

Mr. BLAKE. I quite agree that it will be the inevitable result of the proposal of the Minister that this measure should become law at the earliest moment. The announcement of the fact that such a change is in contemplation, and the suggestion in some leading organs of public opinion that it had already taken place, is likely to produce considerable confusion and difficulty unless we legislate according to the intention which has been announced; and, therefore, I quite concur in the view that, whatever is to be the decision of the House, it should be proceeded with immediately, so far as I am individually concerned. I do not know, however, whether the Finance Minister has consulted persons who hold stamps, with a view of ascertaining whether they would not like to retain them for two months or so longer, or whether it would be any advantage to the trade that they should do so.

Mr. MILLS. I do not rise for the purpose of making any objection to the measure. It is one which has, perhaps, been on the whole more inconvenient than unjust; but the First Minister, over and over again, told Parliament, ever since the tax was imposed, that he knew no tax more fair or more justly imposed than this. Now, the hon. gentleman proposes to repeal it, and I think we should have a statement from him why he has changed his views on this particular subject.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I have not changed my opinion at all. I think that, for the purposes of revenue, there can be no better means than the Stamp Act. I think that commercial transactions should contribute, and commercial men should contribute, to the revenue as well as the farmers, the mechanics, the manufacturers, and my hon. friend and myself, who are working men; but such is the happy state of Canada, and such is the flourishing state of the revenue, that we have been able to assist various industries and take off various burthens. And we might have gone still further, perhaps, but we could not well have gone much further in the direction of the reduction of taxation without affecting the principle of the protection of the industries of Canada and the encouragement of their development. We have laid that down as a fixed principle, and no attempt will be made to affect or alter the Tariff of Canada if it can be supposed in any way whatever to affect the great principle which was established by the adoption of the National Policy. As we have relieved various classes of men, and as, happily for us, we are in a position to relieve every class of some burthen or other, I think the commercial world has the same right to have a share of the benefits so generally distributed amongst the people of Canada.

Bill introduced and read the first, second and third times and passed.

COLONIZATION SOCIETIES.

Mr. SCOTT enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to rescind that clause of the land regulations which provides for the disposal of tracts of lands to colonization societies?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It is not.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY RATES.

Mr. SCOTT enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to arrange, at an early date, the rates to be chargeable for freight and passengers, by the Canadian Pacific Railway, between Emerson and Rat Portage, Winnipeg and Brandon, and intermediate points?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. That matter is now being arranged.

WINNIPEG DRILL SHED.

Mr. SCOTT enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to place, in the further Supplementary Esti-

mates, a sum to assist in the erection of a drill shed in the city of Winnipeg?

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. The matter is now engaging the attention of the Government.

IMPROVEMENT OF RED RIVER.

Mr. SCOTT enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum in the further Supplementary Estimates to improve that portion of Red River called "The Rapids," between Winnipeg and Selkirk, so that lake vessels can reach the former place at any time during the season of navigation.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. We have no information in the Department relative to the obstructions which exist in the locality mentioned in the question. Their nature and extent can only be ascertained by an examination which I hope will be made during next season.

WATER HEN RIVER NAVIGATION.

Mr. SCOTT enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum in the further Supplementary Estimates for the purpose of improving the navigation of Water Hen River, so that barges and tugs can run between Lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis?

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. To answer this question I would have to enter into more details than I can do now; but when the Estimates come down I shall, perhaps, be able to enter into the question. The intention is, at all events, to have an examination made of that river, which is connected with Lake Winnipegosis as well as Lake Manitoba, and when the Estimates come down I hope the hon. gentleman may find something which may give him an opportunity to enlarge on this subject.

WORKS IN LITTLE RIVER ST. LOUIS.

Mr. BERGERON enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to have work done in Little River St. Louis, in the County of Beauharnois, in order to furnish water to manufactories of the city of that name; and if so, when do the Government propose to have the said work done?

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am enabled to state, in reply to the hon. member, that the River St. Louis has been surveyed, but that the Engineer-in-Chief of the Department does not consider that he has sufficient information to enable him to make any report or recommendation to the Department. He has the intention of visiting the locality in person during the coming season, and perhaps the Department will be obliged to employ yet another engineer to see how far the proposed works would affect those on the canal.

BRIGADE CAMPS.

Mr. MACDONELL (Lanark) enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to have brigade camps formed this year; and if so, what proportion of the force do they intend having drill?

Mr. CARON. It is the intention of the Government to have brigade camps this year. We hope to drill about 20,000 men. The camps will be similar to those held last summer.

BREAKWATER AT RED POINT, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Mr. MUTTART enquired, Whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum in the Supplementary Estimates, this Session, for the construction of a breakwater at