

and failed to do justice to Quebec. Every one knew that if a jurymen absconded when a case was under trial, any judgment the jury would then render would be null and void. On similar grounds, any decision arrived at by an arbitration, whose numbers were incomplete by the resignation or death of one of its members, would be nugatory. In Quebec, no difference of opinion existed with respect to the injustice of the decision—the people, irrespective of nationalities, were unanimous on that point. He regretted to see the feeling that now existed in that province, but it would not disappear until the grievance was removed. It would be better for the Dominion Government to assume all the debt of the provinces than to allow the difficulty to get worse. Some mode of allaying the existing dissatisfaction must certainly be found with as little delay as possible.

Hon. Mr. Wilmot said that if any mistake had been committed by the arbitrator from New Brunswick, he could assure the House it was an error of judgment, not of intention.

Hon. Mr. Allan said that many gentlemen certainly had reason to complain that the House had been taken by surprise, for he had not expected that the merits of the question would have been dealt with at that stage, when the papers were only asked for. It was certainly unfortunate that an *ex parte* statement should go before the country. As respects the arbitrators, he was sure that they had considered the question with a conscientious desire to arrive at a right solution.

The Speaker here stated that a telegram had just been received announcing the fact that peace had been signed at Versailles. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. Macpherson said that the House would not, of course, expect him to enter into the merits of the question at that stage. He had to discharge a very onerous and delicate duty, and had endeavoured to do so to the best of his ability. He could assure the House that he had endeavoured to act with the utmost impartiality. If the time should come, when the whole matter could be discussed, he would be prepared to vindicate the award. He did not enter upon the consideration of the question in the spirit of an advocate, but had dealt with it impartially and honestly.

Hon. Mr. Tessier had no doubt that the arbitrators discharged their duties conscientiously and he had not the least intention to say any thing reflecting on their personal character.

Hon. Mr. Sanborn felt the highest regard for the honourable gentleman opposite who had been acting as arbitrator. He had not used the term "advocate" offensively. What he meant

s'esquive quand un cas est en litige, tout jugement rendu par le jury est nul et sans effet. De même, toute décision d'un arbitrage incomplet (à cause de la démission ou de la mort de l'un de ses membres) est nulle. Au Québec, aucune divergence d'opinion n'existe en ce qui concerne l'injustice de la décision; les citoyens de toutes nationalités sont unanimes sur ce point. Il regrette qu'un tel sentiment règne dans la province, sentiment qui ne se dissipera pas tant que l'injustice ne sera pas réparée. Il vaudrait mieux que le gouvernement fédéral assume toutes les dettes des provinces au lieu de laisser empirer la difficulté. On doit certainement trouver, aussitôt que possible, un moyen de dissiper l'insatisfaction qui règne.

L'honorable M. Wilmot affirme que si l'arbitre du Nouveau-Brunswick a commis une erreur, il peut assurer à la Chambre que c'est une erreur de jugement, non d'intention.

L'honorable M. Allan déclare que de nombreux sénateurs ont certainement raison de se plaindre que la Chambre ait été prise à l'improviste, car il n'avait pas prévu que la question serait traitée avant d'avoir les documents. Il est certainement malheureux qu'une déclaration unilatérale ait été faite devant tout le pays. En ce qui concerne les arbitres, il est certain qu'ils ont étudié la question avec la volonté d'arriver à la bonne solution.

Le Président déclare qu'un télégramme arrive à l'instant annonçant que la paix a été signée à Versailles, (applaudissements).

L'honorable M. Macpherson affirme que la Chambre ne s'attend certes pas à ce qu'il élabore la question à ce moment. Il doit s'acquitter d'une tâche très pénible et délicate et il s'efforce de le faire le mieux possible. Il peut assurer la Chambre qu'il tente d'agir avec la plus grande impartialité. Au moment de la discussion sur l'ensemble de la question, il sera prêt à justifier la décision. Il n'a pas considéré la question comme un avocat, mais il l'a traitée avec impartialité et honnêteté.

L'honorable M. Tessier ne doute pas que les arbitres aient assumé leurs fonctions consciencieusement et n'a pas la moindre intention de dire quoi que ce soit qui puisse nuire à leur réputation.

L'honorable M. Sanborn a beaucoup de considération pour l'honorable sénateur d'en face qui a rempli la fonction d'arbitre. En employant le mot «avocat», il n'a voulu offenser