

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The Prime Minister may possibly remember that when some inquiry was made with regard to the irregularities that have taken place in the elections throughout the Dominion, the government at that time assented to the proposal that counsel should be appointed on both sides to represent, not only one side of the question, but also to bring forward and put into the hands of the commission any irregularities, any frauds, of which there was information in the possession of hon. gentlemen on either side of the House. So far as the present matter is concerned, it would appear that there are two considerations. One is the consideration of protecting the rights of the half-breeds; the other is the consideration of seeing that the public interests are protected in regard to all transactions with the Department of the Interior. Now, as to both of these features, I desire, as I presume it must be the desire of the government, to have a fair investigation and a fair consideration, but it is difficult to see how that can be accomplished unless the suggestion of the hon. member for Toronto is adopted. There should be counsel in whose hands information can be placed in regard to what has been alleged concerning the half-breeds, and also as to the alleged intention of this gentleman and those associated with him to utilize this Order in Council for the purpose of acquiring profit to themselves out of what was intended exclusively for the benefit of the half-breeds. I think my hon. friend has made a very fair proposal, and I would be inclined to think that the investigation could not be very thorough or satisfactory unless some such plan is adopted.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I have only to repeat what I said the other day, when the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) called the attention of the government to it, that we have not yet taken the matter into consideration. But I will think over the suggestion, and perhaps on Monday, if the hon. gentleman will repeat his question, I can tell him what we will do.

Mr. FOSTER. I would ask the Minister of the Interior to facilitate as much as possible the production of the papers asked for. There has been a lull of serious dimensions of late. I am not able to satisfy my desire for an examination so far as I would like to.

Mr. OLIVER. All right.

INQUIRY FOR RETURN.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I moved for two returns a while ago—one from the Department of the Interior with regard to grazing leases, and another showing the number of employees in the civil service appointed since 1896. Neither of these returns have

been brought down. I would like to know if the government can give us any information as to what rate of progress is being made in getting these out.

Hon. FRANK OLIVER (Minister of the Interior.) In regard to the return of grazing leases I am compelled to say that the return has been ready for some days and that it is owing to inattention on my part that I am not able to lay it on the table of the House to-day, but I can assure my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) that it will be here on Monday without fail.

Mr. SPROULE. In regard to the other I think the right hon. leader of the government (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) took a note of it a few days ago, but we have had no result since.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am sorry to say that we have not.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTHWEST.

House in Committee on Bill (No. 69) to establish and provide for the government of the province of Alberta.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

On section 2—British North America Act, 1867 to 1886, to apply.

Mr. MONK. I gave notice of an amendment to this section on the 15th of the present month. I will read the proposed amendment. It is proposed to add to clause 2 of the Bill the following paragraph:

Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the legislative assembly of the province and in the proceedings of the courts, and both these languages shall be used in the records and journals of such assembly and all laws made by the legislature shall be printed in both languages; provided, however, that the said legislative assembly may by law or otherwise regulate its proceedings and the manner of recording and publishing the same and the regulations so made shall be embodied in a proclamation which shall be forthwith made and published by the Lieutenant Governor in conformity of the law and thereafter shall have full force and effect.

The object of this motion, Mr. Chairman, is not, as some have supposed, to attempt to introduce the dual language into these two new provinces. Nor is it an attempt to force the French language upon the two new provinces. To describe the amendment in that way is a very incorrect proceeding. It is sought, on the contrary, by this amendment to maintain the constitutional provision in the law of the Northwest Territories which has always existed from time immemorial and it is also sought to secure the maintenance of the solemn agreement which was entered into when Rupert's Land was incorporated into and became a part of the Dominion of Canada. I would like to call the attention of the committee, because I would like to be as brief as pos-