

THE SENATE

Friday, November 15, 1867

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

Sundry petitions were presented, among others one from Arthur Harvey, author of a statistical work on British Columbia, which, on motion of Honourable Mr. Ryan, was referred to the Library Committee.

CALL OF THE HOUSE

Pursuant to the orders of the day the Clerk proceeded to make a call of the House, when the following members answered to their names:

The Honourable Joseph Cauchon, Speaker; the Honourables, Messrs. Aikens, Allan, Anderson, Armand, Blair, Blake, Bosse, Botsford, Bourinot, Campbell, Christie, Crawford, Dickey, Dickson, Duchesnay (A. J.), Dumouchel, Ferguson, Flint, Guévremont, Hamilton (Kingston), Holmes, Kenny, Lacoste, Leonard, Leslie, Letellier de St. Just, Macpherson, McCrea, McDonald, Ryan, Sanborn, Seymour, Skead, and Wilson.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Mr. Christie, previous to the putting of the motion for the adjournment of the House, suggested that as there was little at present to engage its attention, the adjournment should continue until Thursday next, the 21st instant.

Hon. Mr. Macpherson said the House ought to be careful not to create the impression that its presence was not required, or that business was not ready to be proceeded with. He had on former occasions suggested that more of the Government Bills might very properly be introduced into this branch of the Legislature, and in referring to His Excellency's speech, at the opening of Parliament, he found there were several which could originate here as well as in the other House. These Bills, whether introduced here or not, must be carried through by the members of the Government in it, and he thought it would greatly facilitate and expedite business, if the practice obtained of bringing in more of such Bills in the Senate. We ought not to be content to be a mere Court of Revision, and should aim at giving it a firm place in the confidence of the country. In his opinion we ought to remain at our post.

Hon. Mr. Christie said that the measures the honourable member named, with one or two exceptions, must of necessity originate with the other House, as they would affect the finances of the country, and as a general thing should be in charge of the head of the Department to which the particular interest they related to appertain. The House met day by day but to adjourn as it were. The delays caused by the debates on the Address in the Commons necessarily left this House without work, and it would always be so since that branch of Parliament invariably expended several days in this way—a fact for which this House was in no wise responsible. Then after the Address was passed the earliest bills introduced would at least take a week before they could get to their final stage and find their way to this House. If he saw there was any prospect of business, he would be the last man to propose a prolonged adjournment.

Hon. Mr. Macpherson maintained that while any member who had private business could at any time absent himself, it was an altogether different thing to close the House itself and could not but think such a course would injuriously affect its position and influence.

Hon. Mr. Dickey said he fully sympathized with the objection urged against the proposed adjournment. This House was as it were on its trial, and should not even seem to ignore what the country expected from it. Business might come, and it should be prepared to do it. The Address had now passed the other Branch, and no doubt several measures would immediately be submitted. It was not desirable to give parties sufficiently disposed to find fault with the opportunity of doing so with a semblance of propriety. The conduct of the House was in the hands of the Government, and it was for them to say whether the proposed adjournment should take place.

Hon. Mr. Campbell said it was for the House to decide the question. It was the place of the members of the Government to be here to attend to the business, but they could not always occupy the time. This lack of occupation at the commencement of the sessions had been always experienced in the Legislative Councils, and in all the Provinces alike. With reference to the measures foreshadowed in the Speech, and to which an honourable member had referred, with two exceptions they were of a character requiring their introduction in the Commons. And even where a Bill did not necessarily involve this, it was always much more proper and convenient that it should be presented by the Minister to whose