

being dealt with by him. Upon a general review of the facts connected with the matter, the situation seems to me to be absolutely clear. The rules of this House determine and define the functions, duties and powers of the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and in rule 14 is found everything that is necessary to enable the business of the House to be properly conducted. Notwithstanding the fact that all the rules contemplate that every committee must report to the House before the House can be seized of the matter before the committee, it is asserted by hon. gentlemen opposite that Mr. Speaker can, of his own motion and at any time, take the Chair and proceed with the business of the House. I say that such a conclusion is not warranted, and there are no conditions which reasonably justify such a proposition. When this matter came up for discussion last week, Mr. Speaker, when asked to read the rule embodying the authority under which he took the Chair, said:

The quotation which I gave as to the right of the Speaker to take the Chair is in the English rules, number 161, which reads:

In the case of grave disorder arising in the House the Speaker may, if he thinks it necessary to do so, adjourn the House without question put.

He went on to say that our rules are practically the same; but I am sure that Mr. Speaker, on reflection, will see that no such principle is involved in the rules of this House as they exist to-day. Rule 161 is an English rule which applies entirely to the proceedings in the House itself, and not to the proceedings when the House is in Committee of the Whole. I have read the rule, which is a correct transcript of what is to be found on page 139 of the Manual of Procedure of the English House of Commons dated 1912. I think these rules came into force in 1902. The point, however, is that rule 161 deals with conditions existing in the House with the Speaker in the Chair, and when disorder arises it indicates what should be done. There were incidents in the British House in 1905 and 1911 which show how that rule is enforced. In 1905 a discussion was originated by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who demanded from the then Premier, Mr. Arthur Balfour, a statement as to the position of the Government with respect to the matter of colonial preference. Mr. Balfour did not rise to reply, but Mr. Lyttleton, who I think was Secretary of the Colonies at the time, proposed to do so, whereupon the Opposition of the day insisted that Mr. Balfour should make the statement. They continued to insist vociferously; the incident is recorded here in the English 'Hansard.' A lot of maudlin

references have been made to what occurred here the week before last. Let us go to the English House of Commons and see what occurred in 1905, and in 1911. True, they do not have such curious rulings as we have had in this House but we find discussions in which the Opposition in the British House of Commons have asserted their rights in the most determined manner. What occurred in 1905 under rule 161 was this. Mr. Deputy Speaker, who presided in the absence of the Speaker, rose and said:

It is perfectly obvious that this scene cannot go on. It has now lasted for nearly an hour. In these circumstances it comes, I take it, within the words of rule 21, namely, 'that in case of grave disorder' the power rests with the Speaker to adjourn the House without question put. That power I now exercise, and I declare that the House stands adjourned.

That was in 1905, and a scene somewhat similar occurred a month or two ago, as will be in the recollection of hon. members. That action was taken by virtue of rule 161 while the House itself was sitting, and the Speaker was in the Chair. It had no relevance whatever to any proceedings in the Committee of the Whole, and has no relation to the issue which we are discussing here.

Mr. EMMERSON: What did the Opposition do on that occasion; what was the measure of the disorder?

Mr. MACDONALD: The measure of the disorder was the continued insistence upon the fact that Mr. Balfour should make the statement on behalf of the Government as to their policy in regard to the question of Imperial Preference. So much for the application of rule 161. I think it is desirable in discussing this question to wipe away the extraneous matters in order to see just where we are. I submit that the right of Mr. Speaker to take the Chair does not arise for the purpose of instructing the chairman of a committee to do a certain thing, such as to put a motion. We have heard isolated and antiquated precedents quoted here, but even such worthless evidence cannot be furnished up to justify the proposition that Mr. Speaker can interfere and dictate to the Chairman of a committee as to the putting of a motion. I do not intend to labour that point, because nothing can be found in the rules, either here or in England, to warrant any such assumption. We on this side of the House are sincerely desirous that this question should be settled in conformity with what are the well understood rules of Parliament. We on this side of the House have the right to freely discuss any question that is brought before

Mr. MACDONALD.