

being given, alter any of its rules, or, by unanimous consent, set aside its own rules, and without such unanimous consent, even when the House is fully constituted, it cannot set aside those rules. But here we are no House; we cannot suspend any rules; we must carry out the practice of Parliament; we are obliged to carry out the practice of Parliament; and any act we take which is not in accordance with the Act of Parliament is illegal and invalid. The rule is, therefore, upon new members coming into the House, that they be introduced to the table between two members, making their obeisances as they come up, in order that they may be better known to the House. It was—I have no doubt it will be mentioned—stated, perhaps, that we have set aside that rule in this House and allowed members to take their seats without being introduced to the Table. You all can remember, or those who were in the House during the last two or three Sessions, the course of our practice in that respect; and I say that there are cases in which the House of Commons could, by unanimous consent, suspend the rule. We have had that power, but we cannot now make a new rule. We cannot now suspend the rule. We must now carry out the rules of Parliament as we left them at the end of last Session. Had we a Speaker, and had any of the numerous gentlemen who were elected since last Session, by the unanimous consent of the House taken their seats, then, of course, the rule is not altered, but it is dispensed with for the occasion, by the unanimity which so often enables Parliament to set aside a rule without repealing it. Such a rule is not repealed. It still exists, and as long as it exists it must be the only governing principle, and the only governing principle which is to be used at this moment. It may be said, Mr. Clerk, that this rule does not apply to the hon. member for Gloucester who is now proposed for Speaker, and that as to the rule respecting new members coming into the House and being introduced to the Table, he is not a new member, that the House knows him, that he cannot be better known than he has been, and, therefore, that this rule does not apply to him. Well, Mr. Anglin—I may use his

name, because his name is mentioned in the motion—is either a new member or an old member. That is quite clear. If he be a new member, he must be introduced between two members, under this rule, before he can take his seat in this House; and if he is not a member of this House, the practice in Parliament goes to show that he cannot be elected Speaker. But he is not a new member, he is an old member. Then I would call the attention of the House to the 45th clause of the British North America Act, which provides that in case of a vacancy happening in this office of Speaker, by death, by resignation or otherwise, the House of Commons shall, with all practicable speed, proceed to elect another of its members to be Speaker. If he is a new member he must be introduced, and until introduced he cannot be elected as Speaker; if he is an old member, and, by death, by resignation or otherwise, his seat is vacated, another member must be elected by the express words of the clause I have mentioned. There is no way of getting over that. There is the law of the land; you may discuss what was the actuating cause which induced the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, of the United Kingdom, to pass this clause; but there is the law, that in case of vacancy by death, by resignation or otherwise, such a course must be taken. Well, this vacancy is not occasioned by death, I am glad to say, for the sake of us all; it is not occasioned by resignation of the Speakership; but it has been occasioned otherwise, by resignation of the seat, which involved the loss of the Speakership. It comes under the third of the instances in which there is a vacancy, and when the House is to elect another of its members Speaker. Now, by no possible argument can another of its members be made to mean the same member. If a new member, he cannot be elected in his absence; he cannot take his seat until introduced; and, therefore, under that clause, under the rule of 1688, he cannot take his seat; while, if an old member, and if that rule does not apply to him, then another member, and not the same