

THE SENATE.

OTTAWA, Tuesday, January 26, 1909.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

NEW SENATOR.

The Hon. VALENTINE RATZ, of Parkhill, Ont., was introduced and took his seat.

AN EXPLANATION.

The SPEAKER.—Before the orders of the day are called, I desire to make a statement. I regret to say that I am not a master of the French language, and have not felt free to undertake to address this honourable body of parliament in that language without some preparation. On the occasion of the opening of the House I hesitated to betray my deficiencies, which might, I thought, reflect somewhat on this honourable body, and, therefore, abstained from saying anything in the French language during the ceremony. I hope, however, to make amends for this, and some day in the near future to address the House in that beautiful language.

ICE BREAKING AT CAP ROUGE.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE.—Before the orders of the day are called, I wish to inquire from the government whether they have come to a decision, or have taken some action, in regard to the objection made by the Quebec Board of Trade and the Quebec city council with reference to the work the steamer 'Montcalm' is doing—very bad work indeed in trying to break away the ice at Cap Rouge? This is a very important matter to Quebec. Although resolutions have been passed by those two bodies and sent to the government, I am told that nothing has been heard from them. I should like to know if the government has reached a decision or whether they are going to do something in regard to the matter?

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.—I believe the matter is under consideration of the department immediately concerned,

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

and, perhaps, to-morrow I may give the hon. gentleman more definite information.

COMMITTEE ON SELECTION.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE.—I regret to observe by the Minutes the speedy decision the House has arrived at in the last sitting in appointing the Striking Committee without giving the usual notice in order that members may consider the subject. I do not personally object to any members who have been appointed. They are all good men; but it was my intention to move that instead of having two hon. gentlemen from Montreal serving on that committee, the city of Quebec should have a representative, that Mr. Beique or Mr. Casgrain be replaced by Mr. Tessier. I am sorry to see that the committee was appointed without more consideration. Last session the motion was proposed on the fourth sitting of the House, and adopted on the sixth sitting. On Thursday last there was but a handful of members in the House when the motion was carried. According to my information, the proceedings are not correct, because the seconder of the motion was not even in the House. I do not see exactly what can be done, except to perhaps move a reconsideration. That may cause delay, but I wish to enter my protest against what has been done, and I hope one of the two hon. gentlemen appointed from the Montreal division will be kind enough to resign in favour of an hon. gentleman from Quebec, and I would suggest my hon. friend, Mr. Tessier.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE.—As far as I am concerned, with the leave of the House I would be very glad to be relieved of the duty of serving on that committee, and would be pleased if I could be replaced by the hon. gentleman from De la Durantaye (Hon. Mr. Tessier).

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE.—With the consent of the House, I would move to suspend the rules to permit of this change being made, and I wish to thank my hon. friend from de Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Beique).

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE.—I move, with the consent of the House, that the name of the Hon. Mr. Tessier be substituted for my