

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 21, 1868

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

FIXING SALARIES

Sir J. A. Macdonald moved that the House will to-morrow resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider resolutions respecting the salaries of the Deputy of the Minister of Militia and Defence, and others. Carried.

IMPORTATION OF TOBACCO

Sir J. A. Macdonald moved that the House will to-morrow resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider resolutions respecting the importation of tobacco. Carried.

FURTHER ESTIMATES

Hon Mr. Rose brought down a message from the Governor-General, transmitting to the House of Commons further estimates of the sums required for the service of the Dominion for the year ending 30th June, 1868, as follows:—Legislation, \$13,500, being additional; on account of printing, \$10,000; do. mileage to members, \$1,500; do. expenses of committees, \$20,000; Militia, additional on account of clothing, \$15,000; public works, \$42,500, being additional, (on account of St. Peter's Canal, N.S., \$17,500; construction and repairs of lighthouses, Nova Scotia, \$25,000.)

ON FISHERIES

Mr. Fortin presented the second report of the Select Committee on Fisheries and Navigation, as follows:—Your Committee having taken into consideration the subject of licensing of foreign vessels engaged in the Gulf and sea fisheries, are of opinion that a tonnage fee of four dollars per ton should be imposed on American vessels fishing in Canadian waters, and such fees on small vessels or boats engaged in the coast fisheries as will be proportioned to the tonnage fee on the large vessels; also that a sufficient force should be employed to enforce the due payment of such fees or prevent non-licensed vessels in those waters, and that provision should be made for the distribution of the

money derived from such tonnage due by a system of bounties or otherwise for the benefit of the fishing interest. Your Committee would respectfully urge upon the Government of the Dominion the expediency of endeavouring to secure concerted action with the Government of Prince Edward Island in the importation of the tonnage fees on American vessels, and the protection of the fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

C. B. AND K.C.B.

Hon. Mr. Holton enquired if the Ministry were to bring down further correspondence as to the dignities conferred on members of this House, in addition to the papers already brought down.

Hon. Mr. Langevin read the following answer:—

I am authorized to state that the Governor-General acting as an Executive officer of the Imperial Government, reserves to himself the right of withholding from Parliament any documents the publication of which might in his judgment be prejudicial to the public service. With respect to communications from the Secretary of State for the Colonies marked 'private' or 'confidential', it is not competent for the Governor-General to give copies of such correspondence to Parliament without the express sanction of the Secretary of State. This rule, of course, equally applies to letters written by the Governor-General to third parties communicating confidentially to them, or referring to the contents of 'private' or 'confidential' letters from the Secretary of State, and to answers to such letters received by the Governor-General.

Hon. Mr. Holton asked if the Secretary of State would place on the table the communication just read that it might be entered on the minutes.

Hon. Mr. Langevin said the statement he had just made was of the nature of an ordinary answer to a question by a member and must take the ordinary course. That is, it would be published in the newspapers.

Hon. Mr. Holton said it was of a much more formal nature than the answers usually given to question put across the House. The answer was read from a manuscript, and began with the grave official formula—"I am authorized." Authorized by whom? Of course, by the Governor-General. It was of the na-