

And the House being returned,

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

The following Bills were introduced and read the first time:—

Bill (No. 59) providing for Harbor Improvements at Moncton.—(Sir Albert J. Smith.)

Bill (No. 60) to incorporate the Don River Improvement Company.—(Mr. Platt.)

### REPORTS ON PRIVATE BILLS.

Mr. DOMVILLE moved,

That, in accordance with the first report of the Select Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce, the time for the reception of reports on Private Bills be extended for a period of two weeks from to-day.

Motion agreed to.

### AN EXPLANATION.

Mr. CHARLTON. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I desire to occupy a moment to correct a mistake I made a day or two ago with respect to the expenses incurred by the Sheriff of Norfolk county in putting a stop to the prize fighting at Long Point. I stated that the Dominion Government and the Ontario Government had both refused to reimburse him. The sheriff informs me that after the Dominion Government had declined to pay the expenses a second time, he applied to the Provincial Government, and they have provided for the amount in the Estimates of the present year.

### INSPECTION OF SMOKED HERRINGS.

Mr. MOUSSEAU moved the third reading of Bill (No. 49) to amend the General Inspection Act of 1874 and the Acts amending it.

Mr. GILLMOR. Before this motion is passed, I wish to make a few remarks. On reference to the Inspection Act of 1874, I find that the Governor in Council may, from time to time, designate the cities, counties, towns and other places, or inspection divisions, in Canada, at and for which, respectively, it is expedient to appoint Inspectors of the several articles named in the Act. Although this Act has been on the Statute-book for many years, the Government have not thought it proper to enforce the inspection of smoked herrings. I am quite satisfied that if the Government understood this matter, they would not make the inspection compulsory. Last Session, when the hon. the Minister of Inland Revenue occupied a seat on the floor of this House, he informed me that the inspection of smoked herrings would not be enforced, unless a municipality requested it, and under these circumstances I did not oppose the measure. As the hon. mover informs me, however, that the Government intend to put this Act in force, I believe I would not be discharging my duty to my constituents if I did not oppose it. No possible good can result from enforcing this Act. All the smoked herrings exported from New Brunswick to the United States amounts to 5,356,790 pounds, while from Nova Scotia, a constituency of which is represented by the hon. member for Annapolis (Mr. Longley), there are exported to the United States only 13,214 pounds, valued at \$329; and I may say that 95 per cent. of all the smoked herring exported from New Brunswick go from the constituency I represent—the county of Charlotte. The quantity exported from New Brunswick would amount to 750,000 boxes, 95 per cent. of which are exported from the county of Charlotte to the United States. I am not surprised that the late Government did not deem it necessary, in the public interest, to enforce this inspection. I can see no good that

can arise at all. It would entail an enormous burden on that struggling industry—a favorite term with hon. gentlemen opposite—of some \$3,500 a year, even at one-half cent per box. I cannot conceive why the Government should deem it their duty to make this inspection compulsory when a greater part of the fish finds a market in the United States, and those who are engaged in this business which has been handed down to them from generation to generation, know how to manage it better than the Government or anybody else, and in their own interest must consult the taste and wishes of their customers. If my constituents found a market at home and the public interest demanded there should be inspection, I would have no objection to it. My hon. friend informed me the Chamber of Commerce of Halifax, and the Board of Trade of Montreal petitioned for this inspection. Well, let an inspection be had in those ports, but it can be of no earthly use in Charlotte county, except as a tax of \$3,500 on a portion of my constituents for the benefit of the inspectors into whose pockets the whole amount will go. I beg to move, in amendment, that this Bill be not now read a third time, but that it be referred back to the Committee of the Whole House, with instructions that they have power to so amend the Bill as to make the inspection in no case compulsory.

Mr. MOUSSEAU. I cannot see why, after the agreeable relations which have taken place between the hon. member and myself on this subject, he should desire a vote of want of confidence. The hon. gentleman states the law has been long on the Statute-book without being put in force. I do not know how far his assertion is correct. The Boards of Trade complain of the quality of the fish and ask for an enforcement of the Inspection Law. My hon. friend complains that 5,000,000 pounds of smoked herring are exported from New Brunswick, 95 per cent. of which comes from his county; further, that if the Government could foresee the evil results that will flow from the enforcement of the Inspection Law, it would not press its passage. If the law, as my hon. friend says, has never been enforced, how can he say that its enforcement will produce bad results. The people engaged in the fish trade complain that the quality of the fish is not what it ought to be, and ask that the Inspection Law be more severely enforced. Should it be found the law produced bad results the Government do not intend enforcing it severely, but a trial must be had to see whether the Boards of Trade or my hon. friend are correct.

Mr. ANGLIN. The hon. Minister seems to think it is a matter of small importance whether those people are put to a great deal of unnecessary trouble or not while he is making his experiment—an experiment suggested by the Boards of Trade of Halifax and Montreal. I understood the hon. member for Annapolis (Mr. Longley) to say last year, that the Board of Trade of Halifax wanted the inspection for the purpose of having a standard quality of fish for the foreign market, and I really supposed there was a considerable exportation of herrings from Digby Basin through Halifax, until my hon. friend from Charlotte stated it was very small, the chief exportation being from his county. To render the inspection of value, an enormous amount of trouble must be imposed on the people who put up the fish. The fish are now put up as fast as possible in boxes, and shipped in small vessels to the United States, clearances being obtained to meet the demands of the authorities in such a way as to impose very little trouble on the shippers. If after the fish are packed in boxes, they must undergo inspection before the boxes are finally closed; if the inspector is to sort the fish, and see if they are of the proper size and weight, a great deal of trouble will be occasioned. It is almost impossible for any one who does not know anything of the trade to form an idea of what the inspection will amount to.