

**Sir John A. Macdonald** said there was no inconsistency between the statement in the speech that Government were prepared to introduce a Bill on bankruptcy, and the action of the member for Argenteuil in moving a committee to enquire and report on the working of the present bankruptcy law in Canada proper, and in the Lower Provinces—if there be any such Act there. The Committee might be of great service to the Government, as the Government could not otherwise get the information that would be laid before the committee. He might say that the Government were well satisfied on the whole with the working of the present bankruptcy law, which was the work of his honourable friend who made this motion, and of the Vice-Chancellor Mowat. To these gentlemen we were indebted for a common sense, practical measure. It was, however, of course, an experimental measure, and he was glad the honourable gentleman who made the motion was willing to devote his time this session to making these enquiries.

**Mr. Johnson** said that if the doctrine just laid down was to be followed out, every subject embraced in His Excellency's speech might be dealt with in the same way. He thought it would be very unfortunate to introduce such a system. Suppose the committee as a result of their enquiries, were indeed to bring in a report setting forth certain views; then if the Government introduced a measure different from that, they would be bound either to vote against the Government or to go in the face of their own report. He thought the course proposed was a very awkward one, and, if it was to be followed they might as well dispense altogether with the Governor's speech.

**Mr. Mackenzie** pointed out that in the motion as originally submitted there were on the Committee only two commercial men—Workman and Simard, and that it did not include a single member on his side of the House from Western Canada. He would suggest the addition of Mr. McGill and Mr. Blake to the Committee.

**Mr. Abbott** said he was quite willing these names should be added.

The motion, as thus amended, was agreed to.

#### THE SHERIFF OF HALTON'S CLAIMS

**Mr. White** moved for copies of accounts claimed to be due by the Government of the late Province of Upper Canada, to George

McKenzie, Sheriff of the County of Halton, and all correspondence relating to such Government. These claims extended over ten years, and it was understood they had been referred by the Auditor's Department and referred to the Crown lawyers. As there was a difference of opinion in the County of Halton with respect to the legality and justice of the charge, it was desirable that the correspondence should be made public.

**Sir John A. Macdonald** said that if the Government received the reports on payment and acquiesced in the reference, he did not see how anybody had anything to do with it; but he would look into the matter.

The motion accordingly was allowed to stand.

#### THE NORTH WEST TERRITORY

**Mr. Bodwell** moved an address for all papers and correspondence relating to claims of the Hudson's Bay Company over the north west territory, or to the acquisition of the Territory by the late Province of Canada or the Dominion.—Carried.

**Hon. Mr. McDougall** said there were certain documents in the correspondence which it might not be in the interest of the public service to bring down. Such papers, however, as could be made public would be sent down.

**Mr. Howe** said this was a subject of a very large character, and of great importance. The minister of Public Works seemed disposed to withhold certain papers. This might be right and proper, but he hoped the Government would not take any step towards the purchase of that territory without the authority of the House. He was under the impression that the Hudson's Bay Company might be bluffed off without our making an expensive purchase. They had feathered their nests for a very long time out of that territory, and now, in common decency, they ought to abandon it.

This motion was then agreed to.

#### BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES

**Mr. Oliver** moved for a return of the quantity of beer manufactured, and the quantity of grain used in such manufacture in each brewery in the Province of Ontario.

**Sir John A. Macdonald** said there could be no objection to giving the information sought, provided the honourable gentleman did not insist on the names of the parties being given.