

House of Commons Debates

FIRST SESSION, FIFTH PARLIAMENT.

THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT of the Dominion, which had been prorogued from the 17th day of May, 1882, and thence from time to time, was dissolved by Proclamation on the 18th day of May, 1882; and, Writs having been issued and returned, a new Parliament was summoned to meet for the Despatch of Business, on Thursday, the 8th day of February, 1883, and did accordingly meet on that day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, 8th February, 1883.

On which day, being the first day of the meeting of the First Session of the Fifth Parliament, for the Despatch of Business,—John George Bourinot, Esquire, Clerk of the House of Commons, Donald William Macdonell, Gustavus William Wicksteed, Henry Hartney, and François Fortunat Rouleau, Esquires, Commissioners appointed by *Dedimus Potestatem* for administering the Oath to Members of the House of Commons, all attending according to their duty;—Richard Pope, Esquire, Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, delivered to the said John George Bourinot a book containing a list of the names of the Members returned to serve in his Parliament.

The aforesaid Commissioners did administer the Oath to the Members who were present, which being done and the Members having subscribed the Roll containing the Oath, they repaired to their seats.

A Message was delivered by René Edouard Kimber, Esquire, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod:

Gentlemen,

The Honorable Sir William Johnstone Ritchie, Deputy Governor, desires the immediate attendance of this Honorable House in the Senate Chamber.

Accordingly, the House went up to the Senate, when the Speaker of the Senate said:

Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate, and

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

The Honorable Sir William Johnstone Ritchie, Deputy Governor, does not see fit to declare the causes of summoning the present Parliament until a Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen according to law, but to-morrow, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the causes of calling this Parliament will be declared.

And the House being returned,

ELECTION OF A SPEAKER.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, addressing himself to the Clerk, said: Mr. BOURINOT, I have the honor to propose that George Airey Kirkpatrick, Esq., the member representing the Electoral District of the County of Frontenac, do take the Chair as Speaker of this House. To those of this House who sat in former Parliaments I need say very little about the qualifications of the hon. member for Frontenac for this important position. He has been in Parliament since 1870. He succeeded my revered friend, his own father, who sat in Parliament until his death, and he has represented that county ever since. Four times he has received the confidence of the electors of Frontenac, and I believe, indeed I know and am well assured, that his conduct during the period he has been in Parliament has

gained for him the esteem, I might almost say the affection, of his brother members. He has been an active member of Parliament since 1870; he has paid great attention to the business of the House, in the House and in Committee; he is, I believe, thoroughly versed in the practice of Parliament, and in every respect, Mr. Bourinot, I do not think I can present any name more acceptable to this House than that of George Airey Kirkpatrick, Esq., the hon. member for Frontenac.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN (Translation). Mr. BOURINOT,—I have much pleasure in seconding the motion of the hon. Premier of the Government for the election of Mr. George Kirkpatrick as Speaker of this House. As my hon. colleague has just said, those who have sat with Mr. Kirkpatrick during the last ten or twelve years know how useful a member of this House he has been, and especially as member of the leading committees in which the affairs of the country are considered before being submitted to this House. I should say that after the hon. gentleman who has, during the last Parliament, presided over the proceedings of this House with so much dignity and honor for himself as well as for this House, which had elected him, we could scarcely have found a member who would have presided over this House with greater dignity than the hon. member whom we now propose. It is true that the hon. gentleman, Mr. Kirkpatrick, is not as conversant with the French as with the English language; nevertheless, I think I may state that the hon. gentleman understands French well enough to follow the debates, and, when occasion occurs, to decide questions of order which may present themselves. I am convinced that the hon. member, who received part of his education in the Province of Quebec, will be happy to avail himself of this opportunity of acquainting himself with the elegant French language, which we speak freely, and that before long he will be able to express himself in French as we, the French members of this House, express ourselves in English. I hope, Mr. Bourinot, that this motion, will receive the unanimous concurrence of this House.

Mr. BLAKE. Ten years ago it was the duty of the hon. gentleman who is the leader of the Government—filling the same situation which he now fills—to discharge the same duty, which he has just now discharged, in proposing the selection of a Speaker to preside over our deliberations. It was his duty to perform that office under circumstances very similar to those under which he has discharged it to-day. As First Minister of the preceding Parliament, he was called upon to ask the House to assent to the election of a Speaker. Having obtained the confidence of the country at the preceding election, he felt called upon to move that Parliament should elect the old Speaker, to advise the House as to the course it should pursue. His opening remarks to-day were so very similar to those with which he had opened his address on that former occasion that I supposed we were to have the same speech altogether; but the conclusion differs. Allow me to recall the attention of those few of us who sat here then to what the hon. gentleman said, and the rule of conduct which he proposed to lay down. He said:

“To those hon. gentlemen who had sat under his (Mr. Cockburn's) guidance, as Speaker of the House, during the last Parliament, he (Sir John) need not address any arguments to press his claims for that important office. Five years ago he was elected to fill it, and he (Sir John) believed that during that time he had performed his duties in a manner acceptable to the House and to the country. He might say