

ciation a trip out to the Coast some time this summer. It occurred to me that a small deputation from this association might wait upon the hon. gentleman and see if the same courtesy might not be extended to the Canadian association at the same time. I therefore move that a small committee be formed for that purpose."

Mr. Andrew Patullo, M.P.P., said: "I notice the names of two or three gentlemen on the programme in connection with the discussion of the law of libel, and I would like to hear them now, if time permits."

Mr. Wm. O'Beirne, of Stratford, was first called upon, and said: "Mr. President, while every member of the association appreciates the value of your address and the suggestions contained therein, I do not think there is anything of more importance to the publishers of Ontario than the paper by Mr. King to day. I am not prepared to make a speech dealing directly with the issues in the particular way he has done, but propose merely to speak in respect to the injustice of the law respecting security for costs."

I will briefly outline the case and you will see the injustice of it. An exceedingly filthy case was being tried, occupying two days, so indecent that it could not be reported in any decent paper. Still, some people wanted to know something about it, and in my absence the reporter ventured to comment upon it, and he said it was doubtful if ever before in the history of the county of Perth had a case displaying the same moral filth been tried at the court house, and also he added 'that all the phenomenal liars in Canada were not dead yet.' The evidence was of the most contradictory character. When we came to trial we showed that out of 22 witnesses 18 of them contradicted the others, showing that one or the other of them was lying. This was taken up by one of the attorneys, and this resulted in four actions against The Daily Beacon, and four against the weekly for libel. The judge held that it was a question for the jury to decide whether the libel that 'all the phenomenal liars in Canada were not dead yet,' applied to these people or not. Anyway we were refused security for costs, but we won at the trial. The same judge who refused security tried the case, and in eight minutes we obtained a judgment. The injustice I feel about this is that I had to pay the costs, amounting to nearly \$800, in four cases, and in the cases which the judge practically admitted afterwards there should be security for costs given, but, as the law now stands, he would practically have to try the case before ordering security to be given for the costs. Something should be done to relieve a publisher in such cases. No malice was shown. I was away from home, the reporter never saw these people at all, but that a newspaper should be subjected to such enormous costs for such a trivial shortcoming seems outrageous. Fortunately, I am able to stand it, but there are others whom it might have ruined. If they had gotten a verdict for 25 cents it might have ruined me. If the association is going to be of value to the publisher, we should get some amendments to the law so that publishers should be able to conduct their business without such risk, and I hope that the members will co-operate with Mr. King, in endeavoring to obtain a just and proper amendment to the law. I believe that if a newspaper comes out and maliciously slanders a man and charges man with a criminal offence, that man should be allowed, without giving security for costs, to vindicate his character in the courts, but the charge should be distinctly and

clearly defined in the article, upon which he is charged with a criminal offence, before security for costs are refused."

Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell.

At this stage of the proceedings Sir Mackenzie Bowell entered the room, and was requested by the president to occupy a seat among the past presidents.

In response to the general demand for a speech, Sir Mackenzie Bowell said: "Permit me, on behalf of the Senate—that body composed of old men and old women like myself—(laughter)—to congratulate you upon the success that has attended your different meetings from year to year. When I look back at the number of years that have passed since I assisted in forming this association, with the assistance of Mr. Gillespie, then editor of the Hamilton Spectator, I am beginning to think I am a tolerably old man. However that may be, I can assure you my heart is still with you just as strongly as it was before I entered that political world outside of that which pertains to newspaper writers. (Laughter.) It has always been a matter of congratulation to myself to see the unanimity which exists among the newspaper men of the country, and I always remember with pleasure that I was of some assistance in forming, in the earlier period of my life, an association in which I have formed friendships, with many with whom I am not in political accord, which have never ceased to exist to the present day. (Applause.) I am quite sure that you will find great benefit and advantage resulting from your association with each other. In our annual meetings we rub off for the time the little roughnesses that exist in the editorial room, and remember for the time that we are all of one family, having the same object in view—the good and the welfare of our country. (Hear, hear.) I have stolen a few minutes from my duties in the Senate in order to assure you that my heart is with you. That is the reason why I asked for myself the opportunity to make the few remarks I have. I hope you will be successful in some of the attempts which I believe you are making to obtain amendments in the laws of our country by which the press will be benefited in that which is the most important to it, the financial department." (Applause).

The President: "I might mention in connection with the remarks of Sir Mackenzie Bowell, that one reason of which the association has cause to be proud is the fact that it is the oldest national Canadian association in existence." (Cheers).

Again, The Libel Law.

Mr. Hewitt Bostock, M.P., British Columbia, resumed the discussion upon the Libel Law. He said: "I feel very pleased indeed to have this opportunity of meeting so many representatives of the press of the Dominion of Canada. Of course you all probably know that I have been connected with the press a great deal in British Columbia, but, owing to the amount of work I have to do for my constituency when I get down here at Ottawa, I have not very much time to pay attention to the other matters which interest me very much. Therefore I have not had much opportunity of meeting the gentlemen of the press. I very much regret that I was not here to hear the address of Mr. King on the libel law. It is a question that very materially affects me at the present time, and a point was raised in the case in which I figured which I think is a very serious one for the press of this country, but I understand that Mr. King takes a different view to what was apparently taken by counsel in Victoria. They