel so strongly upon it that I shall ask for the votes to be taken in the House upon this resolution, in order that we may stand before the country as not yielding in any way to an unconstitutional and an unparliamentary proposition. Then, Sir, as to the appointment itself. I regret extremely that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Anglin) should have been nominated. I regret extremely the fact that this hon. gentleman should have been chosen by the Government as their nominee. I regret extremely that this same Government, having felt it their duty to support, as far as they could support, the ground taken that the hon. gentleman had forfeited his seat by becoming a Government contractor, should now press that appointment. I remember the discussion—we all must remember that discussion, that unpleasant discussion of last Session, that disagreeable discussion of last Session, upon these points, and we can remember especially the argument of the hon. member for South Bruce (Mr. Blake) when the Government was attacked by the resolution introduced by the hon. member for North Hastings (Mr. Bowell). And something essentially like it was moved from the Government side regarding their course with respect to the

Speaker. Then the hon. gentleman's (Mr. Blake's) argument—and a very ingenious argument it was, and all his arguments are so—was, that the Government was not in fault, but that the Speaker was in fault; that the Government had a right to give to any hon. gentleman in this House a contract, because the moment he became a contractor that moment he ceased to be a member of this House, and was civilly dead, and actually dead as a member of this House; and, therefore, the giving to a member of this House of a contract, was certainly not corrupting that member, but the fact of the acceptance of such contract deprived the acceptor of his position as member; and, therefore, the Government was free from censure, and the hon. gentleman (Mr. Blake) at the same time passed the strongest possible censure on the Speaker, when he, in effect, said that he, sitting in that chair, he, the pronouncer of rulings in this House, he, the chief organ and the mouth-piece of Parliament, pretended to be a member of Parliament, while, according to the law properly laid down by the hon. gentleman from South Bruce, he was no more a member, as I said before, and had no more right to interfere with the proceedings of this House than the pages who run about carrying the letters. So he was a stranger in this House, and was open to the censure that I think was properly attributed to him by those who voted on that occasion for the motion of my hon. friend from North Hastings (Mr. Bowell). And that censure will now be felt through all the country with redoubled force, and the course taken by the Government will be considered as even infinitely more censurable, in now attempting to fill up this office in this manner, than its original course. It was said on that occasion, by the hon. the Minister of Finance, that this matter was not discovered for some time; that it was a mistake of the Post Office Department; that the Government was not aware of it until January, 1876, and that the moment the error was discovered, the practice was stopped. But we all felt then, Sir, that this statement aggravated the cause, the reason of the censure which was included in the motion then