



Speaker's Room,
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 24 Feb, 1891

Dear Mr. Donaldson
I used this gavel
one day in the
House and you
can make a
relic of it if you
want to. The House
behaved badly
enough that day to

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justify it.
Yours truly,
WB Reed

Mr. Tho^s Donaldson

Thomas Brackett Reed: Oct. 18, 1829-Dec 7, 1902.

This gavel was used by Mr. Reed as Speaker of the 51st Congress; Dec. 2, 1889, to Oct 1, 1890, and Dec 1, 1890 to March 3, 1891. This gavel was broken by the Speaker in enforcing the famous "Reed Rules," adopted by the House Feb. 14, 1890, first session. The "Reed Rules" which upset Congressional custom of long standing permitted the Speaker to complete quorums by ordering recorded as present on the roll calls the names of the opposition present who refused to answer. Mr. Reed was titled "The Czar."

This gavel is presented to the Maine Historical Society (Sept. 1, 1915) by the children of the late Thomas Donaldson of Phila., Pa. (author of "The Public Domain," "George Catlin's Indian Gallery," and so forth) who was a friend of Mr. Reed. See presentation letter above.

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(0040*)

Date: Feb. 24, 1891

Description: Thomas Brackett Reed gavel