

gentlemen, and their intention was to do business in high latitudes. (Laughter.)

Hon. Mr. READ said he had a decided objection to this bill, some of whose provisions were most extraordinary. Clause 17 provided the Co. might issue bonds to the amount of their stock paid up, to hold priority over all other claims, by which the bondholders might in certain circumstances, use up all the assets of the company, leaving the rest of the creditors to go without any. That as well as some other provisions should not receive the sanction of the House. The shares were to be \$1,000 each, a large amount, even though the promoters of the bill were highly respectable. Besides they might sail ships between Europe and this country, build telegraph lines and do almost everything with a capital of only \$33,000. The bill commenced by sealing and fishing, and to him it looked very fishy. (Laughter.) He hoped the committee would subject it to a good scrutiny.—Motion carried.

On motion of Hon. Mr. BUREAU, the amendments of the House of Commons to *le credit Foncier du bas Canada* incorporation bill were concurred in, and the bill read a third time.

In answer to Hon. Mr. BUREAU,

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL said he was not in a position to say when the House would adjourn. He then submitted a message from His Excellency, accompanying papers relative to the projected Union between Prince Edward Island and Canada, also papers respecting the enquiry into the loss of the "Atlantic."

On motion of the Hon. Postmaster General, the House then adjourned till Monday, at three o'clock.

MONDAY, May 19

The SPEAKER took the Chair at three o'clock.

THE GOLDSMITHS' BILL.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL said he had received a number of petitions from persons in the watch and jewellery trade in Toronto and Montreal against the Goldsmiths' Bill, which, with the leave of the House, he read. Several of the petitioners remonstrated that their signatures in favor of the Bill had been obtained under false pretences, while others set forth the unfairness and pernicious character of the Bill.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU expressed surprise at the course of the leader of the Government in this matter, which he

maintained was contrary to the rules and practice of the House. We were simply a judicial tribunal, the proper place for reading such petitions being the Private Bills Committee. The hon. gentleman's *ex parte* proceeding was indefensible. It was just neither to the promoters nor the opponents of the measure.

Hon. Mr. CHRISTIE said he called the attention of the Senate last session to an impropriety of which the Postmaster General was guilty, his advocacy of a private bill. On such matters it was improper for the Government to take a leading part, either in favor of or against private bills. He had before quoted the authority of Sir Robert Peel on the point, and it was unfortunate the hon. gentleman should have again assumed a position not compatible with his position as a member of the Government in this matter.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL thought he had done nothing improper. The petitions were placed in his hands for presentation to the House, and he would have been remiss in his duty, considering the stage which the bill had reached, had he withheld the information thus sent him. He merely submitted it as any other member would have done. He thought it was quite consistent with the duty of a Minister to take a part for or against a private bill. He interfered, not with reference to the private interests involved, but on account of the public interest, which he was bound to guard. He had taken no strong part, nor was he actuated by personal motives.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST replied to criticisms adverse to the claims of the corporators and their pecuniary qualifications. He maintained their opponents had misrepresented them, and that they were well entitled to a charter.

After further discussion, in which

Hon. Mr. KEESEOR advocated the proposals of the Goldsmiths.

Hon. Mr. CHRISTIE quoted from Todd's Second Volume to prove the correctness of his argument as to the duty of Ministers, touching private bills, to the effect that their peculiar responsibility was confined, for the most part, to the initiation, and control of public business; as regards private bills, wherein the rights of private parties were adjudicated upon by Parliament, an opposite principle prevailed. The hon. gentleman also quoted Sir Robert Peel's remarks in 1830, when he declined interfering with any private bill, in confirmation of his already expressed views.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL admitted the authority of Sir R. Peel was high; but re-