

gard to the rules, must interpret the rules; he must interpret the rules, not as a member of the political party with which he has been associated in the past, but as representing, not only the majority, but the minority in this House.

So far as the hon. member for Bonaventure (Mr. Marcil) is concerned, I can only say that in the course of my experience of him as Chairman of Committees, and, on occasion, in the exercise of the functions of the office of Speaker during the absence of the Speaker, he has conducted himself with dignity and impartiality; and, upon more than one occasion, of a rather trying character, I observed him to use a great deal of tact.

Now, there has been a subject brought to the attention of the public of this country in connection with the hon. gentleman (Mr. Marcil). I refer to what is well known to every member of this House—the allusions that have been made to his methods of campaigning. I do not propose, this afternoon, to affirm or deny any statements which have been made in the press; I have not the evidence at my command which would enable me to do so. But, so far as the system itself is concerned, I say that the system of offering bribes to constituencies in this country is a vicious one, and that, so far as I am concerned, I lifted up my voice during the last parliament in favour of the prohibition by statute of such acts; and I hope some day to see this wrong righted in Canada by statute. But, so far as that is concerned, the whole subject will undoubtedly be discussed later on in this House from a very much wider and more comprehensive standpoint than would be possible to-day. I do not consider it fitting that I should say more on that subject at this moment.

It would perhaps be permitted to me to say, without in the slightest degree desiring to be disrespectful, or to be understood in any offensive sense, that the very judicial quality with which the Speaker of this House is invested would negative any idea in the mind of any one of us, and I am sure in the mind of the hon. gentleman himself, that the person filling such a position could be a suppliant for favours from the administration from day to day in respect of his constituency. I take that for granted. To take any other view would be derogatory to the dignity of parliament and would lead inevitably to the decadence of our parliamentary institutions. I trust that I shall be understood in these remarks as laying down a principle which ought not to be gainsaid by any hon. member of this House. And, having said so much, I dismiss that part of the subject with the assurance that the whole question, so far as it deserves discussion, will be brought forward before the end of this par-

liament. I have nothing further to say at this moment.

The motion being put to the House,

The Clerk of the House (Mr. T. B. Flint) declared the motion carried in the affirmative, nemine contradicente, and Charles Marcil, Esquire, member for the electoral division of Bonaventure, duly elected to the Chair of the House.

Mr. Marcil was conducted from his seat in the House to the Speaker's chair by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Hon. Wm. Paterson.

Hon. CHARLES MARCIL (Speaker-elect). I beg to tender to this House my sincere and hearty thanks for the high honour it has conferred upon me by electing me as its Speaker. It will be my pleasure, as well as my duty, to endeavour to deserve that high honour by dealing with all questions which come before me in my official character with firmness and impartiality. I am fully sensible of my unfitness for the position, but I rely confidently upon the co-operation of hon. members on both sides of the House to assist me in maintaining our rules and regulations, in vindicating our rights and privileges, and in preserving the freedom and dignity of debate, according to ancient usages.

(Translation.) I beg to tender to this House my most sincere thanks for the high honour it has conferred upon me by electing me to the high office of Speaker.

It is my most ardent wish to deserve that high mark of confidence by discharging with fairness and impartiality the duties of the office entrusted to me.

I rely confidently on your co-operation to assist me in my endeavours to uphold our rights and privileges and also in safeguarding the freedom and the dignity of our debates, according to our established rules and parliamentary traditions.

This House could have called to the Speaker's Chair a member more deserving of such a favour.

I am fully confident, however, that my colleagues will continue to favour me, as in the past, with their kind co-operation and allow me to rely on their indulgence.

The Sergeant at Arms then placed the Mace on the Table of the House.

ADJOURNMENT—INQUIRIES FOR PAPERS.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Halifax). Before the House adjourns, might I inquire of the Prime Minister whether or not the report of Mr. Justice Cassels in respect of the matters entrusted to him by order in council during last session has been presented? I would like also to inquire what is the cause of the delay in the printing and distribution