

struck him as very singular, when compared with his conduct last year. There was scarcely a clause in the Assessment Act promoted by that hon. gentleman, relating to non-resident lands, which did not favour the speculator.

Mr. McKELLAR—In what respect?

Mr. FERGUSON said he would instance the clause with respect to statute labour, which was very favourable to those holding large tracts of land. The seconder of the motion said five years' taxes more than swallowed up the whole value of these lands. Would it be fair to subject them to still higher taxes? Up to last year, 10 per cent. was added on taxes unpaid by non-residents; but, so strongly did the member for Bothwell sympathise with them last year, that he reduced it to 8 per cent. After making some further charges against the member for Bothwell, Mr. Ferguson went on to say that he saw no necessity for the legislation that hon. gentleman now proposed. He denied that these lands were a bar to the improvement of the country; for, if it was true, as alleged, that they increased in value from the improvement of the neighbourhood, the assessor would take notice of that fact, and assess them accordingly, so that they would contribute their fair proportion for schools, roads, &c. The Canada Company had been spoken of. He could say of that company, that of all the corporations in the country, the Canada Company had ever been ready to pay its taxes. He thought the house should vote down this resolution, and allow every municipality to tax the lands within it as it pleased.

Mr. GIBBONS made some remarks about the history of the Canada Company, which he accused of having retarded the progress of his part of the country. When the people claimed that they should be compelled to sell their lands, the answer was, that vested rights could not be interfered with. If so, they could only be reached by taxation, and he hoped the assessment law would be altered to permit this to be done. They ought at least to be made to pay the taxes by the 1st of January, like other people, instead of 1st May; and also to pay the statute labour on separate lots, rather than on blocks. In the township of McKillop, they paid \$700 for statute labour; if they paid on the same principle as the settlers, it would be \$1,200. He would have all put on an equality.

Mr. WILSON said there was not a man in the house would object to the proposition of the member for South Huron that non-residents should pay the same taxes as residents and at the same time.

Mr. McCALL said that the proposition of the hon. member for Bothwell—who is doubt aspired to the Treasury Benches—was of such an extraordinary character that he (Mr. McCall) had lost confidence in that hon. gentleman (laughter), and would not vote with him on the motion before the house. The fact was that non-residents were already well taxed for their lands—in some cases even to a larger extent than residents. (Hear, hear). It was not in accordance with their free representative system or the genius of their people that this special discriminating legislation should take place.

Mr. MONTEITH said that if there was anything they had to be dissatisfied with in the country, it was that companies held large blocks of land in the country here and there, like the Canada company. He would say let them not impose a special tax, but let them amend their assessment law and make each separate parcel of land pay its full statute labour, and do away with the sliding scales. That would be the proper way of getting rid of the grievance. Under it the Canada Company, which now held a large section of his county in its thralldom, would soon have to release its grasp. Perhaps his county suffered more from that company than any other in the Province; and he for one, would not be prepared to go with the Attorney General unless that hon. gentleman came down with some measure on this principle. (Hear, hear).

Hon. J. S. McDONALD said that from the last speaker the house heard a very practical suggestion which would get rid of the difficulty before them. That hon. gentleman admitted that there was an evil here to be remedied. And he (the Attorney General) also admitted it. (Hear, hear)