

I venture to hope that the success which attended the Exhibition of articles of local industry during last Autumn, will encourage you to repeat and extend the stimulus which such exhibitions undoubtedly give.

I now leave you to the performance of the duties of the Session.

Hon. Members of the Assembly having returned to their seats, His Excellency's Speech was again read from the Chair, after which the House proceeded to business.

Hon. Mr. COLES, Col. Secretary, laid on the table the Writ of Election issued for the election of a Member for the Second District of King's County, in the place of Edward Rielly, Esq., who had accepted the office of Queen's Printer, and the Sheriff's Return thereon, which was read by the Clerk.

E. REILLY, Esq., Queen's Printer, re-elected a Member for the Second District of King's County, appeared at the Bar, and having been introduced, took the usual oaths and his seat.

The following Committees were then appointed, viz:

Committee to prepare and report the Draft Address in answer to His Excellency's Speech.—Messrs. Reilly, McNeill, Hon. Mr. Kelly, Messrs. McCormack, Dr. Jenkins, Bell and Kickham.

Committee to receive Tenders for Printing the Debates of the House.—Hon. Messrs. Hensley, Howlan, Haviland.

Committee to receive Tenders for Printing the Journals of the House.—Hon. Mr. Hensley, Mr. McNeill, Hon. Mr. Henderson.

Committee on Public Accounts.—Messrs. P. Sinclair, Bell, Hon. Mr. Kelly, Messrs. McNeill, McCormack, Owen, Yeo.

Committee to provide Stationery.—Messrs. Bell, G. Sinclair and Hon. Mr. Laird.

The usual standing Committees were then appointed; and, on motion, it was ordered that Mr. John Griffith be Door-keeper to the House, in the place of Mr. Furlong, who, owing to illness, was unable to attend to the duties of that office.

On motion of the Hon. COL. SECRETARY, Mr. Archibald McNeill was appointed Summary Reporter to the House, his duty being to furnish each Member of the House, daily, with a printed Summary of the previous day's proceedings.

House adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow.

THURSDAY, March 5.

Hon. B. DAVIES submitted a Resolution, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Howlan, to the effect that Robert Gordon, Benjamin Balderston and Isaac Oxenham be appointed Reporters to the House during the present Session.

To which the Hon. Mr. HAVILAND moved an amendment, seconded by the Hon. Mr. McAulay, namely, that the names of Robert Gordon, Benjamin Balderston and Isaac Oxenham be struck out, and the names of David Laird and Peter Stainforth McGowan be inserted in lieu thereof.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND, in submitting the said amendment, asked why were the claims of the two able Reporters of last Session ignored? The capabilities of two at least of the three named in the Resolution of the hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies) were unknown to the House; true, the name of Benjamin Balderston was before the House last Session, relative to his appointment as Registrar of Deeds, and it was extraordinary that the Government, who thought him not fit for that office, should appoint him Reporter to the House, his abilities to discharge the responsible duties of that office never having been tested. Messrs. Laird and McGowan's abilities, as Reporters, had not been questioned, and they had given every satisfaction last Session. It appeared to him exceedingly strange that Mr. McGowan's claims, in particular, should be overlooked; he voted at the last election for Dr. Jenkins and Mr. P. W. Hyndman. He (Hon. Mr. H.) did not wish to say one word disparagingly of Mr. Gordon, whose services were retained by the Resolution in question; he believed that gentleman to be a good member of society and was possessed of many excellent qualities; but in regard to duties of a

Reporter, it was very evident that he was the most inefficient of the three Reporters of last Session, and yet his services were to be continued, and those of the better qualified dispensed with.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL replied, and said it was not to be presumed that the gift or talent of Reporting was confined to any one particular class. Change had been frequently made in that, as in other departments, and he had no desire to recognize the principle of continuing one class of officers always in office. He had reason to believe that the gentlemen named in the Resolution before the House would be found competent to discharge the duties of their office. He was satisfied with the manner in which the Reporters of last Session discharged their duties, but he had yet to learn that Mr. Laird was now an applicant for the office.

Hon. Mr. McAULAY said it was unfair and unjust to discharge the Reporters of last Session. They had performed their work faithfully and well, and why discharge them?

Hon. Mr. DAVIES said the same line of argument as that used by the Hon. Mr. McAulay might be applied to the office of Speaker of the House, or any other office. The debates of last Session were not conducted with that impartiality which should be observed on the part of the Reporters. His opinions on the Loan Bill had not been put forward as they should be; and he was informed that Mr. Laird refused to publish his speech as forwarded to him by the Reporter who was at the desk on the occasion. If those young men named in the Resolution had certificates of competency, which he believed they had, they, he had no doubt, would give general satisfaction to the House.

Mr. BRECKEN said if the charges made by the Hon. Mr. Davies were correct some grounds might exist for substituting the name of another in his place, but he was of opinion that the charge was not correct. Mr. Laird's character was too well known in this community for any one to believe that he would be guilty of what the hon. member (Mr. Davies) had charged him. There were two ways of misrepresenting a speaker, 1st, by putting down what he did not say; 2nd, by omitting what he did say. It was to be regretted that the Government could not provide some other office for Mr. Balderston; but he supposed a section of the Government wanted some public recognition of the services of at least one prominent member of the Tenant League. It was an admitted fact that the two most efficient Reporters were discharged without a fault, and the most inefficient one retained.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON said it was a delicate matter to speak of the conduct of those who could not reply. He was surprised that the Hon. Mr. Davies had not publicly charged Mr. Laird with that now alleged, when writing on the subject in the public press. He would always defend those whose conduct merited defence, but to discharge the able officers of any department was contrary to all he ever knew, civil or military.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAN said it was unfair to Mr. Gordon to say that he was inefficient. The Parliamentary Reporter of last Session would show that Mr. Gordon had performed his full share of the work. It was well to have a change occasionally, without which no inducement was held out to those disposed to excel in any department. He (Hon. Mr. Howlan) would ask if the hon. member for Georgetown (Mr. McAulay) thought it unfair or unjust on a certain occasion to accept the office of Speaker of that House, the duties of which had been efficiently discharged by his predecessor.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND reiterated that Mr. Gordon was not an efficient Reporter; he might be master of the English language, and yet not be a good Reporter. He (Hon. Mr. Haviland) said that the hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies) should have stated, openly and fairly, when he submitted his resolution, that Mr. Laird was guilty of favoritism, and not charge him with it afterwards.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY said that individually he had nothing to say against the Reporters of last Session. He had ample confidence in Mr. Laird's integrity, but it appeared that that gentleman was very indifferent about taking the office again, though he believed he would accept of it if it was the desire of the House. The Free Education Act had