

tion of whether or not the surrender was legal, involving as it does the validity of titles to any lands which may subsequently be transferred.

Mr. MURPHY: Why not take the case to the Exchequer Court?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Or to the Supreme Court?

Mr. DOHERTY: There may be an appeal from the decision of the courts of Manitoba to the Supreme Court, but the Supreme Court is not a court to try a case of this kind.

Mr. OLIVER: Might I ask the Minister of Justice—

Mr. SPEAKER: This procedure of following up question after question is certainly not regular, and I think the better way would be to put the questions on the Order Paper.

Mr. OLIVER: I wanted to ask the Government if they would be good enough to bring down the papers connected with the case without delay and lay them on the table, and whether they would require a motion to that effect.

Mr. ROCHE: Probably the hon. member had better put the motion on the paper, and then we will know exactly what he desires.

INQUIRIES FOR REPORTS AND RETURNS.

On the Orders of the Day being called:

Mr. GRAHAM: Might I ask the Minister of Railways if any decision has been given by the Board of Railway Commissioners as to western freight rates, and, if not, has he any idea when such a decision will be given?

Mr. COCHRANE: I could not say. I have consulted with the Chairman, and they are still working at it. I hope it will be down very soon, but I could not give the exact date.

Mr. GRAHAM: I would like to ask the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals when he expects the report of the Commission appointed to investigate the Transcontinental railway construction.

Mr. COCHRANE: I thought I would have it this week, but it will be next week before I will be able to bring it down.

Mr. MURPHY: The papers had it last week.

[Mr. Doherty.]

Mr. COCHRANE: I have not seen it yet.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: Mr. Speaker, I wish to call the attention of the House to the fact that on the 7th May last I got an Order of the House for a return. The return was brought down the other day, but it is not at all in accordance with the Order of the House. Perhaps I might read the Order:

For a return showing the total cost of the Elmira branch railway in Prince Edward Island; the total amounts paid the contractors, Whitehead Brothers; the total amount paid by the Government after taking the work off the contractor's hands, and showing the amount paid in wages each month, the names of the men to whom it was paid, the positions they held, and the wages per day to each; also showing what materials were used, each kind and class, with the cost of each, from whom purchased, and when, and the quantities left over, if any.

The return is really of no use in the way in which it is prepared. It is a jumble of figures, which nobody could understand; in fact, even the addition is wrong. I asked for a statement of the quantity of materials supplied after the work was taken off the contractors' hands, from whom obtained, and the prices. In some cases the names are given and the quantities, but in other cases the quantities are given without the names. In some cases an item as small as five cents is mentioned, and then again a large amount is classed under the head of 'sundries.' The return really contains no information that anybody could make use of. The party who prepared it must have known that it was no good. If a clerk in a business office were asked to prepare a statement and submitted anything of that kind to the general manager he would be severely reprimanded, and I think that the parties who prepared this statement should receive a reprimand. This was prepared at Moncton. Is there any one in the department here to whom I could apply who would have power to instruct the parties at Moncton how they should prepare the statements and order them to do so? If there is anybody here who has that power, I will apply to him.

Mr. COCHRANE: I am sorry that the hon. gentleman has been so aggrieved at receiving a return which he alleges not to contain the true facts of the case. I have no knowledge personally of it myself, although I believe it to be prepared according to the question asked. I shall certainly bring it to the attention of those in charge of the matter and convey to them the statement made by the hon. gentleman.