

COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS AT LOUISBURG.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (for Mr. Forbes) asked. Is the Government aware that P. O'Toole, the collector of customs at Louisburg, N.S., is conducting a general store and supply business at that place and transacts the duties of collector in the same store where he has but one office? Does the Government propose that this state of affairs shall continue?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. The Government is not aware the the sub-collector of customs at Louisburg is conducting a general store and supply business, or as to the situation of his office. The question is one that cannot be answered until information is obtained as to the alleged business of the sub-collector. Inquiry is being made through the inspector of customs with a view to ascertaining the facts.

FINANCES OF KINGSTON PENITENTIARY.

Mr. MULOCK asked, Has the warden of the Kingston Penitentiary recently paid over to the Government any moneys in respect of any shortage on his part? If so, how much? When, and on what account?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. The question is founded on a mistake. Mr. Speaker. There is no shortage in the accounts of the warden; there has not been any that I have ever been aware of.

Mr. MULOCK. The return of the gate money received, which was laid on the Table does not show that the money was paid to the Government at the different dates. It shows several thousands of dollars of gate-money collected by the warden, but it does not show that this was paid over in the order of its receipt.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. There is no shortage in the gate-money, so far as the warden is concerned. The practice has been, and the rule of the department has been, that the money should be deposited in the bank, not to the order of the Receiver General, but to the credit of a special fund. But under a recent arrangement it is deposited to the credit, not of the warden alone, but of the warden and the accountant.

Mr. MULOCK. The return shows that the money was deposited to the warden's own credit.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. That was the rule until a few months ago.

Mr. MULOCK. Then the return ought to be corrected to show when the money was paid over.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

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Sir JOHN THOMPSON. The money is not paid over at all, but is kept there and used for a specific purpose. The only change made is that a second officer is included with the warden, and the money deposited to the credit of both. The account has always been checked and has always been found correct.

HER MAJESTY'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER HUDSON'S BAY.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell) moved for:

Copies of all correspondence since 1867, between the Government of Canada and the Imperial Government in reference to Her Majesty's exclusive sovereignty over Hudson's Bay.

He said: This, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of very considerable importance. The Government, of course, know right well that Hudson's Bay has always been claimed by Great Britain as part of the sovereignty of the Crown ever since the discovery of that bay. It was a matter of dispute for some time, during a former century, between Great Britain and France as to whom this bay, of right, belonged; but that question was settled in favour of the British contention by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, and since then I believe, it has been recognized as between Great Britain and France and acquiesced generally by Christendom that this is a portion of the British possessions in North America. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that lately American vessels have been going in there, engaged in whale, porpoise, and other fishing operations, and I do not understand that any steps have been taken by the Government to assert the jurisdiction of Canada over these waters. Now, the whole coast of Hudson's Bay lies within British territory. The bay is a land-locked bay, only connected with the high seas by the narrow passage of water called the Hudson's Straits. But, Sir, if the ships of foreign countries are allowed to go into these waters without question, and without taking out any license, to engage in fishing operations there, it might very well be, at no distant day, according to the rules of acquiescence, that the parties whose ships so engaged might claim to go there, as a matter of right, regarding these waters as part of the high seas. I think it is important to know how far there has been any departure from the long and continuous contention that these are British waters. Under the modern doctrine there has been a disposition to limit the rights of states to waters within their own territory and upon their own coasts, and it is important to know whether any correspondence has taken place between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United Kingdom