

June 12, 1872

amendments to the Quebec Pacific Railway bill.—Carried.

The amendments to the Imperial Guarantee bill were also concurred in.

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### SUPPLY

**Hon. Sir FRANCIS HINCKS** moved the second reading of the Supply bill.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE:** I should like to know what there is in this bill; I have never seen it. (*Laughter.*)

**Hon. Sir FRANCIS HINCKS** said the bill was a very little one. He would explain to the hon. member about the Indian Commissioners. There had been no mistake, as he (Hon. Sir Francis Hincks) had stated last night. It had been found absolutely necessary to send Mr. Simpson, the commissioner, to negotiate treaties with the Indians on the Saskatchewan, some hundreds of miles from Fort Garry, and he would consequently be absent from Fort Garry almost altogether. As this point was constantly visited by bands of Indians, it was found necessary to have a branch of the Indian Department there. The item was for the salary of the agent, \$1,000, and the expenses of the office.

With respect to the item of \$20,000 for British Columbia, very strong representations had come from British Columbia, pointing out the necessity for making provision for the Indians there. The amount asked for was given in detail; but inasmuch as the amount asked for includes items which the Government were not prepared to admit in principle, the Government thought it better to bring down a lump sum of \$20,000, which was considerably less than the sum asked for.

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### WELLAND CANAL CONTRACT

**Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN** said the hon. member for Lambton (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) had last night brought before the House a statement in a Roman Catholic newspaper, to the effect that a contract for the supply of timber on the Welland Canal had been given to one John Macdonald, who's tender was not the lowest. The hon. gentleman then quoted from the report of the engineer on these tenders, from which it appeared that although the tender of the Messrs. Phelps was the lowest, it was accompanied with conditions as to time of the delivery of the article, and as to prices and was not in accordance with the specifications, and he advised that Mr. Macdonald's tender should be taken.

It would therefore, appear that no preference had been shown to any one in this matter, as the law and the customs of the

Department had been strictly carried out. As the name of the member for Welland (Mr. Street) had been used by the same newspaper, he (Hon. Mr. Langevin) would take this occasion to deny that that gentleman had anything to do with the matter either directly or indirectly.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said that the statements in the paper proved to be substantially correct, the only difference being the condition asked as to the length of time to be given and the prices under certain circumstances. He contended that the Government should have told the parties that their tender must be unconditional, and if they had concurred, their tender should have been accepted.

**Mr. STREET** said that as he had been referred to by the newspaper, and as such statements were calculated to be a serious injury if not contradicted, he was glad that this explanation had been made. He denied that he had ever had anything whatever to do with the matter, and thought it had been clearly shown that no corruption had taken place.

**Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD** said the article in the newspaper was couched in most unfair and unfriendly language, insinuating improper conduct. The statement of Mr. Munroe, the responsible engineer, disproved anything of this kind. It showed that the engineer recommended the correct course, the only course which could be taken by the department in any case.

When tenders were put in, they should be put in in accordance with the terms and conditions of the call for tenders, and the contractors understood what this meant. It meant that if they were not made in accordance with these terms, they were altogether void. It was a trick of contractors to insert a small variation so as to make it possible to open negotiations, and one could see that if the department did not rigidly carry out a system of looking at the tenders, and tenders only, and seeing whether they were regular, the door would be opened to all kinds of favoritism.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said it would be quite apparent that the statement he had alluded to was correct. A list of prices had now been published and people could form their own conclusions from it. As to making any charge of corruption, he had never thought of anything of the kind.

**Hon. Mr. McDOUGALL (Lanark North)** thought that the hon. member for Lambton (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) hardly gave credit to the department for the very clear explanation that had been made. He (Hon. Mr. McDougall) would be glad if every case that came up in Parliament might be as clearly explained as this one had been. The engineer's statement was a proper statement to make, and the contract accepted was the proper contract to accept. He thought that so full an explanation having been made, the hon. member for Lambton, who was himself a