

April 7, 1874

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 7, 1874

The **SPEAKER** took the chair at eight o'clock.

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*Prayers*

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### ATTORNEY GENERAL CLARKE

The **SPEAKER** informed the House that this afternoon he had received a telegram from the Hon. Henry J. Clarke, Attorney General of Manitoba, a witness ordered to appear at the Bar of the House on Wednesday to the following effect:—"I am badly laid up; it will not be possible for me to get to Ottawa before Thursday evening session of the House." This was sent from Oswego.

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### MONTREAL ELECTION COURT

The **SPEAKER** also laid before the House the general rules of the Montreal Election Court under the provisions of the Controverted Elections Act.

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### BANKS

The **SPEAKER** also laid before the House lists of the stockholders of the Metropolitan Bank to the 6th April, 1874; and of the Bank of Nova Scotia to 28th March, 1874.

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### NEW MEMBER

The **SPEAKER** laid before the House that the Clerk of the House had received from the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery a certificate of the election and return of Edward Borron, Esq., as a member to represent the electoral district of the provisional judicial District of Algoma.

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### PETITIONS

**Hon. Mr. CAUCHON** presented the petition of Mr. Stanislaus F. Perry, member-elect for one of the counties of Prince Edward Island, which he read.

The petition contained statements which were made to the House the other day in reference to this matter. Hon. Mr. Cauchon moved the reception of the petition, which was agreed to. He also gave notice of a motion to refer it to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

A large number of petitions were presented asking for the passage of a prohibitory liquor law.

### PROTECTION

**Mr. BAIN** presented the petition of the Dundas Cotton Factory Company and thirteen other Companies praying for increased protection to Canadian manufactures.

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### THE ELECTION LAW

**Hon. Mr. DORION** moved for leave to introduce a Bill to elect members of the House of Commons by ballot. He explained that the Bill provided that the Returning Officers at elections shall be the sheriffs or registrars of the counties in which the elections take place. If there are no sheriffs or registrars available the Governor General shall appoint the Returning Officer, and the same shall apply where the registrar or sheriff is unable from any cause to undertake the duties. This, however, was only meant to hold good in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, as on account of their distance from the seat of Government, it was thought better in the other Provinces to give this power to Lieutenant-Governors.

The elections would take place simultaneously over the whole Dominion on some day to be fixed, except in the Provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba, and in the electoral district of Algoma and Muskoka, in the Province of Ontario, and the electoral districts of Bonaventure, Gaspé and Chicoutimi—Saguenay in the Province of Quebec.

Exceptions for these places were made on account of their immense distance from the seat of Government, and almost impossibility of fixing the elections in those parts at the same time they were fixed in other Provinces. It was proposed to do away with the public nomination of candidates—(*Hear, hear*)—and to substitute therefore nomination by paper signed by a certain number of electors. The number of electors so required to sign was a matter of comparative indifference, but that fixed upon as a matter of fact was ten. In England the number was twelve. A day and place would be fixed for the nomination, and during a certain hour of that day the Returning Officer would be present for the purpose of receiving the papers above described.

The property qualification was also abolished. (*Hear, hear.*) It has been found heretofore that this provision was scarcely any protection against persons who had not the necessary property qualification; therefore it was thought better to allow electors to choose those whom they think most fit and qualified.

The next provision—a most important one—was with regard to the ballot. In almost every country having representative institutions the system of voting by ballots had been adopted. If they looked at the reports that were made in the British House of Commons before the adoption of the ballot system there two or three years ago, and by the adoption of the system in several countries, that, where it had