

JOURNAL
OF THE
HOUSE OF TEXAS
TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION
1891

HOUSE JOURNAL.

FIRST DAY.

HALL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
AUSTIN, TEXAS.
Tuesday, Jan. 13, 1891.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The chair announced the first business before the house to be the election of a speaker, whereupon

Mr. McKinney, of Walker, nominated Hon. James N. Browning, of Donley county.

Mr. Brown, of Grayson, nominated Hon. Robert T. Milner, of Rusk county.

The nomination of Mr. Browning was seconded by Messrs. Swayne, King of Bell and Swan.

The nomination of Mr. Milner was seconded by Messrs. Derden, Gossett and Truitt.

Mr. Baker moved that the nomination be closed.

The motion prevailed.

The chair appointed as tellers Messrs. Martin of Soumervell, Crowley, Murrell and Rogan of Brown.

Mr. Moody moved that the tellers take up the ballots.

The motion prevailed.

Upon casting up the ballot for the speaker, it appeared that

Mr. Milner received 53 votes.

Mr. Browning received 50 votes.

Mr. Milner having received a majority of all the votes cast was declared legally and constitutionally elected speaker of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second legislature.

The chair appointed Messrs. Wurzbach and Baker to escort the speaker elect to the chair, and the clerk administered to him the oath of office.

Mr. Milner addressed the house as follows:

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

In repairing to the post you have assigned me and before entering upon the duties of the same, I desire to express to you my profound thanks.

So distinguished a mark of confidence, proceeding from an intelligent body like this, under any circumstances would have commanded my gratitude and devotion, but since I have been chosen over a gentleman whom to know is to honor and esteem, I feel that the distinction and its responsibilities are thereby pre-eminently enhanced, and from this

recognition of your partiality I derive a gratification which language is inadequate to express, and which those who have done all they could do to merit the confidence of their associates can alone feel.

I think I comprehend a just estimate of the importance of the trust, and know something of its extent and duties, yet I am truly conscious of my deficiency, and were I not animated by the faith I have in your indulgence, and the assurance of your earnest co-operation, I would shrink from a performance of its duties and the burden of its responsibilities.

While despotism—that arch fiend of civil liberty—has no advocates here seeking the establishment of dangerous precedents, yet in view of the autocratic and revolutionary methods adopted only last year by one branch of the national congress, and enforced over the solemn protest of the constitution and the spirit of a Republican government, it is propitious that we, to lay, as the representatives of a state which constitutes one-tenth of the territory of this entire union, and which holds within her borders one-twentieth of the population of the republic, renew our devotion to the principles of right and justice, which alone will maintain our system of free government in its purity, and transmit it unimpaired to posterity.

I believe with Jefferson, the greatest advocate of popular government, that the will of the majority in all cases should prevail. But in the same sentence in which he laid down this wise axiom, he declared that we should at all times bear in mind the sacred principle that that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal right, which equal law must protect, and which to violate is oppression.

While we are the exponents of a political majority that is imperious in numbers, yet with a patriotism enlightened and invigorated by experience, and with a magnanimity of soul characteristic of all lovers of liberty, we should guarantee to every man elected to this House, of whatever political school, that freedom of speech for which the blood of our heroes was spilt and to which the wisdom of our sages was dedicated, and without which our Democratic institutions would totter and fall to pieces.

Texas is larger than any partisan majority, and the patriotism of her

masses is not inferior to nor more selfish than the patriotism of her wisest and noblest sons. Hence Texas does not only expect every man armed with a public trust to perform his duty, but under our benign institutions she has a very emphatic way of compelling him to do it or to seek refuge beneath a well-sheltered private life. Were it otherwise, a solicitude for the public weal should prompt us to a conscientious and faithful performance of our official duties.

He who sits in this hall as a legislator, occupies a position fraught with responsibilities as onerous and sacred as are enjoined upon any other public servant, and none but a traitor would disregard that trust or prostitute it to sinister ends.

We are entering upon the deliberations of a session involving grave and intricate questions. A wise, just and practical solution of them should be our highest aim. Let us, therefore, enter upon the discharge of our work here with that prudence and sincere devotion to principle and patriotism which have characterized the wisest and best men who have gone before us, and which will challenge the legitimate admiration of just and fair-minded men everywhere. Let us meet all questions in a spirit worthy the councils of a State which is large enough and rich enough to furnish homes for every human being now living in the union, and still have room where wanderers from afar may come and breathe the air of liberty.

Thanking you again, gentlemen, for the partiality you have shown me, I pledge you my impartiality in presiding over your deliberations.