

The report of the Department of Agriculture for the year ending October 31, 1900.—Hon. Mr. Fisher.

The report of the Department of Public Works for the year ending June 30, 1900.—Hon. Mr. Tarte.

The report of the Department of Inland Revenue for the year ending June 30, 1900.—Hon. Mr. Bernier.

Report of the Department of Marine and Fisheries for the year ending June 30, 1900.—Hon. Mr. Fielding, for Sir Louis Davies.

Statement of all bonds or securities entered in the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada since last return, February 6, 1900.—Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Mr. J. CLANCY (Bothwell). After this little theatrical display perhaps we may receive some information as to when the Auditor General's Report will be down. The most important returns are still left to be brought down, the Auditor General's Report and the Trade and Navigation Returns. Perhaps the Prime Minister will give us some information about that?

The PRIME MINISTER. I should certainly endeavour to gratify the rather fastidious curiosity of my hon. friend (Mr. Clancy). I should suppose he would have enough reading for one night at least. Tomorrow, perhaps, I may be able, after conference with the Auditor General, to tell him when this report may be expected. I move that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Before we adjourn, I merely desire to say to the right hon. gentleman that we on this side of the House are delighted at the effect of the admonitions we had to give to the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues last year, when we had to wait for these reports for weeks, and even months, in some cases. The promptitude with which most of them have been brought down this year is very gratifying.

Mr. WALLACE. With these exceptions, that the reports of the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson), and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), which are so necessary for the discussion of the commercial affairs of the country, are not brought down, and we have no information as to when they will be down. As to the Auditor General's Report, the law of the land compels it to be brought down within fourteen days of the opening of parliament. That law was flagrantly violated by the government at all the previous sessions. I hope the government will realize the fact that they are amenable to the law as well as other citizens of this country, and that they are required to obey the law with respect to the Auditor General's Report.

The PRIME MINISTER. The hon. gentleman is just as well aware as I am that

Mr. FIELDING.

the report of the Auditor General is not at all under the control of the government. The government is not at all answerable for the delay of the Auditor General's Report. With regard to the report of the Minister of Customs, the House I am sure will learn with regret that the Minister of Customs has been called away from Ottawa by sickness in his family. But he will be here to-morrow, I hope.

On motion of the Prime Minister, the House adjourned at 5.15 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, February 12, 1901.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

The PRIME MINISTER (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) moved:

That a special committee of five members be appointed to prepare and report with all convenient speed, a list of members to compose the select standing committees ordered by this House, and that the said committee be composed of: Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Borden (Halifax), Sir Richard Cartwright, Hon. Mr. Sutherland and Hon. Mr. Haggart.

Motion agreed to.

THE RAILWAY QUESTION.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN (East York). Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I wish to ask the attention of the House to a matter which I consider of supreme importance to this country, and to put myself in order I shall conclude with a motion.

Mr. SPEAKER. I understand that the hon. gentleman will conclude with a motion to adjourn the House?

Mr. MACLEAN. I will move the adjournment of the House, and to that motion I propose to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER. The hon. member may be absolutely in order in moving the adjournment of the House, but at the same time I would call his attention to the fact that he will doubtless have ample opportunity to discuss the question which he has in view under our ordinary procedure. Unless the question is of really urgent importance, it is hardly regular to bring it up in this form. At the very outset, I wish to direct the attention of hon. members to the fact that it would be much more convenient if questions of ordinary importance were placed upon the Order paper. It would greatly facilitate the business of the House if this course were adopted.