

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, December 10, 1867

The Speaker took the Chair at 3 o'clock.

BANKING AND COMMERCE

Mr. Street presented the 5th report of the Committee on Banking and Commerce. The Committee reported that they had had under consideration the Bill relating to the Civil Service Building and Saving Society, and that the question having arisen whether it was not a Bill that more properly belonged to the Local Legislature, they submitted it to the House for instructions on the subject.

COLLECTION OF CUSTOMS

Hon. Mr. Tilley introduced a Bill relating to the collection and protection of the Customs revenue.

Mr. Tilley said this was, in substance, the Act which had been in force in the late Province of Canada, with some alterations, rendered necessary for the working out of the system in the Maritime Provinces.

Hon. Mr. Holton asked if the Bill imposed any duties, or incurred any charge.

Mr. Tilley—No.

Mr. Holton said it was a very satisfactory Customs measure which imposed no duties and incurred no charge.

Mr. Tilley—It imposes penalties.

Mr. Holton doubted whether, in that case, the Bill could be introduced, except on the basis of the resolutions adopted by Committee of the Whole. The Government would have to take their risk of that.

The Bill was then read a first time, and ordered for a second reading to-morrow.

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE DEBATES

Mr. Mackenzie moved the adoption of the fourth report of the Printing Committee on the subject of an official report of the debates.

Mr. Mackenzie explained minutely the calculations on which the report was based, and stated that if the debates were to be reported, he was satisfied the work could not be done more efficiently or cheaply than according to the scheme reported by the Committee. The total expense for a session of twelve weeks, or sixty working days, would be \$12,019 for reports both in English and French—the printers furnishing daily 2,000 copies in broad sheets form, and 700 bound volumes, at the end of the session. Thirty-six hours would be allowed before the matter was put into book form, to allow members an opportunity of correcting verbal errors. He stated a proposition had been received from the proprietors of a Montreal newspaper, but the cost they estimated considerably exceeded that which the Committee reported as a maximum according to the scheme now submitted. He mentioned that all the other British Colonies had official reports of the proceedings of their Legislatures, and specifically mentioned those of New Zealand, as making a work very creditable in every respect. With reference to an attack which had been made on himself in an Ottawa newspaper, in connection with this matter, he said he treated that as he did everything else emanating from the same quarter, with the utmost contempt.

Mr. D. A. McDonald declared himself opposed to any official report. He thought it would only have the effect of unnecessarily lengthening the speeches of members and protracting the session.

Hon. Mr. Holton stated he was entirely in favour of the adoption of the report. He thought every one who attended to the business of Parliament must have felt the want of an authoritative record of the utterances of our public men.

Mr. Jones (North Leeds) opposed the report; he thought the reports would not be worth the expense.

Hon. J. S. Macdonald said if there was a Hansard there would be no end to speeches designed to fasten inconsistencies on public men.