

of all such oaths." Now, suppose that a number of vacancies occurred during a long interregnum, by decease or resignation, who would have the power of appointment, and before whom were they to take the oath? All these questions naturally came up in connection with this matter, and it was very clear whether or not it was intended to give the power of appointment of other officers than that of the Accountant, which was provided for in one section, that the other section implied that the power of appointment rested somewhere, and that the duty of taking the oath before the Speaker of the day devolved upon all these officers. The hon. member for West Northumberland (Mr. Cockburn) referred to a case that occurred in 1874. He thought he could give an explanation of the hon. gentleman's statement. The late Accountant, Mr. Vaux, was superannuated. He had become utterly unable to discharge his duties, and earnestly requested to be placed on the Superannuation List. There could have been nothing more proper than to do this; but the Government of the day conceived it desirable, in the interests of Parliament, that there should be no appointment to the office of Accountant, and that the Deputy Clerk should discharge the duties of Accountant as well as those of his own office. No Accountant was appointed, but the Deputy Clerk of the House, Mr. Hartney, was asked to undertake the charge of the Accountant's office as well as those of Deputy Clerk, and he had discharged them from that time, the House dispensing altogether with the office and salary of the previous Accountant, and the then Speaker was simply informed of the plan. He (Mr. Mackenzie) thought it was tolerably clear that the House had not received a satisfactory assurance that the Government did not interfere directly in the matter over which neither this Act, nor any other Act, gave them any control. But he would wait, before making any argument, or passing any opinion further on the subject, for the statements the hon. the Premier, might make on those three points. First, with regard to the resignation of Mr. Piché; second, whether an order was sent to Mr. Patrick; and third, where the power of appointment lay.

MR. MACKENZIE.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD said the power of appointment rested with the Speaker. The question was who was Speaker; which he could not answer except by giving his own private opinion.

MR. MACKENZIE: The present Speaker said he was not on the occasion in question; that he made no appointment in the case.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD said that might be; but, so far as he (Sir John A. Macdonald) knew, Mr. Piché was an officer of the House, and would be until it carried out, what he hoped it would, a proposal to provide for him before dispensing with his services. As the House knew, he had suffered so much in past Sessions that he was obliged to absent himself generally from the House in a way to interrupt the business of the House, and it was known it was considered his duties ended with the Session, and it was considered by himself (Sir John A. Macdonald), and those who acted with him, that they would be improving the efficiency of the staff of the House if his services were dispensed with on the provision of a gratuity to him. Till that was done by the House, he was still an officer.

MR. MACKENZIE asked whether an order was sent to Mr. Patrick to disregard the appointments made by the late Speaker.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD said he forgot whether the order was verbal or written, but he had expressed his opinion in very strong terms to the effect that the late Speaker had no right to make this appointment, and that the House would not, and he (Sir John A. Macdonald) would not, recognise the appointment.

MR. MACKENZIE said there was a serious misunderstanding in the matter of Mr. Piché's resignation and the appointment of his successor. The Speaker had informed the House that a vacancy had occurred in the office of Assistant Clerk, and that the Speaker had appointed another person to fill the place. Now they were informed