

QUESTIONS

Mr. Metcalfe enquired whether the Government would provide for reducing the present postage on letters.

Sir John A. Macdonald replied that the measure, when introduced, would speak for itself.

Hon. Mr. Connell enquired whether the Government contemplated making any further survey of the different routes named for the line of the Intercolonial Railway, previous to locating and deciding on the line, and, if so, what lines they intend to survey. Also whether they have it in contemplation to introduce during the present Session a measure for the construction of the Intercolonial Railway?

Sir John said the Government intended, during the first part of this session, to introduce a measure for the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, and that they designed to have further reports and surveys made to assist in determining what route should be adopted.

Mr. Savary enquired whether it is the intention of the Government during the first part of this session to introduce to Parliament any measure to regulate the granting of letters patent for inventions, and if so, whether such measure will recognize the principle of reciprocity with American citizens, for want of which reciprocity heretofore no inventor in the Provinces, except residents of New Brunswick, have been able to secure patent rights in the United States on the same terms as American citizens.

Sir John said the Government intended to introduce a measure this session raising the law of patents.

Mr. Tremblay enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to erect a lighthouse at Portneuf Point; 2nd. Whether it is the intention of the Government, in accordance with the recommendation of the Board of Trade in Quebec, to erect lighthouses at Egg Island and Manicouagan Point, and place a floating light provided with a steam whistle, at the eastern extremity of Red Island Shoal, in order to diminish the dangers of the navigation of the River St. Lawrence?

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Hon. Mr. McDougall said that the government was receiving information with respect to the necessity of improving the lighthouses, and otherwise facilitating the navigation of the St. Lawrence, but no conclusion had yet been come to as to the works necessary at any particular point.

Mr. Fortin enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to bring forward, during the present session, any measure for the purchase by the Government of the telegraph lines erected in the Dominion of Canada, and thereby to bring about a union of the telegraphic and postal services, with the view of making the former more complete, more efficacious, and especially more economical, and of extending it to the shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and of the Great Lakes?

Sir John A. Macdonald said the Imperial Government had the subject under consideration, and the Canadian Government would await the result of their action.

Mr. Masson (Soulanges) enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to issue a new Commission of the Peace for the Dominion of Canada, and whether the right of appointing Justices of the Peace is vested in the Local Governments, for their respective Provinces?

Sir John A. Macdonald said it was not the intention of the Government. The question involved in the latter part of the enquiry came within the province of a legal tribunal.

Mr. Fortier enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to bring down, during the present session, any measure having for its object to render the navigation more safe and consequently more easy and more economical on the maritime coast of the Dominion of Canada, and in the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, and the Great Lakes, by the construction of additional lighthouses at the most dangerous points of the said coast, and the establishment of signals by means of cannon, bells, whistles, and such other apparatus to warn vessels of approaching danger when fogs, snow, or excessive darkness shut out the view of coast?

Hon. Mr. McDougall said the several subjects mentioned were under consideration.

Mr. Jones (Halifax), enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce, during the present session, any measure having for its object the extension of the bounty system of Canada over the fisheries of the whole Dominion?

Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald said the subject was under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. Jones (Leeds), enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to impose an export duty on sawed lumber, stove-bolts and shingle-bolts leaving the Dominion of Canada?

Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald said it was not the present intention of the Government.

Mr. Bertrand enquired whether it is the intention of the Government to authorize the sale of the lands reserved for the Indians, and to fix the conditions upon which such lands may be sold to settlers who are desirous of occupying them?

Hon. Mr. Langevin said it was not in the power of the government to sell those lands without the consent of the Indians.

Hon. Mr. Johnson enquired whether it is the intention of the Government, when the surveys of the proposed lines for the Intercolonial Railway have been completed, and the Engineers' report thereof made to the Government, and before recommending any line for approval of the Imperial Government, to lay the Engineers' report before the House?

Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald said that all the questions relating to the Intercolonial Railway would come up when the Bill was before the House, which the Government had already promised to introduce.

Mr. Thompson (Haldimand) enquired whether the Government intend taking any steps with a view of bringing that portion of the Six Nation Indian Reserve in the county of Haldimand into market.

Hon. Mr. Langevin said if an offer was made for the purchase of the Reserve the Government would be prepared to negotiate with the Indians, with the view of ascertaining whether they were willing to surrender their lands.

[Mr. McDougall (Lanark North)]

LIEUT.-COL. DENNIS

Mr. McCallum moved an address for the evidence and proceedings taken at the Court of Enquiry on the conduct of Lieut.-Col. Dennis, at Fort Erie, on the 2nd June, 1866.

Hon. Mr. Cartier said it was not the intention of Government to allow this address, because it would not conduce to the interests of the country to bring down the evidence asked for at this time.

Mr. McCallum regretted the unwillingness of the Government to bring down the papers in this case. He did not think it in the interest of the country and of the volunteer force to suppress evidence given at a court, no matter whether it showed Col. Dennis to have been remiss in his duty or otherwise. He believed the court had whitewashed Col. Dennis, and in order to form a fair judgment the country was entitled to know the result of the enquiry.

Mr. Mackenzie believed the regret a very reasonable one. Non-publicity of evidence had given a great deal of dissatisfaction in Western Canada. It was useless to attempt to bolster up the character of any officer of the volunteer force, and if the evidence in this case was not made public, it would lead to the impression that the charges brought against Colonel Dennis were true. If published, everybody could form their own opinion in regard to the matter. He (Mr. Mackenzie) believed that charges had also been made against another officer of the volunteers, a gentleman residing in the County of Simcoe, and in regard to them, the public press, no doubt maliciously, had made certain statements of a somewhat noteworthy character. It would be well to bring down evidence in this case also, so that the public might see that the charge of cowardice made against that officer was unfounded. (Hear, hear).

Mr. Sproat believed that it would be a great deal better for the volunteer force of Western Canada, if the evidence in this case was made public, and he trusted the Government would reconsider their decision not to bring the papers down. He spoke as an officer of volunteers, knowing the injurious effect of withholding all facts of this kind.

Hon. Mr. Cartier said, that all were animated by a desire to encourage the Volunteers and Service Militia of the Dominion. This enquiry took place more than a year ago, shortly after the Fenian invasion. Before