

May 21, 1874

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said the hon. gentleman had given him the letter. He had read it and thought he recognized the handwriting of the Minister of Militia. He knew the hon. gentleman's handwriting as well as he did his own.

So thought Hon. Mr. Tupper also, to whom he gave the letter to be returned to the hon. member. Hon. Mr. Tupper had left for Montreal this morning—(*Hear, hear, and laughter*)—but he had received a telegram from him stating that the letter would be here tomorrow.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE: I suppose it was not the right hon. gentleman who gave it to the newspapers.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: Yes, it was I who gave it to the newspapers. (*Hear, hear.*)

Mr. BOWELL said the member for Cape Breton had shown him the letter, and had stated that the signature was Mr. Ross'. He had read the letter but did not know the handwriting of the Minister of Militia.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Victoria) said he did not write the letter, and he believed if there were an investigation into the matter he could prove who did write it. He believed he could do this to the satisfaction of the House and the public. (*Hear, hear.*)

Mr. McKAY said the Minister of Militia was in his county during the last election, but the first intimation he had of Mr. D. Egan being in the county was the mention of his name in the *Ottawa Citizen*. He did not believe the Minister of Militia had written this letter. He thought the letter should have been placed in the hands of the Minister of Militia and that he should have been asked if he had written it.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON claimed that this discussion was out of order.

The matter was then dropped.

The orders of the day were then called.

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CONCURRENCE

Hon. Mr. CARTWRIGHT moved concurrence in the resolutions reported from Committee of Supply.

The several resolutions were concurred in without discussion.

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SUPPLY

On motion of **Hon. Mr. CARTWRIGHT**, the House went into Committee of Supply and passed the following items:—

Fort Garry and Pembina Branch of the Pacific Railway, \$650,000.

Pacific Railway construction and improvements on navigable waters in the interior in connection therewith, \$1,500,000.

The Committee reported the resolutions.

CERTIFICATES TO OFFICERS OF COASTING SHIPS

Hon. Mr. SMITH (Westmorland), on the order for the third reading of the Bill respecting certificates to masters and mates of inland and coasting ships, said the Government did not intend to pursue this matter further this session, but would leave it over for the country to consider its provisions.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL thoroughly agreed with the principle of the Bill, and believed it would be sooner or later adopted.

The order was then discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

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PROVINCIAL LOANS

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE moved the House into Committee to consider a resolution authorizing the Governor in Council to advance to any Province such sums as may be required for local improvements, under certain conditions therein set forth. He explained that the object of the resolution was to enable the Government to advance money to the Provinces where the actual debt was less than that with which they came into the Union.

British Columbia, which had over \$900,000 difference between its actual and nominal debt, desired to expend a portion of that money in local matters, and to obtain a loan from the Dominion. It had been the opinion of the late Finance Minister that this money could be advanced without Parliamentary authority, but the present Minister of Justice (Hon. Mr. Dorion) did not agree in that opinion. The Government had also had, from time to time, to advance considerable sums to the Province of Manitoba. These advances were, to a certain extent irregular, and this bill would so far legalize them.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD asked if the Government intended to obtain the assent of Parliament to each grant.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE: No.

The resolution was then adopted, reported, and concurred in.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said he had no objection to the measure provided it were properly guarded, but this was giving unusually large powers to the Government.

The resolutions were then referred to the Committee on the Act to authorize the payment of a certain sum for the construction of a graving dock at Esquimalt.

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MONTREAL HARBOUR

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE, in moving that the House go into Committee to consider a certain proposed resolution providing for the payment of an indemnity out of the revenue of the Harbour of Montreal to the President of the Board of Commissioners of the said harbour, said the object was to authorize the Harbour Commissioners to grant an indemnity, not exceeding \$2,000, to the President of the Board.