

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, April 9, 1900.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

INQUIRIES FOR RETURNS.

Mr. NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN (West Assiniboia). Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to mention to the right hon. leader of the House (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) that there are two or three orders, made quite a while ago now, that have not been complied with, amongst them one calling for the correspondence between the Department of the Interior and Mr. Fred. White, the comptroller, and any person in the North-west Territories respecting contracts for supplying the North-west mounted police, more especially, with tea. There was an order made about six weeks ago, and no return has been brought down. I have been searching in the office. There was also an order made for a return in reference to the amounts paid for printing for the North-west Territories for ten years.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). It seems to me that has been brought down.

Mr. DAVIN. I have been upstairs, and I find that it has not been brought down.

The PRIME MINISTER. That is, two. I think the hon. gentleman said there were three.

Mr. DAVIN. There is a third, but it has escaped my memory for the moment. I found the order upstairs.

Mr. E. G. PRIOR (Victoria, B.C.) Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister of Militia and Defence (Mr. Borden) when we may expect the report of the Militia Department to come down, and whether, when it is brought down, it will contain the report of the Major General Commanding.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE (Mr. Borden). The report, I think, is in the printer's hands now and has been for several days. The report will contain such portions of the General Officer's report as I think proper to submit.

GASPE SHORT LINE RAILWAY.

Mr. R. LEMIEUX (Gaspé) moved the third reading of Bill (No. 70) to incorporate the Gaspé Short Line Railway Company.

Mr. G. E. FOSTER (York, N.B.) Mr. Speaker, I just wish to mention to the House, that, in reference to this Bill, I received, this morning, two telegrams, one from Gaspé and the other from Paspebiac. The purport of the telegrams is that docu-

ments were mailed yesterday to Ottawa, and asking if the Bill could be held over until they arrived. I do not see that anything is harmed by holding over the third reading, and we will see what they are. I do not know what they are. I just suggest to my hon. friend (Mr. Lemieux) that it would be well to allow the third reading to lie over until these documents come from Gaspé and Paspebiac.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I have received several petitions, within a month or so, favouring the purchase of this Baie des Chaleurs Railway by a good, sound company, from all parts of the county of Gaspé. I have received, also, petitions against the extension of any delay to the present company. The five years have lapsed for the construction of the Baie des Chaleurs Railway from Paspebiac to Gaspé Basin. This Bill has been discussed several times before the House, and I do not see why such opposition should be brought against the Bill. I have received a number of petitions, and the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Blair) has also received quite a number in favour of the Bill.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON (Three Rivers). The very reasons which my hon. friend (Mr. Lemieux) has given, the number of petitions which he has received from his constituency, and also the strong influence which is brought to bear on him as representing that constituency, are good reasons why we should not hesitate to allow the delay of a day for the purpose of seeing these documents. It would look, in the light of the information which the hon. gentleman has received, as if he wished to hasten the passage of the Bill without knowing exactly what these documents, which are sent forward, will disclose. They may possibly be in favour of the position taken by the hon. gentleman, and if they are not, the hon. gentleman, with the strong support which he has received already, must be quite convinced that he is running no great danger in allowing this short delay for the purpose of allowing these papers to be laid on the Table of parliament.

Mr. FOSTER. If there were anything lost by the delay I would not press it. But, I do not see that there is. I am not offering it any factious opposition at all.

Mr. LEMIEUX. If the documents coming from Gaspé and Paspebiac, which are expected by my hon. friend (Mr. Foster), are in favour of the Bill, I do not need to delay for them. If they are against the Bill, as I presume they may be, the parties who have signed these documents had ample opportunity of presenting themselves before the Railway Committee and of presenting their views during the week or so that the Bill has been before the House. I have waited a long time, and I think I should be given a chance of having my Bill