

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Certainly, we will reserve any item that hon. gentlemen may wish.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. It is not that, but that we should be free to discuss any item of customs.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Yes, the customs matters may be discussed on other items of customs than this. There will probably be something in the Supplementary Estimates which will open the same field. I think we have done a fairly reasonable day's work, and we are much indebted to hon. gentlemen opposite for their help.

Resolutions to be reported.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding) moved the adjournment of the House.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. May I ask if the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fielding) is able to say what is likely to be the order of business for Wednesday—or is that too far ahead for him to know?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. There is some difficulty about it. I think that if the Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick) returns we may take up the motion which he has on the paper respecting the salaries of the judges. But I would not speak of that with too much certainty. It is our expectation, as stated by the right hon. the Premier (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) to announce on Wednesday generally what we propose regarding the business of the session, and that may affect the business of Wednesday. Failing other matters, we will take Supply.

Motion agreed to, and the House adjourned at 11.15 p.m.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, 25th May, 1898.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

### NORTH-WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY— QUESTION OF PROCEDURE.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I wish to call attention to what appears to me to be an irregularity in the Votes and Proceedings. I was present on Monday, the last sitting of the House, when Private Bills were called, and when Bill (No. 140) from the Senate was reached, the Prime Minister asked that it should stand. I had been spoken to by gentlemen who were

interested in the subject matter of the Bill, and had the Prime Minister not made that request, I should myself have asked the House to permit it to stand. It appears that subsequently, after Bill 140 was dealt with, as appears on the Votes and Proceedings, the member for Antigonish (Mr. McIsaac)—so I was informed, I was not present at the time—moved, seconded by the hon. member for Yale (Mr. Bostock), with the unanimous consent of the House, that this Bill be read the second time, which was done, and it was referred to the Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines. The attendance in the House was very small. I was present during nearly all the proceedings, and had been asked to bring to the attention of the House certain facts, by the gentlemen who were interested in the Bill. I have looked into the procedure, and while it may be technically right to do this kind of thing, it is certainly out of the ordinary course. A question might be raised in regard to the regularity of the procedure; but I happen to know there are several hon. gentlemen in the House who have been spoken to as I was, and if any of them had been present, I am certain some of them would have mentioned that this was an important Bill, and that it was desirable that various matters should be stated in connection with it before it was referred to the committee, but no opportunity for that was afforded. I notice in Sir John Bourinot's work, page 374, in speaking of the subject of the power of the House to do almost anything by unanimous consent, it is said:

In the Canadian Commons, in more than one case, it has been attempted to take a notice of motion out of its place, and give it priority, which, of course, could not be allowed. See ruling in Canadian Hansard, 24th March, 1885, when it was proposed to give precedence to a Bill without notice.

Without wishing to insist too much on these technicalities, and as I have not had an opportunity to consult the precedents, I would like to move that the order for the second reading of Bill (No. 140), from the Senate, and its reference to the Railway Committee, be discharged.

Mr. SPEAKER. I may mention with reference to this matter that my recollection is that we had passed through Private Bills, and that order stood at the request of somebody.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Of the Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER. We were proceeding in a later order, I think, and the Minister of Railways and Canals mentioned that, with so many orders standing on the paper, unless it was referred now to the Committee on Railways, it might at this stage of the session fall through altogether. Then a motion was put by me, an expressed and dis-