

May 7, 1872

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, May 7, 1872

The **SPEAKER** took the chair at 3.20 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE BUSINESS

A number of petitions were presented, among them one by **Hon. Mr. CARLING**, from Hon. Wm. McMaster and others, praying for an Act authorizing them to build a bridge for railway purposes across the Niagara River at a point between Fort Erie and Chippawa, and also to construct a tunnel under the said river.

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:

Mr. BLANCHET: To incorporate the Chamber of Commerce of Lévis.

Hon. Mr. TILLEY: To incorporate the Bank of St. John.

Hon. Mr. TILLEY: To incorporate the Maritime Bank of the Dominion of Canada.

Hon. Mr. GRAY: To do justice to the stockholders of the St. John and Holton Railway.

Mr. MACDONALD (Glengarry): To incorporate the Coteau and Province Line Railway and Bridge Company.

Mr. GIBBS: To incorporate the Missionary Society of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada.

Mr. GIBBS: To incorporate the Anchor Marine Insurance Company.

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RETURNS

Hon. Mr. TILLEY laid on the table a Return relating to seizures at Island Pond, and also a Return of seizures of goods belonging to A. Hamel, Jr., of the firm of Hamel Frères of Quebec.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD laid on the table a Return respecting the refusal of Judge Bossé to reside at Montmagny; also a Return to Address for correspondence between the Government and the Postmaster at Halifax respecting the abstraction of money letters from that office.

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TARIFF CHANGES

Hon. Sir FRANCIS HINCKS said he was about to give notice of a resolution upon a subject of great importance to the country, and he trusted the House would hear with indulgence the few remarks he felt it necessary to make in giving the notice. It was now about a week since he had had the honor of making his financial statement, in the course of which he had intimated, it would be remembered, that under certain circumstances, it would be absolutely necessary for the Government to propose a readjustment of the tariff—that changes would be imperative in case certain measures then pending before the Congress of the United States passed into law.

He believed it was only about forty-eight hours after the delivery of his speech that a telegram had been received announcing that the Bill to repeal the duties on tea and coffee had been passed by Congress; but it was not till last night that the Government had received authentic information that the President of the United States had actually signed the Bill, so that beyond a doubt these duties would be repealed on and after the 1st of July next. Now, persons engaged in the trade in the United States had been very seriously embarrassed for three or four months because of the uncertainty about the continuance of these duties; and if he could judge by the questions which had been put to him within the past few days great interest was excited in Canada as to the effect this repeal would have if we continued to impose duties on those articles.

In order to remove any apprehension therefore on this score the Government had resolved that on the 1st of July next the duties on tea and coffee shall be repealed (*Cheers and sensation*). He thought it was evidence of the superiority of our institutions over those of the United States that, while there had been protracted uncertainty in regard to the duties in the neighboring country, there would be no serious delay in ascertaining the intention of the Legislature of Canada (*Hear, hear*). He had the honour to give notice that on Tuesday he would move that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider a resolution 'that the duties on tea and coffee shall be repealed, after the 1st of July next (*Cheers*).