

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

On motion of **Sir J. A. Macdonald** the House went into Committee of the Whole on the Bill respecting the Department of Justice.

The Bill was reported and was read a third time and passed.

CHARGES AGAINST JUDGE LAFONTAINE

Mr. Wright moved the reception of a petition bringing certain charges against Judge Lafontaine, and praying an investigation.

Hon. Mr. Holton said this petition was of great length, and brought very grave charges. He would suggest its postponement till tomorrow, to give Government an opportunity of looking into it.

Hon. Mr. Dunkin thought the House should require that no petition against a Judge should be received, unless it had endorsed upon it that it had been served on the Judge.

Mr. Wright said he had presented the Parliament of the late Province of Canada a petition praying an investigation into certain charges against Judge Lafontaine. The petition he now presented, and which was numerous and responsibly signed, repeated these charges and brought certain new charges. When the petition had been presented it was his intention to move its reference to a Committee. If the charges were true, Judge Lafontaine was unworthy to hold his present office. If untrue, on the head of the petitioners let the infamy rest.

Sir J. A. Macdonald suggested that the petition should be printed, before the question of its reception was put. It might be read at length, but members could not so easily follow it and retain its substance in their minds as if they had it before them in printed form.

Hon. Mr. Holton thought there was a grave objection to the printing and virtual publication of the petition before its reception.

Sir John A. Macdonald said it might be that the publication might be libellous. The member who presented it would have to run the risk of that on behalf of himself and the petitioners.

Mr. Morris doubted the propriety of the House allowing the printing of a petition as to the propriety of receiving which they had not decided.

Mr. Wright said he was prepared to take the responsibility of substantiating the allegations in the petition.

The petition was then seconded.

QUESTION OF FORTIFICATIONS

The House then resumed the adjourned debate on **Mr. Cartier's** motion. That the Speaker do now leave the Chair for the House to go into Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions to provide a sum not exceeding 1,100,000 pounds sterling, to defray the expenses of constructing works of fortifications for the defence of Montreal and other cities.

Mr. Mackenzie moved, in amendment, that all words after "That" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:

The question of the erection of permanent works of defence should form a subject of enquiry by a Special Commission or a Select Committee—first, as to the necessity for and utility of such works, and the relative share of burden thereof to be borne by the Colonial and Imperial authorities respectively; secondly, the system of defence deemed necessary, the character of the works, their extent, locality and cost; and that pending such enquiries and report to Parliament, it is not expedient to vote any sum of money for fortifications of the nature, extent, utility and cost of which this House is uninformed.

Mr. Mackenzie asked who moved the adjournment of the debate.

Sir J. A. Macdonald—I did.

Mr. Mackenzie—The House will be happy to hear the honourable gentleman.

Sir J. A. Macdonald—They will prefer hearing you.

Mr. Mackenzie said he was not much concerned whether the Premier spoke or not. The more the honourable gentleman and his colleagues spoke on this subject the worse they would make their case. (Hear, hear). In resuming this debate, he (**Mr. Mackenzie**) desired to approach the subject in its broadest aspect, and abstain from those sectional feelings and prejudices to which the Minister of Militia had alluded in his opening remarks. The honourable gentleman seemed to have taken it for granted that his (**Mr. Mackenzie's**), threatened opposition to the resolutions arose in a great measure from the prejudices existing in the Province of Ontario on account of the presumed location of the works and the expenditure of the greater portion of the money to be borrowed on