

The 13th August was not only the day appointed for prorogation, but it was also the day to which the Committee of Inquiry had adjourned, but as far as I can gather from the subjoined Report of what occurred it came together to very little purpose. Indeed its whole procedure on this occasion is difficult of comprehension, in consequence, I suppose, of the meagreness of the only Report of what passed which I have been able to obtain. In the first place only four out of the five members were present, and eventually another, Mr. Dorion, withdrew in the middle of a discussion, leaving what are considered the Government members in a majority. One of these, Mr. Blanchet, then proposed that they should report their proceedings to the House. Mr. Blake, in amendment of this suggestion, moved the adjournment of the Committee, which was carried—the result being that when the House met at three o'clock, as had been arranged six weeks before, for the very purpose of receiving the Committee's Report, no Report of any sort or description was forthcoming. The following is the account of the proceedings referred to:—

“Ottawa, Aug. 13.

“The Pacific Committee met at 11.30. Present: Messrs. Cameron, Blanchet, Blake, Dorion.

“At the request of Mr. Blake, the Resolution passed by the Committee at last meeting—that the Committee cannot proceed without further instructions from the House, was read.

“Mr. Blake moved that the said Resolution be rescinded.

“Yeas—Blake, Dorion.

“Nays—Cameron, Blanchet.

“Resolution lost.

“After some conversation as to the Committee making a Report to the House,

“The Chairman said if Mr. Dorion and Mr. Blake were not in favour of making a Report, and withdrew because they thought no Report should be made, the majority of the Committee would not make any Report.

“Mr. Dorion said he wanted a Report to be made, but did not concur with the majority.

“The Chairman—All we propose to do is simply to Report our proceedings to the House. If you don't like that Report, we need not make any at all.

“Mr. Dorion—If I move any amendment, I would stop the report from being made.

“The Chairman—It is impossible for me to tell the result of merely reporting our proceedings to the House; but if you don't think any Report of our proceedings should be made, I have no objection that it be so resolved. My own impression is that as we reported all our former proceedings to the House, there is no objection to our also reporting those which have taken place since the last meeting of the House.

“Mr. Dorion said he would not interfere with such a step.

“The Chairman—Then I suppose it is so resolved, and we have completed our business.

“Mr. Blake—No, there is a quorum present, and any amendment is in order. I move that the House be asked to give such instructions to the Committee as will enable them to proceed with the inquiry.

“Mr. Dorion here withdrew from the room, and the motion was carried unanimously by Messrs. Cameron, Blanchet, and Blake.

“Mr. Blake inquired of the Chairman—Do you propose to give the House communication of this Resolution?

“The Chairman—Not unless you move it to be done.

“Mr. Blake—Do you propose to communicate any of the previous proceedings?

“The Chairman—I do not.

“Mr. Blanchet—I think we should report our proceedings. I move that the proceedings of the Committee since 17th May last be reported to the House.

“Mr. Blake—I move an amendment that the Committee adjourn till eleven o'clock to-morrow.

“Carried.

“Yeas—Blake, Cameron.

“Nay—Blanchet.

“The Committee then adjourned.”

A few hours after my arrival in Ottawa, Sir John Macdonald called upon me by appointment, and formally submitted the unanimous advice of my Ministers, that Parliament should be prorogued according to the announcement made by my authority