

circumstances. It was stated that the postmaster had committed a certain offence, not in connection with the post office at all.

Mr. BENNETT. If the Postmaster General will pardon me, I am referring to the complaints of 1897.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. So am I. It was stated he had committed certain offences not connected with his duties as an official, but what are regarded as offences against society and good morals. I had to consider what my duty was not only to that officer but to all officers under similar circumstances. Speaking in the abstract now, I would submit to the committee: What is the duty of a member of the Government under such circumstances? You cannot issue a commission to try a man on a charge that is capable of being tried in a court—that is not the duty of the Government. If it is a case that is cognizable in a court, let the court take notice of it; and, after the decision of the court, it will be the duty of the Government to act or not as the result demands. But if a public officer's character was so questionable that the public regarded it as a scandal that he should be retained in office, then I should be warranted, in fact my duty would be to remove him from office. But I could not try a private issue in that way. So I sent the Inspector with instructions to visit the most respectable people in the town, not men in politics at all, but the clergy and others specially interested in looking after the moral condition of the people, and to bring a statement whether or not they regarded the postmaster's conduct as sufficient to disqualify him from being postmaster. The officer made that inquiry, and the result did not warrant me in dismissing him. The report did not satisfy me, that to allow the postmaster to continue in office would be a scandal. It is my recollection that it was shown also or that I was informed that he had a wife and children, and this circumstance had also to be considered. But I do not know what his politics are and no politician ever spoke to me on the subject of his being removed or retained on that score.

Mr. FOSTER. Does not the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) think that we have been in this atmosphere long enough?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I do think we have done a square day's work. I move the committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Resolutions to be reported.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE moved the adjournment of the House.

Motion agreed to, and House adjourned at 1.25 a.m. (Thursday).

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, 2nd June, 1898.

The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at Eleven o'clock.

PRAYERS.

AWARD TO THE DOMINION ATLANTIC RAILWAY.

The **SOLICITOR GENERAL** (Mr. Fitzpatrick) moved that the House, at its next sitting, resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the following proposed resolution:—

Resolved, That it is expedient to ratify the award of the Honourable G. W. Burbridge in favour of the Dominion Atlantic Railway Company, and to authorize the payment to that company of the sum of one hundred thousand dollars for the commutation of its privileges with respect to the drawback of customs or import duties.

Motion agreed to.

GRANT TO THE PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.

The **PRIME MINISTER** (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) moved that the House, at its next sitting, resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the following proposed resolutions:—

1. That it is expedient to provide that the sum of two hundred and eighty-four thousand four hundred and fifty-six dollars and forty-seven cents, being the cost of the erection and furnishing of the Legislative Buildings and Government House at Winnipeg, which sum was charged against the "Province of Manitoba debt account," may, on the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, be credited to the said account, and that the interest payable to the said province on the said first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, on the balance at the credit of the said debt account shall be calculated on the balance at the credit of the said account after the said sum of two hundred and eighty-four thousand four hundred and fifty-six dollars and forty-seven cents has been credited thereto as above provided.

2. That it is expedient to provide that the Government of Canada may, on the said first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, pay to the Government of the province of Manitoba the sum of two hundred and forty-one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six dollars and twenty-nine cents, being the sum of the amounts which would have been payable to the province of Manitoba by the Dominion, in excess of the amounts actually paid as interest from time to time payable on the balances at the credit of the said debt account, had the cost of the erection and furnishing of the said Legislative Buildings and Government House at Winnipeg not been charged against the said debt account, together with interest at the rate of five per centum per