

case; it has no bearing on it at all, it appears to me. Mr. Bourinot says:

"It is the usual practice in the English Commons to ask questions, move addresses for papers, and to present petitions when the Address is under consideration, and in the Session of 1882, when the debate was prolonged, public Bills were introduced and discussed on the motion for leave before the Address was agreed to."

Now, this is going a great deal further than we went on Friday. While the debate was going on on the Address public Bills were introduced and discussed before the Address was agreed to. I perceive by the Journals of the Commons that several matters of routine were gone into in that House in former Sessions before the adoption of the Address—the appointment of committees, and things of that sort. I take it to be established by what is said in those books, though there is no rule, that any debatable subject being brought up for discussion and discussed, so as to interfere with the proceedings for the purpose of answering His Excellency's Speech, would not be considered courteous. I take that to be the practice, and I do not think that any hon. member who take the trouble to read those authorities will come to any other conclusion.

The principle is that it is not courteous to him to delay answering his Speech, therefore it has not been the practice to bring in matters which require discussion to interrupt the debate, unless, as seems to be the case where the debate is prolonged and it becomes expedient that business should be proceeded with, business has been taken up, and no fault seems to be found in its being done. If, therefore, as I think I have shown, the books which my hon. friend cited contain no rule prohibiting what has been done on this occasion; if, on the contrary, it is recognized plainly as a matter of expediency whether measures shall be proceeded with or delayed, or matters of routine put through while waiting the discussion on His Excellency's Speech, if the introduction of Bills is a matter of routine and right on the part of the members of this House, why should the Senate go back on its steps, retrace what has been done and cancel the introduction of those Bills in some form or other? Would it be right to do that? What would be the inference of it? That we were deliberately, after discussion, resigning a right which we

were perfectly justified in exercising. The act of introducing a Bill *pro forma* is for the purpose of asserting the privilege of the House to do as it pleases in that respect. Its being a Bill *pro forma* is a mere matter of courtesy to the Sovereign, or the representative of the Sovereign, as the case may be, showing the readiness of the House to proceed with the discussion of the subjects mentioned in the Speech. I take it, the substance of the rule is that anything which prevents the House from proceeding with the Address, anything which materially delays or obstructs that being done, would be considered discourteous. That one can perfectly understand, but that the performance of a mere matter of routine can be considered discourteous I entirely deny, and I insist that there is no foundation for such an assertion in any of the authorities that the hon. gentleman has quoted, or any book on the subject that I can find. I repeat, if I had supposed that any hon. gentleman had an objection to this form of proceeding I should not have adopted it, because I do not think the case sufficiently important to justify a discussion of it. There is no occasion for us to be always thrusting our privileges under the eyes of the people, or the Crown; but now that we have done it, I say that the privilege of introducing these Bills in this form is one that might at times be very important indeed. The withdrawal of these Bills from the Notice Paper and from the Journals of the House would be equivalent to an admission that this House had no right to read these Bills the first time; that a member of the Senate had no right to introduce a Bill, and that the House had no right to read it the first time; that it was an excess of their privileges to do so. That admission I am not prepared to make. I think it was entirely within our privilege to introduce these Bills, and that it is a privilege of importance to us, because it might be desirable to introduce measures which would justify any amount of debate as to the propriety of introducing them, rather than they should be delayed until after the adoption of the Address. Therefore, I cannot consent that the records of this House should be so changed as to strike out the entries made in them with respect to these three Bills.