

the three gentlemen named had received from the country a larger allowance than they were entitled to. I am sorry to say that the Auditor-General seems to have taken very little trouble to inform himself about the proceedings of this House. I believe it is well known to many of my hon. colleagues that during nineteen days, including Sundays, in the first part of the last Session, I was absent from this House on account of illness. I came here on the 2nd of March, I believe, and was therefore not entitled to any indemnity during that time. When the House rose on the 7th of May I received from the cashier the amount I was entitled to, deducting the number of days that I had been absent. While I was temporarily absent from the House, a motion was made by the hon. member for Quebec County, seconded by the hon. member for Kent, which was carried, and which authorised

“The Accountant of this House to pay to C. J. Coursol, Esq., member for Montreal East, J. B. Mongenais, Esq., member for Vaudreuil, and Michael Patrick Ryan, Esq., member for Montreal Centre, the full amount of their indemnity as if they had been present in this House on the 12th of February last, in consequence of the severe illness which prevented those hon. members from attending their parliamentary duties.”

Two or three weeks after this order was passed, I received a regular cheque from the department for the balance of the pay which I had not received when I left the House to go to Montreal, and I saw no reason why I should not accept a cheque which this House had ordered to be paid. Now, I think it would be unfair to any member of this House that a mistake of this description should be allowed to go unrectified. Whether the House had a right to pass that motion I know not; but it was done, and it was done in my absence. I had heard that similar cases had occurred, and I had no reason to refuse that allowance when it was sent, three weeks afterwards.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. I am very glad the hon. member has called the attention of the House to this matter. I imagine the difficulty has arisen from the fact that the Auditor was not cognizant of the resolution that was passed by the House.

Mr. BLAKE. I have not seen the report of the Auditor-General, but if he has reported the report must mention that the payment in question was not made in accordance with the law. An Act of Parliament, and not a resolution of this House, prescribes the mode of payment of the Sessional indemnity. It is the Statute which provides the circumstances under which, and the amount which, a Member of Parliament shall receive, and a resolution of the House cannot alter that law. It is true that such resolutions have not unusually been passed, but they are none the less a violation of the law. If it is desirable to make provision for the payment of the indemnity in any other manner than now provided by Statute, the law should be altered.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. There are several cases where a resolution of the House has authorized special payments. If the Auditor was aware that the House had passed this resolution, though it was at variance with the law, it was proper for him to have made a note of the fact that it was by order of the House the payment was made.

Mr. PATTERSON (Essex). Of course, the rule laid down by the leader of the Opposition is correct, and I would remind the House that in the Session before last some members on the Opposition benches were recipients of their full indemnity on a similar resolution, and the Auditor-General failed to call the attention of the House to that fact.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman is quite incorrect. It was not until this year that the Auditor-General was authorized to deal with the accounts of the sessional indemnity.

Mr. COURSOL. I believe the Auditor-General, at all events, ought to have mentioned that the cheque which was sent to me, at Montreal, had been ordered by this House.

#### FACTORY LABOR.

Mr. BERGIN introduced a Bill (No. 6) to regulate the hours of labor in the workshops, mills and factories of the Dominion of Canada, and for other purposes.

Bill read the first time.

#### CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

The House again resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the Pacific Railway Resolutions.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman: on rising to speak to the motion before the Committee, I confess I feel more than usual the responsibility that rests upon me, in treating this question and answering the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake). This question of the Pacific Railway is one of the greatest, and, perhaps, the most important, that could occupy the deliberations of this House—perhaps the most important question that has ever been submitted to Parliament. Its importance is derived from the fact that this great subject has occupied the attention of this Parliament for the last ten years, and that the construction of this railway must lead to the greatest consequences, and, as I believe, the most happy consequences to this country. Its importance is also derived from the very magnitude of the subsidies in money and land to be given towards this undertaking. Its importance is derived from the fact that, although tenders were asked for some years for the same undertaking, no offers were received; but, to-day, we find capitalists that are bold enough to undertake the construction of this work, concerning which the Government, Parliament and the people themselves had great apprehensions, fearing that the amount of money required for the building of this road, in accordance with the old plan, would so cripple our resources that, for years and years to come, we could hardly undertake any other great work in this country. Its importance is derived from the fact that gentlemen of standing, of respectability, of large means, backed most likely by others of equal means, have come forward and have said to the Government: “We are ready to put ourselves in the position of the Government and to undertake the building of the Pacific Railway, and we will, moreover, work the railway, for all time to come, according to the terms we now submit to you.” These terms have now been laid before Parliament by Message from His Excellency the Governor General, and they are the subject-matter of our present deliberations. Before I enter into the consideration of the details of this measure, let me briefly go back to the time when this great undertaking was first mooted, and let us see what has been done from that moment up to the present time. Ten years ago, when British Columbia was admitted to the Confederation, one of the conditions of that union, according to the treaty between British Columbia and Canada, was the building of the Pacific Railway from the shores of the Pacific Ocean across the continent to connect with the Canadian system of railways. That measure was submitted to Parliament, and, after long discussion and deliberation, the scheme was adopted, and it was decided that British Columbia should be admitted into the Union on the conditions therein mentioned, of which the building of this railway was one. In 1872-3, the Government of Sir John A. Macdonald, presented to Parliament a measure providing for the building of the railway by a grant of \$30,000,000 and 50,000,000 of acres of land. The contract was given to a number of gentlemen who undertook to build the railway, but they failed in their negotiations, and, therefore, had to give up the contract. After the accession to office of the hon. member for Lambton, that hon. gentleman and his colleagues considered the question of building the Pacific Railway by some other measure than that offered by their predecessors. They wished