

Hon. Mr. SCOTT replied, the greatest possible despatch was used, and clerks kept busy in the work. Some papers caused much labor, including applications to every department of the Government.

SECOND READINGS.

Hon. Mr. TRUDEL moved the second reading of the *Stadacona Fire and Life Insurance Bill*, whose main object he briefly explained. He thought the House would admit the desirability of encouraging such enterprises as this one, which not only contributed to the retention in the country of money that would otherwise leave it, but to the attraction of foreign money hither. The general provisions of this bill were of the ordinary character.

The bill was then read a second time and referred.

Hon. Mr. AIKINJ moved the second reading of the *Imperial Bank incorporation amendments bill*. One object of the bill was to make a change in its name and the other to authorize the increase of its stock.

Second reading.

On motion of Hon. Mr. BOTSFORD, the House then adjourned till Monday at half-past seven p m.

MONDAY, May 4.

The House met at 8 o'clock.

RETURNS.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT laid on the table returns to an address for the copy of an advertisement for a winter steamer to Prince Edward Island; also an address for copy of all appointments to, and dismissals from office in Prince Edward Island, as well as for petitions and other papers connected therewith since 1st July last; also for a statement of the distribution of the statutes of Canada of last session.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

Hon. Mr. ODELL gave notice of motion with respect to the mail service between Halifax and St John, N. B. He said he desired to draw the serious attention of the Government to this motion. He would show by and by that the detentions at Halifax ran from 12 to 48 hours. The mails lay at Halifax, not owing to any fault of the Post Office Department, but in consequence of there being but one train a day for St. John. That train leaving in the morning, if the mail arrived at Halifax shortly afterwards, it remained

there the whole of that day and night till the next morning. Thus, if a steamer arrived on Saturday afternoon, the mail remained at Halifax all that evening and night, all Sunday and that night, until Monday morning before it could be despatched westward. He hoped the Government would be able, on considering the matter to promise an improvement in this respect.

CRIME OF LIBEL BILL.

On motion of Hon. Mr. KAULSACH, the House went into Committee of the Whole on the above bill, as amended by the Select Committee, Hon. Mr. Montgomery in the chair.

Hon. Mr. MILLER said that one of the chief recommendations of this bill was its intention to assimilate our law as closely as possible to that of England, but he regretted to see an alteration in clause 6, which would render it somewhat dissimilar in one important respect. He did not think it was wise to give further privileges and immunities to the Canadian press than were enjoyed by the English in the application of the criminal law. He thought it desirable also to have the benefit of the decisions of English Courts, of which we might be deprived by altering the original phraseology of this clause. At present the clause would give the accused a wonderful advantage in his defence. When he was allowed to go on and prove the truth of the libel, and its justification on public grounds, it was not right to take away what the English law required, namely, proof of the necessity of the statement of the particular facts which might be complained of as the libel. He, therefore, moved that the clause be amended by re-inserting the words struck out—"and the particular fact or facts by reason whereof it was for the public benefit that the said matters charged should be published."

Hon. Mr. KAULSACH spoke in general terms against the amendment, admitting, however, that he would not take very strong ground on the matter. He thought that every man accused of a criminal offence should have the benefit of every fact likely to turn to his advantage. In some instances the accused, on citing all the facts, might secure his acquittal. It would be hard to deprive him of any testimony or advantage allowed by the spirit of the British law.

Hon. Mr. PENNY said that the reason why those words were left out was their omission from the revised