

to them that I had received a letter from Mr. Dickey declining further election. In introducing the name of Mr. Vidal, I mentioned to the committee the reasons why the former chairman was not here, deeply regretting—and I repeat it—the cause which retains him at his home. There was not a man who approached me, or whose opinion I asked in reference to a successor to Mr. Dickey, but united in recommending the hon. gentleman from Sarnia. I knew that he had been a very valuable member of committees on which he had acted as chairman, or had anything to do with, and had always attended to the public business most assiduously. It was not upon my own responsibility alone, or altogether, but on the concentration—if I may use that expression—of opinion of the members of the committee who spoke to me on the question of the chairmanship, that Mr. Vidal was selected. I repeat and with a great deal of sincerity, that I disavow in the strongest possible manner any intention or desire to cast a reflection upon any one. I was not responsible for the calling of the committee at the moment.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—I did not insinuate anything of that kind.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—No, my hon. friend did not insinuate anything of that kind, but he did throw out the insinuation, which I do not hesitate to repudiate in the strongest possible language, that I had shown discourtesy to any hon. gentleman.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—I did not use any such language.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The hon. gentleman referred to my predecessors and said that they had been very cautious not to do any such thing.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—That is a different thing.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That implies the same thing.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—Oh no, it does not.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I am glad to hear my honourable friend's disavowal because it has been my good fortune, since I

have been in the House, to be on friendly terms with my honourable friend. Nothing would grieve me more than to suppose that one of the oldest members of the House, whom I have looked up to for advice and assistance, could by any possibility believe that I could be guilty of an action of that kind. I go further than that while I recognize the fact that every section of the Dominion should be represented equitably upon the committees, we ought to ignore as far as possible what might be termed "provincialisms" in the administration of public affairs in this country. I appeal to the senior member from Halifax whether I have not, on many occasions, in striking committees called attention to the fact that members from certain provinces should be equally represented on the different committees. I only mention this to show the hon. member from Richmond, if he has any such idea, that so far as I am concerned I desire to see every province properly represented on the committees, particularly where they would be interested in the legislation which might come before us. The chairmanships held by Ontario members, as I understand it, are precisely the same this year as in former years. My hon. friend shakes his head—perhaps I am in error—

Hon. Mr. MILLER—The chairmanship of the Railway Committee has been taken away from the Maritime Provinces.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—One of the others had been taken from an Ontario man and given to a Nova Scotian.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—Who is that one?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The Hon. Senator from Quinté Division (Mr. Read) used to be chairman of the Committee on Contingencies. He has been replaced by a Nova Scotian.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—The Hon. Mr. McKay was the chairman of the Contingent Accounts Committee last year. I am talking of this year.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I am talking of last year as well as of this year. Nobody objected to the change which was made last year, and I should be sorry to see any question of the kind arise now.