

and elections of their friends. During that time, of course, they had no opportunity to prepare their measures and elaborate the details. The House then had to be summoned in order to meet the requirements of the Union Act, to pass the supplies and such measures as were immediately necessary. He hoped tomorrow to be able to state what measures would be pressed on the attention of the House during the first part of the session, which he hoped would be got through in a very short period. It was proposed that Parliament should meet again in February. The reason of the delay was that, in the first place, it would give the Government two months to elaborate its measures, and they should endeavor, as far as possible, to prepare the Bills and send them to members during the adjournment, that they might consider them at their homes. Another reason for the delay was, that the arbitrators between the General Government and those of Ontario and Quebec could not, according to the Union Act, be appointed until after the General Parliament and both Local Parliaments met, and until the arbitrators met we could not ascertain what property the Dominion had—what was the state of accounts between the General Government's and the Governments of Ontario and Quebec, or how the assets and liabilities were to be divided. He might mention now one measure which would be submitted during this part of the session. The Union Act rendered imperative a measure for the construction of the Intercolonial Railway; a commencement had to be made within six months of the Union coming into operation, and the subject therefore had to be dealt with without delay. The House would be asked also to give the necessary votes of credit carrying out the administration of public affairs. He begged now to give notice that he would introduce a bill similar to the first act of last session, continuing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and also an act to extend to the whole Dominion the act for the trial of foreign aggressors. It would be anomalous that there should be one kind of tribunal in one section of the Dominion for the trial of such parties, and another kind of tribunal in another section.

Mr. Howe said that a minister in the other House, referring to a measure in the matter of the fisheries and marine, stated that it would take till next spring to prepare that measure. Now, as the fishermen on the sea-coast were prepared to go to sea early in the

[Sir John A. Macdonald (Kingston)]

spring, they ought to have as early a notice as possible of what the intentions of the Government are.

Sir John A. Macdonald said he had no doubt the Fisheries Bill would be introduced early in the second part of the session.

Mr. Howe, in regard to the period when Parliament should re-assemble, said he would prefer the second part of the session should not commence till March. If we were having February weather now, what sort of weather we would have in February, who could tell! (Laughter)

Sir John A. Macdonald said that if they met in March the Nova Scotians would be telling them they were as mad as March hares. Here it had been found that the best normal period for assembling Parliament was the end of January or the early part of February.

The motion was carried.

INTERPRETATION OF THE STATUTES

Sir John A. Macdonald introduced a Bill respecting the interpretation and construction of the Statutes.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CANADA

Hon. Mr. Langevin introduced a Bill respecting the Department of Secretary of State for Canada. In introducing the Bill, Mr. Langevin explained the provisions of the proposed measures. The Department of Secretary of State for Canada was to be under the management of the Secretary of State, and Under-Secretary of State. The Under-Secretary of State would perform the duties assigned to him by the Governor General or Secretary of State, and the Department would be a medium of communication between the Government of the Dominion and the Imperial Government and other parties. Besides the Secretaryship, the office of Registrarship of the Dominion would also be vested in the Secretary of State; and, as Registrar-General, he would have to register letters patent and other instruments and documents, under the great seal of Canada. The Indian Department would form a branch department of the Secretary of State, under the control of which all Indian lands and grants in the Dominion would be placed. The laws in the various Provinces in regard to Indian affairs being different, it was necessary, and provision was made in this Bill to

assimilate them and make one law which would be applicable to the whole Dominion. Besides that, in the former Province of Canada, the Ordnance lands had been transferred by the Imperial Government and were under control of the Provincial authorities. These lands would also be fully under the control of the Secretary of State for Canada, and provisions were made in the Bill for carrying out that proposition. He (Mr. Langevin) had also tried to incorporate in the Bill provisions which would acquaint persons having business with the department with all laws having reference to the Ordnance and Indian lands and general business of the department. More special provisions were also inserted to prevent trespassing on Indian lands. Formerly while Indians were absent on their hunting journeys, persons often settled on their lands, and if they had undisputed possession six months, could not be removed. In order to reach them and protect the Indians it was proposed to extend this period of six months to one year, so that these parties could be ejected within that time. If it was in order he would ask whether there was now a Secretary of State for the Provinces, or whether it was intended to fill that office.

Sir John A. Macdonald said it was not intended to fill that office immediately. Mr. Archibald was still acting as Secretary of the Provinces, and his services were of the greatest advantage at this moment in consequence of the numerous applications now being made on the department. The establishment of this department was an experiment, and it was not yet decided whether there should be a new distribution as far as the duties of the Secretaryship of State were concerned.

Mr. Holton asked whether the whole duties of both offices were to be confined to the Department? Whether after the passage of the Bill there would be room for the Secretaryship of State for the Provinces in the machinery of the Government? The Minister of Justice was understood to say last night—at least they understood his statement to imply—that there was to be but one Secretary of State for the Dominion.

Hon. Mr. Langevin said the intention was to make provision in this Bill by which certain of the duties assigned to the Secretary of State for the Provinces, might be transferred to the Department of the Secretary of State for Canada, if compatible with the public interests.

The Bill was read.

THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Mr. Howland laid on the table the Public Accounts of the Province of Canada, for the year ending June 30, 1866.

Mr. Holton asked when the Public Accounts for 1867 would be ready. Nearly five months since the fiscal year had ended, and yet the accounts were not ready, although the duties of the officers of the Finance Department must have been lessened in consequence of the change of system.

Hon. Mr. Howland said that on the contrary, those duties had, temporarily at least, been largely increased in consequence of that change—especially those of the Audit officers. He would inform the honourable member to-morrow when the accounts for 1867 would be ready.

INDEMNITY TO MEMBERS

Sir John A. Macdonald moved that the House go into Committee of the Whole on the resolutions respecting the indemnity to members and the salaries of the Speakers of both Houses of Parliament.

Sir John A. Macdonald explained the provisions of the law of the former Provinces of Canada, which he said had been found to work satisfactorily, and the principle of which had therefore been adopted by the Government in these resolutions. He proposed to fill up the blanks in the clause respecting the salaries of Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons with a sum equal that formerly paid Speakers of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Canada.

The motion was carried.

The House then went into Committee, Mr. Morris in the chair.

Mr. Mackenzie said he was in favour of an allowance per diem for indemnity to members till it reached a certain amount which it was not to exceed.

Mr. Blake said, that in such an event, it was obvious that members remaining in the House to attend the public business of the country would consider that they were doing so at their own charges, and consequently important measures would be hurried through at the close of the session, without receiving proper attention. The true remedy for this is to pay members a per diem allowance for the time they remain here. It was not a right principle to receive \$180 for thirty