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Mr. BLAKE—And the future.

Hon. Mr. WOOD proceeded to refer to some remarks of the hon. member for South Bruce at the Reform Banquet in the Music Hall, when he had pointed, as an example to the young men of the country, to one who had committed murder and was guilty of treason to his country and to his God.

Mr. McKELLAR rose to a point of order. The hon. gentleman was referring to remarks not made in the House.

Hon. Mr. WOOD intimated that he had only followed the example of the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. BLAKE said he had simply criticised the public conduct of hon gentlemen in the House.

Hon. Mr. WOOD said if the hon. gentleman wished to go into a history of the past, and would give notice, he for one was prepared to meet him and have a field day of it. (Laughter) He had always thought the land question was surrounded with great difficulties, and it was impossible to lay down a general principle by which justice could be done to all the settlers of the wild lands. Many of the Crown lands sold in 1855 and 1856, were in the poorer portion of the peninsula, and brought high prices in view of their fertility. But the School lands had been selected by the Commissioner, personally, from the best townships in the garden of Canada. The attack on the Commissioner of Crown lands, in reference to the Grammar School lands, had failed entirely.

Mr. BLAKE—Because he caved in. (Hear, hear.)

Hon. Mr. WOOD said the Commissioner had not considered it worth while to include the Grammar School lands, because he thought they were so exceedingly small.

Mr. BLAKE—He ought to have known better.

Hon. Mr. WOOD said the Commissioner had found out there were considerable arrears due on these lands, and Government had determined to include them in the resolutions. He thought it behoved the hon. gentleman opposite (Mr. Blake) to be more cautious in speaking of this question than he was upon a former one, when he referred to the award of the arbitrators.

Mr. BLAKE raised a point of order. The hon. gentleman had no right to refer to a former debate.

Hon. Mr. WOOD maintained that he had such a right, and that it was the custom in the English Parliament. In fact, the hon. gentleman had referred to another debate.

Mr. BLAKE—But that was the debate of another session.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—To be strict, the hon. gentleman has no right to read from the newspapers at all.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD—Yes, he had; it was from THE GLOBE. (Laughter)

Hon. Mr. WOOD warned the member for South Bruce to be cautious in speaking of these matters. He had not made much out of the Grammar School lands. As to the Common School lands, the price was fixed; there was no competition; the price being two dollars per acre. But one-fourth of this sum was returned, so that the purchaser paid only a dollar and a half. He would ask the hon. member for South Bruce if he knew of a single portion of the school lands in that county that was not worth \$2 an acre.

Mr. BLAKE—I do.

Mr. SINCLAIR—I have no doubt a large proportion of the school land in Bruce is worth \$2 an acre, but some of it is not worth \$1 50.

Mr. WOOD went on to say that the school lands in Bruce were among the richest in the Province. If any of it now unsold was put up at auction he ventured to say the hon. member for North Bruce would bid more than \$1 50 for it. If the facts he had stated were true, did it become the hon. member for South Bruce to stir up a feeling of dissatisfaction throughout the country merely for the sake of making a little political capital out of it? The hon. gentleman seemed to find some difficulty between arrears of principal and of interest.

Mr. BLAKE—Not at all; they are treated differently in the resolutions; that is what I complain of.

Mr. WOOD—I suppose the Commissioner has his own reasons for that. (Laughter) The principle that applies to one class of arrears certainly applies to the other.

Mr. BLAKE—Then alter the resolutions accordingly.

Mr. WOOD—The question is, how much is the land worth over and above a reasonable allowance for improvements, and considering also the profits derived from the occupancy of the land? Is it worth \$1 50 an acre? If so, then the whole of the land should be struck down to that sum; if it is \$5, fix it at that.

Mr. BLAKE—It is to be regretted that there was not a meeting of the Executive Council before these resolutions were brought before the House. (Laughter)

Mr. WOOD—I leave that matter to the Commissioner. The Commissioner must deal with these school lands as he deals with disputed questions in reference to any other lands. He must find out all the facts of the case, the nature of the soil in each instance, the location, and all other points that determine the value of land before he comes to a decision. And then all the papers connected with each case would be in the records of the Commissioner's office, and could at any time be examined by Parliament. It should be remembered that Lower Canada was interested, to a certain extent, in the proceeds of these lands, always reserving one fourth to be repaid to the several counties, and any interference or apparent interference in these proceeds should not properly be discussed in connection with the question before the House. If the hon. gentleman chose, let him bring up a separate and distinct resolution to the effect that the older counties should refund the money to these that are in arrears for school lands. But that had nothing to do with this question. The statute provided that these school lands should be sold at \$2 an acre, and it was not competent for them to remit a single dollar either of principal or interest. The proposition of the Government was fair and reasonable. No rule could be laid down applicable to all cases. The only just way was to consider each individual case upon its own merits.

Mr. SINCLAIR said he was quite willing to admit that as a general thing the school lands in North Bruce were valuable, and were purchased at a reasonable rate; though some of the lands were inferior. It was not, however, correct, as stated by the hon. treasurer, that all the school lands were sold for \$2 an acre. These lands comprised several town plots, which were sold at a higher price.

Mr. WOOD—I meant to have excepted the town plots, of course.

Mr. SINCLAIR said in reference to some of these town plots, if the Government made any abatement, it would be only justice to make some abatements in their case. The town plot of Southampton for instance had been sold very high, under the impression that it was going to be a Canadian Chicago. Some years ago a commissioner was sent up to value that plot, and instead of valuing it at \$2 an acre, they made something like \$120. If abatements were to be made this case should not be overlooked.

Mr. WOOD—You cannot give exact justice to every man in selling land: one man as a matter of course gets a better lot than others.

Mr. SINCLAIR said if the Government were going into a general inquisition as to the prices of lands in order to aid poor settlers, he did not see why they should confine their attention exclusively to school lands. He wished also to call the attention of the Government to the case of the settlers in North Bruce who had purchased Indian lands. They had paid a high price for these lands, and much of it was inferior to the school lands. The burden of supporting the Indians up there should not fall exclusively upon the settlers. He thought the Government should take possession of the Indian lands, and pay the Indians out of a fund for that purpose. No settlers in the whole Province deserved relief more than those who had settled on Indian lands in North Bruce, and if relief was not afforded them many of them would be obliged to leave their farms and the country.

Mr. A. W. LAUDER said he was glad to see that this question had at last been taken up in earnest, and he hoped no mere party considerations would be allowed to interfere with an equitable settlement of the matter. He hoped the Government would adopt some scheme by which all lands should receive relief alike.

Mr. SCOTT (Grey) said he agreed with the remarks of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and also with those of the hon. member for South Bruce. The latter had gone further than the Commissioner of Crown Lands, but he (Mr. Scott) was prepared to go with him. He considered that all classes of lands should participate in the relief, and

quite agreed with the hon. member for South Bruce that if the Commissioner should be armed with power in one case he should in all. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. OLIVER said that the Commissioner of Crown Lands had stated that the Government would not use the power they sought for to further their political prospects. It was very extraordinary that this House should be called on by the Government to pass this measure just on the eve of an election. (Hear, hear.) The course of the Government was very significant. The matter was evidently a blind, or it would be better understood by the members of the Government, who contradicted each other on the details. The real object was to dangle prospective relief before the eyes of the poor people of the Province for the next six months, and then there would be nothing more heard of it for three years to come. (Hear, hear.)

It now being six o'clock the House rose for recess.

After recess,

Mr. OLIVER resumed the debate. He said the House had been called upon without sufficient information being given it to delegate extraordinary powers to the Government. This was the greatest attempt that had yet been made to procure the power to expend money without affording any information as to details. If this scheme were pushed through in its present shape it would not be strange if certain gentlemen were found doing missionary work among certain of the constituencies before next elections. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He would be glad to vote a sum for the relief of these settlers, provided it were not a large one.

Mr. McKELLAR said that although his constituency was not greatly interested in this matter, yet it was interested in the general prosperity of the country. There was not a subject of much greater importance than the one now under discussion. This subject was one which he himself and his friends on this side of the House had brought up before; they had brought it up at the first session of this Parliament, and it had recurred at every subsequent session. He was aware that there were large arrears—the exact amount had been stated by the hon. member for South Bruce. He was also aware there was a large number of people that were in great distress, and who were unable to pay for the land they had purchased. He thought it was an act of justice to these people and the whole country that their case should be considered. But when he looked at these resolutions, and found that the Commissioner of Crown Lands had only taken up two classes of these lands, he (Mr. McKellar) was very much surprised. The Commissioner only proposed to deal with the Crown, clergy and grammar school lands. Now, the arrears of the grammar school lands were comparatively small; and while he went heartily with the Government in dealing with these lands, he was anxious to go further in the common school lands. He failed to see any force in the arguments of the Government not to deal with that class of lands. It was said they were trust funds; but these funds had been abolished; there were no such funds now, for the funds for the schools were to be taken out of the consolidated revenue of the country. But, supposing they were trust funds, were we for that reason to stand by idly, in the case of the settlers on the common school lands, while doing justice to those on the Grammar School and Clergy Reserve lands? Why, what did it matter to the Common Schools whether the money were taken out of the pockets of the settlers, or out of the general funds of the province? If we did justice to these people—if there were a deficiency—whatever we remitted to them we could take out of the general funds of the province; and whatever was to be due our Lower

Canada friends we could supply out of the general funds of the province. We should do justice to those people, for it was our duty. He would certainly advocate the extension of the principle the Commissioner had inaugurated. He hoped they would have the sense of the House on it if the Government did not yield; but they would yield, for there was scarcely a measure they did not yield on when pressed. He would have a vote on the amending of those resolutions, so that those settled on the Common Schools lands should be included in this measure of relief. One of the arguments that the Government used was that these lands were so very good that no reduction would be required. Well, then, if a very large portion of these lands were so very good, why should the Government object to deal with them? (Hear, hear)