

every case, in a judicial spirit and not in a partisan spirit. I have heard the statement of the hon. gentleman, and I have heard the particulars for the first time. My attention has not been called before to this case, but it is a very important case, and involves a very important principle. I have not the slightest objection that this motion should be adopted.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I understand from the hon. the leader of the Opposition that he would prefer that the name of Mr. Mills should be substituted for his own on the Striking Committee. By the universal consent of the House the change can be made.

Motion agreed to.

DEBATES COMMITTEE.

Mr. BOWELL. I beg to move the motion of which I gave notice yesterday:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to supervise the Official Report of the Debates of this House during the present Session, with power to report from time to time; to be composed of Messrs Baker, Béchard, Charlton, Colby, Davin, Desjardins, Ellis, Innes, McIntyre, Royal, Taylor, Tupper (Picton), and Weldon (Albert).

I may explain to the House, for the information of those who were not present yesterday, that, in increasing the number of this committee, I have selected a representative from each of the Provinces, and two or three from the larger Provinces, making the total thirteen, which I hope will meet with the approval of the House.

Mr. BLAKE. I am sorry the hon. gentleman has made another attempt in the direction which I objected to on a former occasion with reference to this committee. It must be well understood by the House that this is a very special committee, and that the possibility of maintaining the institution which is presided over by the committee depends upon the very full recognition of the equal rights on both sides. That recognition was made until the year 1885. The committee, for example, for the year 1884, and I believe also for the preceding year, was composed of nine members, of whom five were from the side of the majority and four from the side of the minority. It was not unreasonable, since there must be a majority on one side or the other, and of course, it was not merely not unreasonable, but it was proper, that the majority should be on the side of those who have the majority in the House. But the hon. gentleman opposite, who had a majority in the House of about two to one, recognized through a series of years, and up to the year 1884, the special circumstances belonging to this committee, and had the committee composed as nearly as might be of an equal number of members. In the year 1885 the hon. gentleman proposed to change that, and he proposed a committee in which the number on the side of the majority should be very considerably increased. I objected. He did not propose that our number should be increased at all; he left them at four, and he put at either six or seven, the number of gentlemen who were to belong to the side of the majority. I pointed out the special circumstances which had been recognized for all these years as applying to the constitution of this committee, the practice which had been pursued, and I requested that it should be maintained. The hon. gentleman declined to maintain it in its integrity, but he agreed to add one member, a member for the minority, and thus the committee was increased to twelve, being five from the side of the Opposition and seven from the side of the Ministerialists. That, of course, did not preserve the proportion, did not keep as nearly an equality as possible, but it

Mr. WELDON.

mitigated the injustice which the hon. gentleman had designed and proposed to the House. Well, since that time, in 1886, the committee was renewed in the same way. Now, we come to a new Parliament in which there has been no circumstance which entitles the hon. gentleman to propose that the Ministerial side should be increased on the committee; but what the hon. gentleman proposes is that the Ministerial strength should be still further increased on this committee. He proposes that there should be eight Ministerialists to five members of the Opposition on that committee now. That is proceeding in the same improper direction, although the popular voice has not indicated to the hon. gentleman that he has got any right to make such an assumption at all. I, therefore, object to the constitution of the committee in these proportions. I am sorry, also, to find that the hon. gentleman should have proposed to strike off the committee, a number of gentlemen formerly, and still, members of this House, who have taken an active and intelligent interest in the discharge of the labors of the committee. I believe that there is, perhaps, none of the committees in which an acquaintance with the duties, an acquaintance with the permanent staff, and an acquaintance with the general run of the business, is more important than with reference to the Debates Committee; and for my part, and to the extent to which I may have any voice at all in the selection of the members of the committee, I shall endeavor to promote the notion that those members who have satisfactorily acted in the past should not be withdrawn from the committee in the future. I am not myself a very great admirer of the notion that there is an absolute necessity in this House, twenty years after Confederation, of each Province being represented *nominatim* upon each and every single committee we strike. It seems to me to be a very painful confession—if it is a confession we are called upon to make, and the hon. gentleman made it yesterday for himself and repeated it to-day—that we cannot trust one another sufficiently, but that, in order to remedy some apprehended injustice to each Province, each Province must always be represented on each committee. This is the proposal which the hon. gentleman makes, and by which he proposes to justify, as I understand, first, the enlargement of the committee, and secondly, the changes he makes in its number. However, I am not going to quarrel with the notion that the committee should be enlarged, to the extent of pushing my objection to a vote. I differ from the view that the business of the House requires this committee to be enlarged, and my opinion is that there will be a greater sense of responsibility, that the work will be better done by the small, than by the larger, committee. But I do most emphatically object to this alteration, this still further alteration, in the proportions of this committee to the disadvantage of the gentlemen sitting on your left, which is now proposed; and also, in so far as we are to be represented on the committee, I think we would prefer to be represented by those who have represented us in times past—to a certain extent, at any rate. My hon. friend from the Island of Prince Edward (Mr. McIntyre), who is proposed to be placed on this committee now for the first time, would, I am sure, if he were in his place, object to the view that either my hon. friend the member for the County of Huntingdon (Mr. Soriver), or my hon. friend the member for North Brant (Mr. Somerville), should be displaced from the position with the labors of which they have familiarized themselves, in order that, forsooth, the Island of Prince Edward should be represented for fear some injustice might be done to that Island in the preparation of the reports. I, therefore, ask the hon. gentleman to reconsider the construction of the committee, and to arrange for such a disposition of the strength of the committee from one side and the other, as has been recognized in former days, and if the members are to be increased, I should like to propose a substitution