

tion; I know its difficulties, and I introduced several modifications, with a view to remove some of them, and everyone understands that when a work is in progress it is difficult to suspend it without great injury being done.

Mr. THOMPSON. The hon. gentleman has asked me a question as to whether the dates of the warrants appear. They do not. It may possibly be that they did not come down so late as 9th February, 1878. The hon. gentleman will not find that I was in the least degree incorrect as to my statement of the items of those warrants.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I was not disputing the items.

Mr. THOMPSON. As regards the dates: the hon. gentleman has made reference to December, 1877, and some other dates which appeared in the papers. These are the dates of the Orders in Council. The dates of the warrants do not appear.

Mr. BLAKE. Will the hon. gentleman state the latest date given.

Mr. THOMPSON. December.

Mr. WELDON (St. John). The hon. Minister of Justice has hardly been fair, because the House was led to believe that the warrants came down almost the day before the House met, and the dates came down to 9th February, 1878. It appears, however, that that is the date of the Order brought down to the House. We now find that, although there were no dates given for the warrants, yet the very paper which was in the hands of the Minister of Justice gives the dates of every Order in Council, and the last order was passed on 24th December, or nearly six weeks before the House met. The Minister of Justice, I say, had the information in his hands at the time he made his argument, and yet he endeavored to lead the House to believe that these Orders in Council went up to the date of the meeting of the House, and he put that forward as a justification for the issue of the warrants under discussion. So much with regard to that question. I think, however, my hon. friend the Minister of Justice ought not to have dealt unfairly with the argument of my hon. friend from Prince Edward Island. He said there might be cases of urgency in which an Order of Council might be passed a short time before the meeting of the House, but I scarcely think the Minister of Justice will undertake to say that the circumstances here are circumstances of extreme necessity or urgency, such as will alone justify such action. I think the hon. member for Bothwell is right in laying down the principle that this is a power which should not be used except in cases requiring immediate attention. But does the hon. gentleman pretend to say that there was any immediate necessity for passing an Order in Council before the meeting of the House, to pay the costs in the case of the St. Catharines Milling Company? Then I see there is an item, Intercolonial Railway deep-water wharf, St. John, \$5,000. Now, what urgency was there for paying that amount, or issuing an Order in Council, dated on the 21st of February, just one day before the elections took place? I may state that there was a large hole there which had remained open for years, and they suddenly put men on to fill it up. These men were paid by tickets, hundreds of which were issued by special parties in the city of St. John, who exacted a promise from those who received them that they would vote against the Opposition candidates. That is the case of urgency which required an Order in Council to be issued on the day before the elections. I would ask the Minister of Railways what urgency there was that required the issue of an Order in Council, on the 11th of March, for increased accommodation at St. John. It is rather remarkable that while the Minister of Justice puts forward such pleas as those, the dates of

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the Orders are mostly found to be between the time of the issue of the writs for election and the day of election, a fact which, to say the least of it, is very suspicious. And we find that the Minister of Justice has been put forward, with the assistance of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, to make the charge against the Government of Mr. Mackenzie that they issued Governor's warrants to the extent of \$100,000, and they urge that as a justification for the issue of warrants to the amount of \$2,500,000, most of these warrants being dated after the House met, or being based upon Orders in Council issued a few days before. Sir, the Act itself points out under what circumstances this power should be used, that is in cases of immediate necessity and urgency, and hardly a single item has been pointed out where that urgency exists except, as my hon. friend behind me has said, the urgency of a general election. This power is granted for a particular purpose, and there is no power which a Government possesses as to which we should be more careful; it is a power which, as has been said before, should not be prostituted by being used for the mere party advantage of the Government.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

SECOND READINGS.

Bill (No. 24) to incorporate the Goderich and Canadian Pacific Junction Railway Company.—(Mr. Porter.)

Bill (No. 26) to incorporate the Kincardine and Teeswater Railway Company.—(Mr. McCarthy.)

Bill (No. 27) respecting the Ontario and Quebec Railway Company.—(Mr. Patterson, Essex.)

Bill (No. 28) to incorporate the Brandon, Souris and Rock Lake Railway Company.—(Mr. Small.)

Bill (No. 29) to incorporate the Manufacturers' Life and Accident Insurance Company.—(Mr. Brown.)

Bill (No. 36) to incorporate the New Westminster Southern Railway Company.—(Mr. Chisholm.)

Bill (No. 38) to amend the Act to incorporate the Hamilton, Guelph and Buffalo Railway Company, and to change the name of the company to the "Hamilton Central Railway Company."—(Mr. McKay.)

DISCHARGE OF INSOLVENT DEBTORS.

On the Order for second reading of Bill (No. 9) for the discharge of Insolvent Debtors whose estates have been distributed ratably among their creditors.—(Mr. Edgar.)

Mr. THOMPSON. I will ask the hon. member to be kind enough to allow this Bill to stand, and I will state the reason. Within the last twenty-four hours documents have been served on me in relation to proceedings now pending before the Court of Appeal in Ontario to test the validity of the Ontario Act, the efficacy of which is necessary to be established in order to make this Bill effective. I will undertake that the hon. gentleman's Bill will not be lost by delay.

Mr. EDGAR. It is getting fairly late in the Session, and I should not like to see the Bill lost on account of delay. I really think a good deal might be gained and nothing would be lost if the Government would allow this Bill, after discussion to-night, to go either to the Committee on Banking and Commerce or to a special committee. In either case there will be ample time to consider it in all its details as well as with regard to its general principles. With reference to what the Minister of Justice says about