

"On a report of the 30th of May, 1883, from the Right Hon. Sir John Macdonald, stating that it would be necessary to appoint a High Commissioner in London in place of Sir Alexander Galt, whose resignation takes effect on the 30th of June, and that Sir Charles Tupper had consented to go to England to perform the duties of the office at present, without salary, Sir John Macdonald recommends that Sir Charles Tupper be appointed High Commissioner."

The commission framed on that Order in Council will be brought down, together with all the papers on the subject, and then if the hon. gentleman wishes to discuss the constitutional point and the expediency of carrying out the cast-iron rule that a Minister should not leave the country, then I will quite willingly discuss the matter and abide by any decision which the House may arrive at.

Mr. BLAKE. I never proposed to lay down the cast-iron rule that a Minister should not leave his office for any purpose. The hon. gentleman knows that he may challenge the opinion of the House on the question, for I do not know that a year has elapsed when Ministers have not left their offices; and we know that last year there was a perfect galaxy of Ministers in London at one time. For that reason I purposely abstained from raising that point. I do not say that there should not be a temporary absence for some particular purpose of health or public business; but the hon. gentleman has obviously felt that there is a difficulty—in fact, an impossibility—of justifying this arrangement as a permanent arrangement, for he has told us that it would be inexpedient as a permanent arrangement, and he justifies it only as a temporary arrangement. He says further that it is perhaps inexpedient that there should be an absence for a year, or during the whole period of the recess; but he says it is a question to be decided in each case by the circumstances; and when very serious public reasons called for the selection of a successor to our late High Commissioner, who was to proceed to England at once—and called, of course, for the selection of this particular person as the successor—he was justified in his opinion in proceeding. But the hon. gentleman went on to say that he would give us information as to the reasons for this appointment; and he read us an extract from an Order in Council which gave no such information. When he came to state the results of the hon. gentleman's mission, they were such as he described them to-day; and great as they may have been, remarkable as they may have been, wonderful as they may have been, they were those which the hon. gentleman did not take credit for foreseeing when he sent Sir Charles Tupper to England. It was not because he foresaw that there would be a difficulty about the live cattle trade that he sent the Minister of Railways—I beg his pardon, the High Commissioner; I am afraid we shall get into a number of difficulties of this kind this Session—that he sent the High Commissioner to England to display his knowledge of anatomy with relation to four-footed as well as two-footed animals. What was it for, then? What were the public, moving causes which led to an arrangement which the hon. gentleman indicates is merely temporary, to be justified only by some special reason? We have not heard them yet. But the hon. gentleman says: I will give you plenty of precedents—Lord Beaconsfield was at Berlin, Lord Salisbury at Berlin, and Lord Russell at Vienna, and Lord Castlereagh was at Vienna at an earlier period. But all these cases were different. As the hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie) pointed out, none of those gentlemen took offices under the Government, at all capable of being likened to the office of Canadian High Commissioner, as created by our Statute, and as related to the Departments of Government. When Lord Beaconsfield went to Berlin, was he to make a report to the analogue of the hon. Minister of Agriculture, who shows such little respect to our High Commissioner that he does not know whether

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he has received his report or not? Did either Lord Russell or Lord Castlereagh occupy such a position that a single Minister was to tell them what negotiations they were to undertake, or what they were to do? They occupied the highest places which a man can fill in the service of his country, except that of First Minister—and one of them was First Minister—the position of plenipotentiary acting on behalf of the country to complete a treaty—a transaction temporary in its nature, and of the highest possible consequence. The hon. gentleman says one of the members remained a long time. It is true, Lord Castlereagh remained a long time—because we know the condition of the continent at that time, when the question of the Holy Alliance was under consideration; we know the great convulsions that appertained to that time; we know the difficulties of the settlement over the Napoleonic relations; we know that there were great difficulties about precedence; we know there was a great deal for that diplomatist to do, and he took a great deal more time in which to do it than would be required to-day. Not at this conference, but at one in the Low Countries, were the difficulties such that it had to be held in a room with twelve entrances and a round table, so that there should be no question of precedence. But what we have to deal with is something of a more modern time; and if the hon. gentleman can furnish no apter precedent for the duties he has imposed on the High Commissioner of Canada than those he has cited, he has entirely failed in justifying, by precedent, if precedent were to justify, this transaction; and I doubt very much whether, when the papers come down, they will furnish more justification for it than his oral statement has done, or whether a further ventilation of the subject will prove this to have been a more expedient or constitutional course than it is shown to have been.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. BLAKE moved for copies of all correspondence relating to any payments, claims or allowances on any account whatever in respect of the office of High Commissioner, not already brought down, and separate statements, in detail, with dates and sums of all payments made on any such accounts in respect of the office, during its tenure by Sir A. T. Galt, and by the present incumbent respectively, and an estimate, in detail, of all sums payable on any such accounts, up to this date, and yet unpaid; also, for copies of correspondence as to the letting of a residence for the High Commissioner, and statement of the terms and of the sums payable for rent, taxes and other charges, in respect of such residence and the date of the letting.

Motion agreed to.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY GUARANTEE.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER presented a message from His Excellency the Governor General.

Mr. SPEAKER read the Message, as follows:—

LANDSDOWNE.

The Governor General transmits to the House of Commons for its information, correspondence relating to the guarantee by the Government of interest on the stock of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, so that means might be provided for the completion of the work by May, 1886.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

OTTAWA, 25th January, 1884."

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD moved the adjournment of the House.

Motion agreed to; and (at 6 o'clock, p. m.) the House adjourned.