

accordance with custom, be conferred on Mr. O'Rorke, the present Speaker of the House of Representatives, on the ground that he had been a second time elected to that office, I stated that I was making inquiries as to the circumstances connected with the bestowal of distinctions upon previous Speakers, and would write further on the subject.

2. I find the office of Speaker has been held before Mr. O'Rorke by four gentlemen, as follows: Sir Charles Clifford, Kt., 1854–60; Sir David Monro, Kt., 1861–70; Sir Francis D. Bell, Kt., 1871–75; Sir William Fitzherbert, K.C.M.G., 1876–78.

3. Sir Charles Clifford was knighted in 1858, after four years' Speakership, and a second election; Sir David Monro was knighted in 1866, after five years' Speakership, and a second election. Sir Francis Bell was knighted in 1873, soon after his election as Speaker; and Sir William Fitzherbert, who was before a C.M.G., was advanced to the K.C.M.G. in 1877, shortly after his elevation to the chair; but in both these latter cases the distinction was understood to be in some measure connected with previous services.

4. Mr. O'Rorke has already proved himself admirably fitted for the high post to which he has now been twice elected unopposed. Within a few weeks of his first election Parliament was dissolved, and upon the assembling of a new Parliament in September last he was unanimously voted to the chair.

I have, &c.,

HERCULES ROBINSON.

The Right Hon. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bart., &c.