

of Committees, to be Second Clerk Assistant.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Has any one resigned?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am told that Mr. Piché is not here.

Mr. MACKENZIE: I desire to ask if you have received the resignation of Mr. Piché.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Or if you have dismissed Mr. Piché.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Then I desire to say that there was no other authority under which it was competent to act except one or the other.

#### REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER laid before the House,—Account Current of the Accountant of the House of Commons, of the amount disbursed by him for Contingencies from the 1st July, 1877, to the 1st July, 1878; with the Auditor's Report.

#### OFFICIAL REPORTING OF THE DEBATES.

##### QUESTION.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Before the Orders of the Day are called, I desire to ask the hon. the first Minister if he has not any information to give the House upon the matter of the reporting of the debates. I observe from the newspapers, a report, which is further confirmed by the circulation of certain circulars, that the Government, or some parties, have assumed the giving of a contract for the reporting of the debates. There was no authority that I am aware of delegated to the Government by the last Parliament to do this. There was no such authority vested in the commission of Internal Economy for the House of Commons, and I presume, if anything has been done, if the hon. gentleman has ventured upon this proceeding, it was with a view of obtaining indemnification from the House afterwards; but not one moment should be lost in communicating to the House what has been done, and by what authority it was done.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: The Government, believing that it would meet with the approbation of this House, took

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the responsibility of making a preliminary arrangement for the publication of the debates. They have taken that responsibility, and will throw themselves upon the House for their support. In doing so, we believe we will receive the support of this House. Believing that the country, as well as the House, require an official and impartial report of the debates, we have undertaken this matter upon our own responsibility. Of course, the contract is subject to the approval of the House.

#### ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH.

The House proceeded to the consideration of His Excellency's Speech at the opening of the Session.

Mr. BRECKEN: Before attempting, Sir, to discharge the onerous duty that has devolved upon me—a duty, I will frankly state, I feel totally inadequate to perform—I must throw myself on the kind consideration and indulgence of the members of this House. This is the first time I have had the honour of sitting on the floor of this House; but I understand, Sir, that in former Parliaments, to young members occupying the very high position in which I am now placed, the kindness of this House has always been extended. Now, if I did not feel that that indulgence would be extended to me, I should be very diffident in attempting to discharge this duty. His Excellency, in the first paragraph of his Speech, expresses the gratification he feels in having been selected by Her Gracious Majesty the Queen for the high and important office he now fills. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that I am but expressing the sincere sentiment, not only of every member of this House, but of the people of the Dominion at large, when I say that we feel profoundly grateful to Her Majesty for having made such a wise and judicious selection. (Hear, hear.) Our illustrious Queen in appointing her noble son-in-law to be Viceroy of the Dominion of Canada, has selected from among the rising statesmen of the Mother Country a very distinguished nobleman. Although, from the age of His Excellency, his political experience has not been of long duration, yet, when we remember the educational advantages that have fallen to his lot, his ex-