

report be taken into consideration this day fortnight, and that in the meantime Mr. Dickson be notified thereof and a copy of the said report be transmitted to him through the mail by the Clerk of the Senate.

HON. MR. PLUMB—I did not suppose that the remarks I made yesterday would be taken in any way as a proof that my hon. friend from Niagara did not attend in his place for two years. I merely mentioned it in connection with the remarks which I desired to make at the time. It must be obvious to every hon. gentleman that it is quite impossible unless a different system is adopted to prove exactly that any member of this House has not been within the purview of the Senate, attending its Committees, or sitting for half-an-hour perhaps in this Chamber, or ill within ten miles of this place for two years during the sessions of Parliament. That would be quite impossible, and I merely rise now because my hon. friend, the leader of the Senate, has said that my representation was that Mr. Dickson had been absent for two years. That was simply an incidental remark. It was not intended to convey any information to the Senate with regard to Mr. Dickson's absence, and I think, as it has been suggested this will probably be a precedent, and as it is the first time, except one, that the Senate has had to deal with so painful a case, it is quite proper that the course which has been proposed by the leader of the House should be adopted. It is desirable in every way that there should be no summary proceedings. The gentlemen who have seats in this House have sacred vested rights which cannot properly be taken away from them upon any report, unless it is carefully scrutinized and thoroughly authenticated. I have no moral doubt of Mr. Dickson's absence, but I think it would be courteous to proceed with the utmost deliberation, and to allow the hon. gentleman whose seat is concerned, the opportunity of making any statement he can in writing, and I have only to express again to-day my great regret that circumstances have occurred by which we lose the presence of that gentleman in the Senate, in which he has occupied a seat so long and so worthily.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL

HON. MR. DICKEY—The explanation of my hon. friend who has just sat down as to the misunderstanding of his remarks show, I think, most conclusively the propriety of the course which has been adopted in this matter, and explained in the most practical and forcible way the reason why we should adopt the course that is proposed, although it has not been adopted before. We are adopting it now, not merely in reference to this case, but as a precedent for the future.

HON. MR. POWER—I hope that in allowing this motion to pass without dividing the House or without voting against it, one will not be supposed to approve of the action of the Senate in the matter. I gather by what has been said by the hon. gentleman who has just sat down that although the Senate has been in existence for sixteen years, this is the first time that such a step has been taken.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—The second time—Sir Edward Kenny's was the first case.

HON. MR. POWER—I was not aware of that fact, and it removes part of the objection I have to the report. I suppose the matter can be considered more fully when the report comes up to be voted on.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—Certainly.

HON. MR. POWER—I am looking at the section of the British North America Act which deals with this matter. It seems to me it does not leave room for any such notice as is proposed to be given. The section says: "the place of a Senator shall become vacant in any of the following cases:—1st, if for two consecutive sessions of the Parliament he fails to give his attendance in the Senate."

It seems to me that the Statute declares a Senator's place vacant *ipso facto* from his having failed to give his attendance here for two sessions

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—We want to make that clear beyond a peradventure.

HON. MR. PLUMB—No one can say that he has been absent for two years.