

ected Speaker, as it is that the practice and rules and law of Parliament should be observed. If this had been the first Session of a Parliament, and if, as was the case in the first Session of this Parliament, the majority or at least a large number of the members were new to Parliament, and there might be a difficulty in choosing a member to be Speaker who had sufficient Parliamentary experience, then there might be a reason for selecting a man who had experience of the practice of Parliament. But this is the last, or, at all events, the fifth Session of this Parliament, and those who have been here before have had sufficient training during four Sessions to be able to fill the office of Speaker creditably. Therefore, there was no necessity for this motion being made by the hon. gentleman. He might have found in the ranks of the House, and in the ranks of those who accord him their confidence, many gentlemen who might have filled the office as creditably as the late Speaker, against whom I do not wish to say anything in his character of Speaker. I think, therefore, it is unfortunate that the motion should have been made, and the hon. gentleman must know that it is rather straining the rules of Parliament to take this course. It is setting a precedent, setting aside the old rules of Parliament and the precedents which have been established by the wisdom of centuries, simply because the hon. gentleman prefers one particular individual over all the members of this House. If there were no other person fit for the duties, or as fit for the duties, there might be some justification or excuse for the motion. But, Sir, I contend that we, the members here, are but a crowd until we have, as the old phrase was, the mouth of Parliament. Until we have a Speaker, we are but an assemblage of members of Parliament, meeting in the hope and belief that, in accordance with the summons of the Crown, we will be constituted a House. We are not a House as yet. We must proceed according to the rules of Parliament. We cannot suspend the rules of this House, or rather of this assembly, which will be a House; and, in say-

ing assembly instead of House, I think it will be found that, in the time when the privileges of Parliament were perhaps more looked at, and more carefully scanned than at any other time—during the existence of the Long Parliament and the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell—that a case arose when the House declared that, the Speaker being absent from illness, they were a mere assembly, and they entered on the records that, divers members of the House having met in assembly, and no Speaker being there, they could not even move an adjournment, but *ex necessitate* they dispersed. They came again next day, and a member was desirous of leaving to attend a lawsuit, which, as he said, was of the greatest possible consequence to the State, and in those days no man could leave without the special permission of the House. The members said that by connivance they might allow him to go, but that without their Mouth they could not even give him leave of absence. And, Sir, we have a rule, the 120th Rule, I think, of our House, which says:—

“In all unprovided cases, the rules, usages and forms of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, shall be followed.”

This is an unprovided case, and the rule, the practice of the Parliament of England, the Commons of England, must be followed. Now, what is the rule of the Parliament and House of Commons of England that was established years ago? On the 23rd of February, 1688, it was resolved that the ancient order be observed, that upon new members coming into the House, they be introduced to the Table between two members, making their obeisances as they come up, that they may be better known to the House. That rule was in 1688 resolved upon, and repeated the ancient rule, as it is expressed, that whenever new members were introduced, they should come into the House and be introduced to the Chamber between two members. We cannot set aside that rule. The House of Commons of this country, as the House of Commons in England, is to a very great extent master of its own rules; with the Speaker in the Chair, it can, upon due notice