

Mr. PENNY. I am paired with the hon. member for Sherbrooke. If I had voted I would have voted against the amendment.

Bill read the second time, on the same division reversed.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright) moved the adjournment of the House.

Motion agreed to, and the House adjourned at 12.04 a.m. (Wednesday).

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, 30th March, 1898.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Bill (No. 104) respecting the Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal Company.—(Mr. Sutherland.)

Bill (No. 105) respecting the Montreal Island Belt Line Railway Company.—(Mr. Sutherland.)

EXAMINATION OF STATIONARY ENGINEERS.

On the order for introduction of Bill "An Act respecting the examination of stationary engineers and the inspection of steam boilers.—(Mr. Sutherland.)

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I beg to state that I propose to introduce this Bill at the request of the Association of Stationary Engineers. Owing to the point having been raised by several legal gentlemen in the House as to whether the powers contained in the Bill standing in my name come within the jurisdiction of this Parliament or are altogether within the jurisdiction of the provinces, at the suggestion of hon. members on both sides of the House the matter has been referred to the Department of Justice for an opinion. I ask that the Bill be allowed to stand until we have received the opinion of the Department of Justice.

Mr. WOOD (Brockville). Within what period does the hon. gentleman expect to procure the opinion of the Department of Justice? I do not see why a long time should be occupied in securing an opinion on this subject. The question was brought up on the Bill introduced by the Minister of Marine respecting engineers on steamboats, and I then alluded to the subject.

Mr. SCRIVER.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). I do not think there will be any delay whatever in obtaining an opinion. My hon. friend (Mr. Sutherland) will take on his own shoulders some of the responsibility for delay, as he did not send over the Bill as quickly as he should have done.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I suggest this point for the consideration of the House, whether this course is entirely in order. We have a law officer of the Crown in this House, and no doubt he is here for the purpose of expressing from time to time his opinion on questions that may arise. But it occurs to me—although I cannot at the moment lay my hands on the authority—that the reference of a Bill or other matter direct from the House to the law officers of such, with the object of obtaining a report from them to this House, is not according to English practice. On the contrary, I believe—I am not raising the point of order, but I am merely advertent to the practice—there is authority which prevents the House obtaining the opinion of the law officers of the Crown given to the Crown. That is a confidential document, and on special occasions is submitted, with the consent of the Crown and the consent of the Government, to the House. I suggest this point; and I think it would be a pity, if that be the rule, to unintentionally violate it. Perhaps the hon. gentleman who has charge of the Bill will not be in the slightest degree prejudiced by letting this order stand until this prior question is considered, as to whether it was proper and regular to obtain the law officer's opinion and quote it in this House in regard to a Bill.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I understand that this course is being adopted on the suggestion of members on both sides of the House who thought an opinion might be had. Whether that will be agreed to by the House, I do not know.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I suppose the objection could be overcome by the Solicitor General stating the decision arrived at as his opinion.

Mr. SPEAKER. There is no motion before the House. As to the point raised as to taking the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, I do not understand that any question of that kind has been raised here. It was mentioned by the intended mover of the Bill that it was intended to delay the introduction of the Bill so that he could obtain a legal opinion. I do not think that the question arises now.

THE COASTING TRADE OF CANADA.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER moved for leave to introduce Bill (No. 106) to amend the Act respecting the coasting