

power that has the right to alter it, each Province has the right to a certain number of representatives. While the election law of England exists, providing for the number of representatives in each of the kingdoms, that proportion must be observed; yet in England, again and again, when corrupt practices have been shown, as in Sudbury, St. Albans, and very many other constituencies, the constituencies have been hung up.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). That is a local change.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Now there is no necessity for a delay like this. The committee will be struck tomorrow, they can meet in a day or two and decide this important question. It is a very important question, looking upon it as I do.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). What is the question?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The question is, what is the consequence here of the report made by the judge?

Motion agreed to, on a division.

CANADIAN FISHING VESSELS.

Mr. EDGAR asked, Whether Canadian fishing vessels are required to report, enter or clear when putting into Canadian ports or harbors for shelter or repairing damages? 2. Whether Canadian fishing vessels, when in any Canadian bay or harbor for the purposes of shelter or repairing damages, of purchasing wood, or of obtaining water, are liable for harbor dues, tonnage dues, buoy dues, light dues or other similar dues?

Mr. FOSTER. Canadian fishing vessels are required to report, enter or clear when they put into Canadian ports or harbors for shelter or repairing damages, provided they require to communicate with the shore or remain over twenty-four hours. When they merely run in and remain at anchor for a few hours, they are not required to report. All fishing vessels are exempt from sick mariners dues. They have, however, the option of paying them and securing the benefits of the fund. Harbor masters' dues are, by Chapter 86, Revised Statutes, exacted at ports proclaimed under the Act, from all vessels entering and discharging or taking in cargo, ballast, stores wood or water. These would not, therefore, be legally required from Canadian fishing vessels in for shelter and repairs, and in practice are seldom exacted from any Canadian fishing vessels. In Halifax, harbor masters' dues are not paid by any vessels under twenty tons, nor by coasting vessels, which include fishing vessels. At Pictou and Sydney, harbor dues are, by Acts of Parliament, exacted from all vessels over forty tons register; whether, in practice, fishing vessels are exempt when over forty tons cannot be stated without correspondence with the harbor masters of these ports. All vessels under eighty tons are exempted from compulsory pilotage dues by the general Act. Pilotage authorities have, in addition, the power to make other exemptions with consent of the Governor in Council, and have generally exempted fishing vessels. No tonnage, light or buoy dues are collected in Canada.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD presented a Message from His Excellency the Governor General.

Mr. SPEAKER read the Message, as follows:—

LANSDOWNE.

The Governor General transmits to the House of Commons, a copy of a despatch, dated 19th July, 1887, from the Right Honorable Sir Henry Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, conveying the thanks of Her Majesty for the joint Address of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, offering their sincere congratulations on the completion of the fiftieth year of Her reign.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
OTTAWA, 28th February, 1888.

ADJOURNMENT—THE TARIFF—COMBINES.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD moved the adjournment of the House.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Before the House adjourns I would call the attention of the Finance Minister and the First Minister to the fact that I observe in the *Montreal Gazette* of Tuesday, February 28th, the statement that they are authorised to announce to all and sundry that no change whatever would be made in the tariff. It may be very convenient indeed that such an announcement should be made, but it strikes me as slightly contrary to custom that any organ, however zealous a supporter of the hon. gentleman, should be authorised to speak in authoritative terms as to such a very important question. I think it would have been better that such a statement had been made in answer to a question put by one of the hon. gentleman's supporters in this House; but are we to understand that from this time forth the *Montreal Gazette* practically supplants the *Canada Gazette* for the purpose of giving general information, and most important general information this undoubtedly is?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I can only say that, so far as I am concerned, the statement that has been made has not my authority. I was asked by a gentleman connected with the press, whether it was expected that there would be any material modifications of the tariff this Session, and I said I hoped it would not be necessary to open the tariff at all, but it was simply an expression of opinion in answer to an enquiry, and I thought it was of some advantage that the statement should go to the country, because it would prevent a great many deputations and parties coming to Ottawa, at great trouble and expense to themselves, visiting the capital, when I thought it was not likely to be attended with the result they anticipated; but there was no intention to say more than to express my personal impression and hope that it would not be necessary to open the tariff at all.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Was this an assurance to the sugar combine of Montreal?

Mr. MITCHELL. I am glad to find that the Government have taken a new way of communicating to the public their intentions with regard to public policy. There is a great deal of interest felt now in what are called the combines. In Montreal there are a number of combines now, and I see by this morning's paper that there is a new combine, a combine of wringers, that is, proprietors of washing machines. In Montreal we have a cotton combine, a flour combine, a sugar combine, a rubber combine, a shirt-makers' combine, and an undertakers' combine. We cannot even get buried on moderate terms now, though, no doubt, the Government would like to bury some of us. Though it may be proper for the Government to send this statement through the press, I think it would not be wise to follow that as a principle hereafter, because it is very unwise and very unfair to lay down an absolute statement that there shall not be any changes in the tariff. Some of these combines may make claims for the services which they have rendered to the Government within the last two years, and the Government may be hampered in dealing with their claims by a statement of this kind. I think it would not be wise for the Government to adopt that course in order to inform the public of their intentions. I was rather sorry to hear the Finance Minister say that he had given this as a sort of authoritative statement. At first he said he had not made an authoritative statement on the subject, but afterwards he said something which meant that it was an authoritative statement. If he is going to give this sort of information to the press, let him give it to all the papers; let him give it to the *Herald*, the true organ of public opinion.

Motion agreed to; and House adjourned at 4:10 p.m.