

Mr. THOMPSON. I would ask the hon. member to state the question a little more explicitly. It is ambiguous as it stands at present.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). I will put it this way: "Did you not state at the time of the declaration that you had obtained law books from Mr. Currey and looked into the question? When did you get the law books and look into the question?"

Mr. LYONS (*Counsel*). Before that question is answered by the witness, allow me to say that I object to it. I do not wish to take technical objections at all, but I submit respectfully to the House that that question is not at all material to the issue. We must draw a line somewhere as to what questions will be put to the witness. If a returning officer consults law books, I presume he is doing something which we would expect him to do; but surely it is not a matter that he is to be examined about, with a view of making a complaint out of it, or as affecting his return. As to conversation which he may have had with third parties, unless they are material to the issue, I submit very respectfully that witness should not be examined upon them.

Mr. MITCHELL. Amen.

Mr. THOMPSON. It strikes me the question may be material, and if it may be material it ought to be put. We are not deciding now whether it is material or not. In examining a witness we must admit every question which may possibly be material. There are many views of the case in which it may possibly be material; therefore, I think we should allow it.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. DUNN. I did not state at the day of declaration that I had obtained law books from Mr. Currey, and looked into the question.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). I move that the following question be put:—"Did you obtain books from Mr. Currey or any other person, and look into the question prior to or on the 5th March? If from any other person, from whom?"

Mr. LYONS (*Counsel*). On behalf of Mr. Dunn I object to this question most strongly. Part of it was asked before in the last one, and now he is asked if he received any books from anybody previous to the 5th March. At what time? During his whole life? I believe he has been a school teacher for some time during his life. Also he is asked from what other person. I submit to the House that this is a question that cannot be material at all.

Mr. DALY. I think hon. gentlemen opposite should employ counsel.

Mr. SCARTH. Perhaps it would be well to appoint a committee on the other side.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Carried, carried.

Mr. MITCHELL. It appears to me that this thing is degenerating into a farce. If hon. gentlemen want to maintain the dignity of this House and conduct this examination properly, an examination of a most serious character involving most serious consequences, they had better allow the questions to be put; and I think if the gentlemen who act as counsel, having taken this objection to one of the questions, allowed matters to proceed without continuing every individual objection we would get along very much better with the business.

Mr. DUNN. Am I supposed to answer this question literally? I do not remember having obtained any books from Mr. Currey. I remember of having bought

Mr. WELDON (St. John).

books ever since I was five or six years old from other people. I am unable to mention the different parties.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Dunn asked the question whether he should answer the question literally. I would suggest that he should answer it fully and distinctly as relating to this enquiry.

Mr. DUNN. I did not obtain any books from Mr. Currey prior to 5th March—that is with respect to this question.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Or from any other person?

Mr. DUNN. Or from any other person; although—nor on 5th March.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Although what?

Mr. DUNN. I was going to say that previous to that time I had obtained some; but it was previous to the election. I had obtained some law reports that he had; but it was previous to my being returning officer, previous to my being appointed; but I had no books in relation to this question from him or any other person.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). I move that the following question be asked: "Did any one assist you in or point you out any authority? If so, who assisted you in this subject?"

Motion agreed to.

Mr. FERGUSON (*Counsel*). The way the question is put is this: Did any one assist you in this question, and point out to you authority?

Mr. WELDON (St. John). On this subject, with respect to the question of the deposit.

Mr. THOMPSON. I suggest that the question might be put more definitely, as to whether any person assisted him as to the return he should make.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). In conducting an examination you must frame the questions as you would in a court of law. I understand that the witness is sufficiently astute to understand the question. But he has trifled with the House; I say so advisedly.

Mr. THOMPSON. I did not make the suggestion that the questions be more distinct for his benefit, but that we might understand them.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). The question says: "Did any one assist you in this?" To what are we referring? In regard to whether any person assisted him in coming to a conclusion, examining law books and citing authorities? I can put the question in another way if necessary.

Mr. THOMPSON. The ambiguity is here: Whether the hon. gentleman meant to imply that anyone advised him in regard to the point raised with respect to the deposit, or advised him after the election as to the return made, notwithstanding this defect.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). I have not touched the question of return. I have not got there yet. If the witness says he cannot understand the question, I will put it in another shape. I propose to alter the motion as follows: "Did anyone assist or advise you as to this question of the validity of the deposit, prior to or on the 5th of March, and show you any authorities on the subject? If so, who so assisted and advised you?"

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. DUNN. Prior to the 5th March, no one assisted me or advised me as to the question of the validity of the deposit, but on the 5th March, declaration day, the matter was argued before me by Mr. Currey, agent for Mr. Baird, and by Mr. Gregory, agent for Mr. King.