

early part of the session that 40 men are to be employed in connection with the binder twine industry.

#### FIRST READINGS.

Bill (No. 134) to amend the Revised Statutes of Canada respecting the Department of Public Printing and Stationery.—(Mr. Foster.)

Bill (No. 133) relating to granting subsidies in land to railway companies.—(Mr. Daly.)

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. FOSTER. I move that, when the House adjourns this day, it do stand adjourned till Saturday next at eleven o'clock in the morning, and that Government Orders have precedence on that day, and that all Senate amendments to private and other Bills be considered immediately on their receipt in this House.

Motion agreed to.

#### ADJOURNMENT—FRENCH TREATY.

Mr. FOSTER moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. LAURIER. I would ask the hon. gentleman if he has any more information to give us with regard to the Treaty with France?

Mr. FOSTER. I have a few words to say with reference to the French Treaty. The House will remember the statement I made when that treaty was laid before the House about a fortnight ago. At that time, after having explained the terms of the treaty, I said that, owing to certain points which were touched upon then, I did not propose at present to ask the House to ratify the treaty; that communications had been opened with the British Government and the High Commissioner, with reference to certain clauses and other matters in connection with the treaty, and we were waiting the result of those communications. I may say that those communications have progressed to a certain extent. With reference to two of the clauses regarding which I was in doubt at that time, the meaning appears now to be clear. The terms "Poissons conservés au naturel" and "Homards et langoustes, conservés au naturel," were badly translated, I believe, into English, and I came to the conclusion, in looking them over, that they meant simply that fish in their natural shape were admitted. They are, however, wider than that and bear out the construction given them by the papers laid upon the Table, and the despatches of Sir Charles Tupper, that canned fish and salmon and canned lobsters are allowed in, under these clauses, at the minimum rate. With regard to soaps, I am not clear. The clause, it seems to me, gives entrance to common soaps

of all kinds, although the papers distinctly showed that castile soap was what was negotiated for by the commissioners. I think it is regrettable that immediately upon the statement being made by me at that time, information was cabled to the other side, that I had positively said that the Government would not ratify the treaty, and, upon that information which was not of course correct, certain comments were made and, probably, certain impressions were received on the other side of the water, which, of course, being based on that wrong information, were not correct. It has been stated that the Canadian Government acting in that way, a way in which they did not act, had caused umbrage in London and in Paris, and I am happy to be able to state, that, so far as that is concerned, there is no foundation for the statement. All proper explanations have been made as to what was said, and neither in Paris nor in London is there any feeling which would warrant a declaration of that kind. Parliament will not be asked to ratify the treaty this year. I think it is also well to state that one of the chief points which the Government have to keep in view, is with respect to the favoured-nation clause. Whatever may have been our understanding with respect to all the other clauses of the treaty, as to articles which were to be allowed to come in, it is perfectly true that by our telegram of 12th January we assented to those clauses, whether we fully understood them here or not, and are responsible for them. But, with respect to the extension of the most-favoured-nation treatment, that was never contemplated by the Government, that was not included in our instructions, and, so far as that is concerned, was entirely beyond the wish of the Government. How that came to be, is explained by Sir Charles Tupper in the papers laid before the House. I may say, in passing, that I know no discourtesy is supposed to have been shown by the Government in its action towards France, under the explained condition of affairs, as I am quite certain, and the House well knows, no discourtesy was intended.

Mr. LAURIER. I do not think the Minister of Finance can be at all surprised, if, after the statement he made two weeks ago in this House, the impression was conveyed abroad that the treaty would not be ratified this session. His language fully justified the impression which was then conveyed abroad, because the hon. gentleman has just told us that the treaty is not to be ratified this session. I am at a loss to understand, notwithstanding the explanation given by the hon. gentleman, and he will pardon me for so saying, what can have been the motives that induced the bad feelings which evidently have sprung up between the Government and their Ambassador at Paris, the High Commissioner in London. Of course, I do not know whether there has been some mis-