

to-day. (Applause.) We have been summoned here for the despatch of business with two of the most important departments of the Government unrepresented in this House; with practically one-third of the Cabinet rejected by the people of the Province at the last general election. (Applause.) Nearly two-thirds, if not quite two-thirds, of the members of this House are sitting here to-day with their seats attacked, with the right to their seats attacked by protests, and under all the circumstances I say, and I propose to be brief, that this speed is unseemly; and I challenge contradiction of the statement I make that our position is unparalleled not only in the Province of Ontario but in any country or colony which has been, or is now, or ever will be again, under British rule and under the system of responsible government as we have it in Canada. (App'ause.) In addition to the crippled state of the Cabinet as it appears here to-day I desire to refer to the suggestion that the determination as to the right of certain of our citizens to vote shall be taken from the Judges of the land, from the courts charged with the administration of justice, and placed in the hands of the members of this House, some of whom may be decided not to have the right to sit here as members. The action of the Government is not only unparalleled but it fully justifies the protest which I have endeavored to make on these two questions of the day. And although we find in the leading newspaper organ of the Government this morning an article indicating to a certain extent the retreat of the Government, while I do not use the word obstruction, nor will I furnish anything of the kind, I say that we will through this session take every opportunity which constitutional Parliamentary practice affords of voicing our protests and objections to the course which has been pursued by the Government, but we can go no further than that. (Applause.)

Endorses the Nomination.

Now, Mr. Clerk, we do not propose to divide the House on the Speakership for two reasons, each one of which in itself would be a good reason, but the two combined are unanswerable. Our first reason is this: As I have already intimated, we protest against our being summoned here in the manner and under the circumstances and for the purposes which have been indicated by the Government. But we have a duty to perform to the citizens who sent us here as their representatives and we must not shirk that duty. Therefore it is that, I say, we cannot carry out our intentions unless this House shall first **have chosen a Speaker to conduct the business of this House in a proper manner under our constitutional system.** And, therefore, under any circumstances such as this, however intolerable we might feel the situation to be, having regard to the welfare and interests of the people of this Province—we say it is disgraceful—we recognize that a presiding officer should be chosen in order that the business of the House should be conducted in an

orderly and proper manner. (Applause.) That is the first reason. The other reason is an equally strong one, and it is that every person knows that we cannot possibly oppose the choice of Mr. Evanturel as Speaker of this House. (Applause.) He has been our Speaker as well as the Speaker of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, and when I say that I am in accord and expressing the sentiments of the hon. the Premier of the Province, because when I allude to him in that language I merely allude to the ideal which is proper to consider in the selection of any presiding officer. It was my happy position along with the Attorney-General two years ago to express satisfaction at the choice of the Government then of Mr. Evanturel as Speaker of this House, and I am prepared to-day, without going into detail or taking up the time of hon. gentlemen unduly, to say that I reiterate with the strongest feeling the sentiments which I expressed then; and if I do so it is because he has proved, while occupying the chair of this House, the eminent fitness of himself as a presiding officer. It had been expected by a more or less numerous section of this House before Mr. Evanturel was elected Speaker two years ago that he would have been advanced to the Cabinet, and I am bound to say so far as his party services and his ability is concerned that he fully deserves that honor. I am prepared to repeat to-day my language on that occasion, and to say that I am surprised that even after this lapse of time Mr. Evanturel's claims to sit in the Cabinet have not been recognized. As my friend from Oxford has said, we have had a large number of illustrious men who have filled the office with honor. They have, so far as my recollection goes, been eminently fitted for the position they occupied, and have carried away with them when they left the Speaker's chair the good wishes and warm regrets of every member. Mr. Evanturel, I feel bound to say, is remarkably well equipped for the position of Speaker. We have proved the truth of the suggestions made by my hon. friend, the Premier, and myself two years ago, as to what might be expected of him, or rather I should say he has proved the truth of the language used then. Being fully as well equipped as any of the hon. gentlemen who have occupied the chair before him, and so far as it has been possible he has expedited the business of this House without unduly hurrying it, and in this respect he stands at the head. (Applause.) My hon. friend also alluded to a matter which I had not intended referring to—that arising from the creed professed by Mr. Evanturel, who he said was the first of his creed to be elected to that honorable position. My hon. friend has forgotten that the Hon. R. W. Scott, the second Speaker of this House I think, was also a member of that creed. But I am glad that he has referred to it, for the reason that it shows that with the people of the British dominions in North America, and in fact elsewhere, race and creed are neither a qualification nor an objection to a man occupying high public positions—(applause)—and that we in the Province of Ontario