

wise we might receive a petition from certain persons in Honolulu, praying for a repeal of our Election Law.

Mr. WETMORE.—Even though the parties may not be residents of this Province, I conceive they have a perfect right to petition this House. Hon. members say there is a rule which requires the residence to appear on the petition. Mr. Speaker says there is no rule, so the petitions are in perfect order.

Mr. BOTSFORD.—The hon. member must know that parliamentary law requires that the residence should follow the name. This is laid down in May, and has always been practiced.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—I take exception to the idea that custom makes law, or that the parliamentary rules of the House of Commons are necessarily to be applied to the representatives of a small country like this. It may be considered that the insertion of the residence tends to give weight to the petition, but if it is omitted the burden of that omission must rest, not with the House, but with the petitioners. There certainly is no rule to exclude a petition so presented.

Mr. SMITH.—The practice of the House has always been to have the residence endorsed on the petition, and you, Mr. Speaker, have frequently corrected hon. members who have introduced petitions without the residence, and handed them back to be amended. It is certainly important to know where petitioners live, so that they may be found if necessary.

Mr. SUTTON.—If the petition does not show where the people belong, we have no opportunity of finding out, and in justice to hon. members of this House I think the information should be given. If it is not done I shall certainly take objection to the admission of these petitions on that ground.

Mr. W.P. FLEWELLING.—Although I know from some of the names—names of very respectable persons—where one of the Petitions come from, yet other hon. members may not be so informed, and I think courtesy demands that the residence should be endorsed upon them.

Mr. WETMORE.—The objection raised then is on the rule. Now, I say, show me that rule, and I will at once withdraw the Petitions and endorse the residence. I will be the last to infringe or break a rule of this House, but to my mind there is nothing to prevent a Petition coming before this House without such an endorsement. I have no objection, as I have said, to amend them if it is required by the rule, but I do not want to be driven to it just because my hon. friend from Westmorland chooses to pick upon the petitions I introduce to raise an objection. It does seem somewhat strange that he should have selected these, and his hon. colleague (Mr. Botsford) should

have been all ready with May on Parliaments with his finger open on the place, but I am not to be so driven from my position, which is that there is no rule making it imperative that the residence should be endorsed upon a Petition.

Mr. RYAN.—There are certain cases in which it would be impossible to put the residence upon the back of a Petition. Suppose some of the petitioners belong to every County of the Province, how can the residence be designated; and if one county is named, then there would be a fallacy on the very face of the Petition. I don't think it is at all necessary to say where the parties reside, the fact of the Petition being introduced by a member of this House is certainly sufficient indication of the district from whence they come.

Hon. Mr. CONNELL.—What is all the trouble, Mr. Speaker? What is the question at issue?

Mr. SPEAKER.—The hon. member from Saint John (Mr. Wetmore) has introduced two Petitions, but there is nothing on the back to show where the petitioners reside. This is objected to by the hon. members from Westmorland and Northumberland, on the ground that although there is no specific rule laid down in the matter, yet that the unvarying practice of the House has been that Petitions should be so endorsed, and this, in a manner, has established a rule by which all Petitions should be regulated. This, I think, is exactly how the question stands at present.

Hon. Mr. CONNELL.—Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can assist in settling the matter. I hold in my hand a number of Petitions which have been received during the past few days. Here is one praying for a change in the manner of measuring cord wood; another praying for a change in the law relating to duties at the Port of Saint Stephen; another praying for the incorporation of the Saint John Trades Co-operative Society. There is nothing on either of these to show where the petitioners reside, nor indeed that they are inhabitants of this country. This is quite sufficient to show what is constantly being done and that there is no fixed rule or practice in the matter at all, for if there had been, neither the hon. members nor you, Mr. Speaker, would have allowed these Petitions to lie on the table.

Mr. SMITH.—I am willing to leave it to the Clerk to say what has been the practice; he has been in the House longer than any of us, and therefore can speak impartially in the matter.

Mr. WETMORE.—I don't see, Mr. Speaker, why my hon. friend should want to apply to the Clerk. I have heard him vaunt himself that for sixteen

years he had filled his place in this House, and had only been absent two days, and it is something strange that the Petitions which have just been referred to by the Surveyor General, should have slipped through without being challenged by my hon. friend, as he is so well posted in the rules of the House. It is something strange, too, that the objection should be raised on these Petitions instead of upon others. Does my hon. friend intend to oppose the Bill, and refuse the prayer of the petitioners? If so, let him come out like a man and tell them so openly and fairly. It does seem most extraordinary that whenever I stand up to speak, my hon. friend should imagine that I have reference to him, and that what I say is intended as an attack upon him. He has such an exalted idea of his own importance, and of what is due to him for his vast legislative attainments, that he seems to imagine there is no one else to whom anything may apply but to him. Well, if the cap happens to fit let him wear it; but I most strongly object to his constructing every word I speak as an attack upon him or intended for him alone. I think I have as much right to express my opinions in my own humble way as my hon. friend, and I refuse to bow to his decision in every case, for he has very frequently been found to have arrived at wrong conclusions. This morning he singled me out because I asked a simple question, upon which I wished information, and now again he takes exception to my actions, although it is quite clear that I have a perfect right to introduce such Petitions, and in form as I have done. I dare say now he will think that I am attacking him again by making the few remarks I have.

Mr. SMITH.—The fact is that the hon. member is so used to making attacks that he does not seem to know when he does it. He is constantly making attacks on me, and I submit it to the House, whether the sarcastic remarks which he has just made can be construed to mean anything else. He did the same thing this morning, and I leave it to hon. members whether he was not in that instance, as in this, the aggressor. And am I to sit still and make no reply? am I to allow his violent assaults upon me to go to the country and make no comment upon them? I say that his remarks are most unwarrantable and ungenerous. This morning two or three hours of the valuable time of this House were occupied in a discussion which arose from the manner in which he assailed me and the late Government, and he seems determined that two or three more should be occupied in like manner; this after-