

HON. MR. SMITH—I must to a great extent repeat the same words. I cannot ask from the Privy Council what they have not got. I cannot go to Sir John Macdonald as a private gentleman and ask him for a copy of his private letters and I do not think that this House ever intended any such thing. I have given the answer as I have it, the true answer.

HON. MR. HOWLAN—There are no papers. ?

HON. MR. SMITH—There are no papers—there cannot be any papers brought into the Privy Council on the question to which the hon. gentleman refers. The Privy Council cannot make up papers, and I cannot ask Sir John Macdonald if he has written any private letters—I do not say that he wrote any letter—to any ecclesiastic or private gentleman in this country. I cannot go to him and ask him for such letters, to bring them before Parliament. I do not think the House requires any such return. The hon. gentleman would be furnished willingly with any information that came into the Privy Council, but there was nothing to my knowledge to be brought before this House. It is impossible to bring in and satisfy him with documents that never appeared before the Privy Council.

HON. MR. POWER—Possibly the contention of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down is correct, but if it is a fact, and we have no right to ask for the letters which are spoken of in the motion which was adopted last session, then I think the Government in this House should have taken that point at the time ; but having allowed the order of the House to pass asking for that correspondence, it is too late for the Government now to say that they are not to be expected to bring down letters which are of a private character.

HON. MR. DICKEY—I rise to a point of order. I have no desire to interrupt my hon. friend, but there is really no question before the House. My hon. friend from Toronto was in the exercise of his undoubted right

when he asked the question he did, but there is no rule to justify a discussion arising upon a question put in this way.

THE SPEAKER—The point of order is well taken by the hon. gentleman from Amherst.

HON. MR. POWER—I was not proposing to discuss the merits of the previous resolution at all, but I think a discussion of a question of order is always in order.

HON. MR. MILLER—I think the hon. gentleman has a right to discuss the question of order raised by the hon. gentleman from Amherst.

HON. MR. VIDAL—The simplest way to get over a difficulty of this kind is to take the regular course. No notice was given by the hon. gentleman from Toronto that the question would be asked, and it would be better to let it stand as a notice, and then I have no doubt that the Minister will come with a written reply to which the House is entitled. If I remember correctly, when the House adopted the motion for an address last Session it was on a statement made to us that a certain official document existed. That document was stated to be mixed up with other letters, we do not know whether private or public. No doubt a proper answer will be brought down in writing, that there are no such documents as the hon. gentleman asked for in existence.

HON. MR. MILLER—I think it would be quite unprecedented if the course suggested by my hon. friend should be adopted. A motion was put to this House and passed last Session for certain papers, and the Minister has been asked when those papers will be brought down. He has given his answer. That answer or is not conclusive. If it is not satisfactory to the hon. member he has his recourse by moving in some other shape in reference to it, but I do not think that a prolonged discussion upon such an explanation as my hon. friend has desired would be in order. I think there would be no difficulty in the hon. gentleman from Toronto getting any redress he de-