

We met as early as it was convenient to do so after the general election. We felt we owed it a duty to the country to ask the House to affirm, with all possible speed, the disbursements of money that were made for public purposes. We thought it was due to the people at large that we should not continue to make appropriations, without the sanction which constitutional usage had pointed out as the best safeguard of the rights of the people. We felt, also, that we had another duty to perform, which called for immediate attention, and that was to render more perfect the Militia and Volunteer organizations. Having these things in view, we called the session at an inconvenient season, and entered upon our duties. We found upon the question of your election, Sir, as Speaker, opposition from parties from whom certainly we had no right to expect it. I mention no names, neither do I refer to this by way of recrimination; but our claim privileges usually accorded to gentlemen, in a similar position to that which I now occupy—to refer to me, bearing upon the position of parties. But our gentlemen had gone to their constituents, and received support from the friends of the Government, otherwise they could not have made their appearance on the floor of this House. I say that when they came to this House under such circumstances, we had a right to expect fair play from them, at any rate on matters which were not of a political character—such as the election of Speaker. We found that we carried the Speaker by a small majority. That was a matter upon which parties undoubtedly had a right to express their opinions freely, as to who should preside over the deliberations of this House. We were then met by a more firm party vote, although its party character was properly disclaimed, arising from the Essex election return. We found that the majority of this House was lessened, from what it was on the election of Speaker. We were then convinced that the expectations we had formed of getting fair play were not to be realized. But, before we had much time to consider our position, serious charges of a personal nature were made against several members of the Government, involving our personal honor and character. That attack upon us was of so determined and direct a nature, that respect to ourselves, demanded that we should not shrink from the ordeal of an appeal to this House, with reference to the charges brought against us. I shall allude to the subject no further, than merely to state that a majority of the House declared that the charge was not of a nature to brand us with the infamy which was attempted to be attached to it, and that we did not deserve the condemnation of the House upon it. On another question my hon. friend from Sherbrooke brought up a vote of want of confidence, and on the discussion of that question, all the attacks of a personal as well as of a general nature came up, and we found our position was one not of a very encouraging nature. But still, as we had a duty to perform—having met Parliament for the purpose of carrying the measures alluded to—we were determined that we should not retire without making an effort to carry them. The failure of that motion soon resulted in the adjournment of the House, and since then we have been carrying on the administrative affairs of the Government in the same manner as a strong Government would have done, with a view to effect as much economy as it was possible for twelve men to do. We then met the House again this session, and had a debate of a fortnight on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. We felt all along that this great Province required an Administration carried on with more vigor, not as regards the persons composing it, but as regards the numerical strength of their supporters on the floor of the House. The gentlemen on the Opposition benches have abstained from putting to test whether we have a majority or not. We do not admit that at this moment they could carry a majority of the House against us—but on the contrary, we assert that we do possess the majority—but we have come to the conclusion that it would not be just to the people of the country at large, to this House, or to ourselves, that we should longer maintain a position in which we find that we cannot promote that usefulness which the country expects of us, with so small a majority to sustain us; and that the time has come when we ourselves should make a fair acknowledgement of the difficulties, and place our resignations, as we have unanimously done to-day, in the hands of His Excellency.

Hon. Mr. McGUIRE.—Hear, hear. It ought to have been done long ago.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD.—The hon. gentleman will not provoke me to recrimination. I arose for the purpose of alluding, in a fair and impartial manner, to the position in which matters stand. Both the Macdonald-Sicotte and the Macdonald-Dorion Governments were supported with as much cordiality and devotion

by the party as ever existed between a party and a Government. To my friends and supporters, behind me, I owe much more than I have words to express. They have never shown the least desire to swerve from a course of unwavering attachment, and to them my colleagues and myself owe the deepest gratitude. Not one of them who supported the Macdonald-Dorion Government at the commencement, had left. I don't blame those who, after appearing before their constituents, and promising to give the Government fair play, came to the House and voted against us. This they were at perfect liberty to do, but it was not what we expected of them, and I leave them in the hands of their constituents and the country. With regard to ourselves, we have considered the position of matters fully and fairly, and have not shrunk from the responsibility of stating to His Excellency that we were prepared to resign, with a view of arrangements being made that will be more satisfactory to the country at large and to the members of this House. I cannot conceal that I myself in the position I occupied, and fighting the battle with many difficulties surrounding me from the commencement, must have created bitter political enmity, and perhaps enmity of a personal nature also. I must leave the course of conduct I have pursued, and that of my colleagues who have entertained the same opinions as myself, to be judged by the country. It is quite clear, that the feeling which has been engendered against myself personally, and the necessity that there should be a strong Government, that will be able to deal with the important questions of this great Province, point to myself, at all events, as one who should retire from the position I held, and in communicating with my colleagues they unannouncedly joined with me in placing our resignations in the hands of His Excellency. I have to repeat that in the course of the time I have had the honor to hold this responsible position, I may have said some things which I regret; but I am not the only person who has had occasion to ask for the forbearance of the House. If ever I have said anything with the appearance of malice, I did not intend it in the sense in which it may have been understood. (Hear, hear.) I owe no grudge against any one on the other side of the House. I desire, as far as I am concerned, to give and take, and will be as ready to forget as to forgive injuries. I beg to move, Mr. Speaker, that the House do now adjourn.

Hon. Mr. CARTIER seconded the motion, and the House adjourned, accordingly, at four o'clock.

#### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 1864.

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

#### HOCHELAGA ELECTION.

Hon. Mr. ABBOTT presented the final report of the Committee on the Hochelaga contested election, to the effect that Hon. A. A. Dorion had been duly and properly elected and that neither the petition nor the defence were frivolous and vexatious.

#### RICHELIEU ELECTION.

Mr. Irvine moved that the Committee on the Richelieu Election case be allowed to adjourn until the 30th instant, by consent of both parties.—Carried.

#### DISMISALS AND APPOINTMENTS.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD laid upon the table a return to an address of the House for a statement of the names, &c., of all parties dismissed from office, and of all appointments made in the various departments of the Government, since May, 1862.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said that as it was well known to the members of the House, Hon. Mr. Blair had been sent for by His Excellency, and had accepted the charge of undertaking to form a new Administration. He had not as yet received any report of the progress which he had made, and doubtless some time would yet be required in order to complete the negotiations. He therefore moved that the House do now adjourn.

Hon. Mr. CARTIER said he was ready to second the resolution, but would like to understand at what time it was proposed that they should meet again.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD.—Oh, so-morrow at 2 o'clock.

The SPEAKER then put the motion, and declared the House adjourned.

#### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1864.

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

#### G. T. R. MAIL SERVICE.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD laid on the table a Return to an Address of the House for copies of papers connected with the Grand Trunk Railway Mail Service, since May, 1863.

#### THE POST OFFICE.

Hon. O. MOWAT laid on the table the Annual Report of the Post Office Department for 1863.

#### THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS.

Hon. Atty. Gen. MACDONALD—I have reason to know, Mr. Speaker, that an hon. member of this House has been requested to undertake the task of forming a new Government, and that matters are progressing to some extent. In order that full time and opportunity may be afforded of accomplishing the object I have mentioned, I feel in duty bound to ask this House that it do now adjourn.

Hon. Mr. CARTIER—Respecting the motion I have to announce to the House that I have had the honor to be summoned by His Excellency the Governor General, respecting the formation of a Government. I have requested His Excellency to be kind enough to grant me time, in order that I should be in a position to report to him some time to-morrow. At this moment I have only to second the motion.

Hon. Atty. Gen. MACDONALD—The gentleman having been called to this important duty, this House can have no objection to adjourn from day to day, in order that he may have ample time to complete his arrangements.

The House then adjourned, until to-morrow, at twenty minutes past three.

#### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1864.

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

#### TAVERN LICENSES.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD laid on the table a Return to an Address of the House for a statement in detail of the number of Tavern Licenses issued in 1861, 1862, and 1863.

#### THE GREY REGISTRARSHIP.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD laid on the table, a return to an Address for copies of all documents having reference to the dismissal of Mr. Hammond from the Registrarship of the County of Grey, and the appointment of Mr. John McLay thereto.

#### FREE LAND GRANTS.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD also laid on the table a Return to an Address for a statement respecting free grants of land in Upper and Lower Canada, for colonization purposes.

#### CROWN LANDS' REPORT.

Hon. Wm. MACDOUGALL laid upon the table the Report of Crown Lands for the year 1863.

#### THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD—I have had no positive information as yet, Mr. Speaker, beyond a mere hint that matters are progressing, in regard to the organization of a new Government, and I therefore feel bound to ask the House to adjourn. I suppose it will, according to the resolution formerly adopted, then stand adjourned until Monday. Perhaps my hon. friend from Montreal East will give the House some information in respect to the progress made.

Hon. Mr. CARTIER—I had the honor to announce to the House yesterday that His Excellency had summoned me to wait upon him, with reference to the formation of a new Government. I am empowered to inform the House that after the conference which took place between Hon. Mr. Ferguson Blair and Sir E. P. Tache had failed to come to the issue expected from it, His Excellency the Governor General was kind enough to intimate to Sir E. P. Tache not to absent himself from town. Well, he remained in Quebec, and yesterday morning His Excellency had a conference with my hon. friend, Colonel Tache, with regard to the formation of a Government. Sir E. P. Tache expressed to His Excellency that, having retired from political life on account of old age, and after several years' service in political life, he thought that, at the time when he retired from