

outside inspectors that the number would not be very great, and we considered that further legislation would not be required.

Mr. BLAKE. But as to the provisions with respect to the presence of sulphuretted hydrogen?

Mr. COSTIGAN. We do not propose to deal with it further than by the present Act.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

ENQUIRY FOR A RETURN.

Mr. VAIL. I would remind the Minister of Marine that the Return with reference to the supplies on the Hudson Bay steamers has not been brought down. The Order was passed on the 28th of February; I amended it to suit the hon. gentleman's convenience, by including other papers, but we have waited for it a long time.

Mr. McLELAN. I enquired of the Deputy Minister this morning, and he said it would be ready shortly. There was some delay in getting the accounts from the Auditor's office, but they have been obtained and are now in the hands of the copying clerks. We have had a number of returns to prepare, and some which have been called for since that day were much more important and they were put in hand first.

Mr. VAIL. I think the hon. gentleman has been favored a good deal this year, as we have not asked for a great many returns from his Department.

THE DISTURBANCE IN THE NORTH-WEST.

Mr. BLAKE. Before the Orders are called, I would invite hon. gentlemen opposite to give some further information with reference to the condition of affairs in the North-West, and also with reference to what further action they have taken with regard to troops, and so forth, since we last met.

Mr. CARON. I understood that the right hon. leader of the Government had given to the House at the beginning of the sitting the news which had been received so far. With regard to the troops, the 9th Battalion, Quebec, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Amyot, has been called out, and will proceed forthwith to the front. The telegrams received from along the line are most satisfactory, as indicating that the measures taken by the railway company are being carried out successfully, and that the troops are being conveyed as rapidly as possible over that portion of the line north of Lake Superior. The hon. gentleman will understand that I do not wish to point out the exact place which the troops have reached. The hon. gentleman may smile; but I think it is of the greatest possible importance that this information should not be given. However, it must be satisfactory to the House to know that the measures taken have been successfully carried out, and that the troops are proceeding as rapidly as possible to the scene of action.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman has not stated what he expects to be the strength of the 9th, or whether the 65th has been ordered to leave.

Mr. CARON. I explained yesterday that they were ordered to be ready and to proceed to the front.

Mr. BLAKE. He did not state that they were to proceed to the front, but that they were to be ready.

Mr. CARON. I may not have gone that far; but they have received orders to proceed, and I expect that they will proceed to-morrow morning or afternoon. The 9th Battalion, under my hon. friend Col. Amyot, has just gone through its annual drill, and was inspected a few days ago, in consequence of which it will be possible to

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despatch it with almost no delay. Colonel Amyot told me that he expected to be able to leave by to-morrow night or the day after. He has left this afternoon by the four o'clock train for Quebec to take command of his regiment, and he expects to be able to leave immediately. The strength of his battalion is about 340, or possibly 350. The full strength of the 65th, I am informed, will be between 250 and 300.

Mr. BLAKE. There have been some statements in the newspapers with reference to the condition of the accoutrements of the 65th. Are those defects now repaired?

Mr. CARON. I do not know what the papers have said, but I can tell the hon. gentleman that the 65th, like every other battalion in ordinary times, is not provided with all the equipment which is necessary when moving. The requisition was sent in by Col. Ouimet to the Department, and the requisition was filled without any delay whatever. Whatever was required that we had not, I authorised Col. Ouimet to purchase in Montreal.

Mr. BLAKE. As the hon. gentleman has stated that it is of the highest consequence in the public interest that it should not be known where the troops north of Lake Superior are, of course I do not enquire further as to that. But we were told, when it was announced to us by the First Minister that this route was to be adopted, that there was a gap in the Canadian Pacific Railway of from seventy to seventy-five miles.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. That was a mistake.

Mr. BLAKE. A little later in the evening the Minister of Customs said a mistake had been made in that, and that there was one gap in the road of 42 miles. The First Minister also stated to us that the troops would reach Winnipeg by that route more quickly than they would by any other route. Now, the information I have received is that there is not one gap, but three gaps, and that the sum of the mileage of those three gaps is about 87 miles, being more than twice as much as the Minister of Customs said; and as they are divided into three parts, the troops will require three transfers, not one. The information I have also received is that the officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway say themselves that they expect the troops now on the railway to reach Winnipeg on Thursday, which would indicate that route to be not shorter, but much longer than any other route. As the statements the First Minister made when he informed the House of the adoption of this route appear not to be in accordance with this information either as to the mileage of the gaps, or the number of the gaps, or the length of time, I think, when the knowledge of these inaccuracies comes to him, he should give us the accurate information on the subject. In this connection, I would ask whether the hon. gentleman can say when he expects that the troops who started yesterday will reach Winnipeg. In the same connection I would refer to a statement made in the *Montreal Times* of to-day:

"The Government had occasion to forward from Kingston and Toronto a quantity of ammunition for the North-West by the Grand Trunk Railway to Chicago. Mr. Cable, President of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Company, on learning the facts, immediately placed, without charge, two cars, and made a special train for the speedy delivery at St. Paul of the war supplies. An act of kindness like this is not at all likely to be forgotten."

I would ask whether that statement is correct as to the transport of these munitions, and as to the kind action of the president of the company.

Mr. BOWELL. The statement that I made just before the House rose was made upon the authority of the president of the company. I made special enquiry as to the length our volunteers would have to travel to connect with the western section of the Canadian Pacific Railway and gave the information as I received it.