

LEGISLATURE OF ONTARIO

SECOND PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

THURSDAY, Feb. 27.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PETITIONS PRESENTED.

The following petitions were then presented:—

By Mr. McRae, of Archibald Carmichael *et al*, of Eldon; of Robert Armstrong *et al*, of Kirkfield; and of David Galloway *et al*, of Ayton, severally praying for certain amendments to the Bill now before the House to amend the Act incorporating the Toronto and Mississauga Railway Company.

THE INDIAN LANDS.

Mr. PRINCE moved that the House do resolve itself into a Committee to consider the following resolution:—"That it is desirable that the management of the Indian lands in Ontario be transferred to the Government of this Province, and that such steps shall be taken as would induce that result." In making the motion, the speaker said that he would first of all read a petition which he had received on the subject from the County of Essex, which set forth that the Indian reserve lands there were covered with valuable timber, which was being recklessly destroyed—that the roads were uncared for, and some of them impassable. There were other petitions that he had received on the matter, all asking that the Government should take such steps as would lead to their having control over the lands, not with a view to their sale only and the money being kept in trust for the Indians, but that the timber should be preserved and the roads kept open; also, the lands should pay taxes in aid of the revenue of the country. For these and other reasons he asked the House to agree to the resolution.

Mr. CROOKS said the subject which his honourable friend from Essex had drawn the attention of the House to was a very important one. He proceeded to describe the relation in which the Government stood to the Indians, and pointed out that the Crown at present had the management of these lands. He thought that settlement and civilization would be aided by a reform in the management of the Indian lands. He could not see why the Crown could not be prevailed upon to give to the Province the control of the Indian lands in this portion of the country. For he was sure such a course would result favourably to the advancement of civilization.

Mr. SINCLAIR said he knew the Indians were willing to sell their right in the lands still held by them for twenty five cents an acre. He could not see that the Dominion Government would have any objection to make a transfer of the management of the Ontario Government. He thought a portion of the surplus would be well used in acquiring those lands, which could be sold on easy terms to intending settlers. They could be sold for more than they were bought for. An expenditure of \$40,000 or \$50,000 would be sufficient. The correspondence brought down showed that the Department at Ottawa was willing to entertain a proposition from this Government. It would be in the interest of the Province as a whole that these lands should be purchased. The Indian Department was not so anxious to settle these lands as this Province would be. The return was not as full as he had expected. Some of the information asked for was not given by the Ottawa department. The Indians had not been as well able to advance themselves as might have been desired. He thought the guardianship exercised over them as minors was keeping them down. If they were obliged to work for their living they would probably get along in the world better than they now did and more in the manner in which it was desirable that all Christians should advance themselves.

Mr. SCOTT (Grey) said that last year he attended a deputation to the Indian Department at Ottawa, and the result of it was that a person was sent to re value the lands on the Indian Peninsula and put them at as low a figure as possible. He had not seen the report yet, but he thought at the time that there was a disposition on the part of the Dominion authorities to obtain control over the Indian lands. He trusted that in the surplus distribution the claims of the Indian Peninsula and townships to a share of the money would not be overlooked. He paid a

compliment to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the care with which he managed the Indian lands, and trusted that the resolution of the hon. member for Essex would meet with the approval of the House.

The resolution was then carried.

THIRD READINGS.

The following Bills were read a third time and passed:—

Mr. Bethune—Bill to amend the Upper Canada Jurors Act so as to provide for the payment of Special Jurors.

Mr. Fraser—Bill to provide for the Recovery of Costs in undefended actions of Ejectment.

Mr. Fraser—Bill to compel by subpoena the attendance of Witnesses before Arbitrators.

Mr. McDonald—Bill to amend the Act passed in the thirty-first year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and chaptered thirty one, in reference to Joint Stock Road Companies.

Mr. Bethune—Bill for the protection of persons improving land under Mistake of Title.

Mr. Wells—Bill to remove certain doubts as to the powers of the proprietors of the Toronto Street Railway, and to incorporate them and others under the name of "The Toronto Street Railway Company," and for other purposes.

Mr. Robinson—Bill to increase the Capital Stock of the City of Kingston Water-Works Company, and to amend the Act of incorporation of the said Company.

Mr. Tooley—Bill to enable the London Freehold and Leasehold Land Benefit Building Society, and the London Union Savings Loan and Permanent Investment Society, to amalgamate with the Agricultural Investment Society and Savings Bank.

Mr. Wood (Brant)—Bill further to amend the Act Incorporating the Norfolk Railway Company.

Mr. Clarke (Norfolk)—Bill to authorize the Law Society of Ontario to admit Charles John Fuller as a Barrister-at-law.

Mr. Farewell—Bill to provide for the permanent establishment of certain side lines in the Townships of Whitby and East Whitby.

Mr. Cameron—Bill to incorporate the Toronto Gravel Road and Concrete Company.

SCHOOL LANDS.

In resuming the debate on the resolution concerning the School Lands of the Province,

Mr. LAUDER said that he trusted the Commissioner, if he could not adopt the valuations made, would, at least, adopt a scale by which some approach to the proper valuations might be made. However, after what the Commissioner had stated yesterday, he would let the matter stand at present, but he hoped that before the House met again these matters in reference to the school lands would be all settled. He thought some of the valuers in the Northwest were not competent men.

Mr. FERGUSON said that the valuations in his part of the country were altogether too high, and that the valuers were unfit for their duties. He did not, however, blame the Government for these appointments, but those honourable gentlemen who had recommended them.

Mr. McMANUS took issue with the previous speaker that the valuers in Cardwell were incompetent. On the contrary, though the valuations might be a little high, they were uniform, and, in the main, correct.

Mr. FERGUSON explained that he meant no disrespect to Mr. Hampton in saying what he had in regard to his valuations, but at the same time he did not think he properly understood the duties of the office to which he had been appointed.

Mr. McMANUS said that if Mr. Hampton had supported the member for South Simcoe in his election he would have been all right. (Hear, hear) Mr. Hampton had opposed him (the speaker), but still he liked justice to be done.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said Mr. Hampton had been highly recommended to him as well suited to the duties to be assigned him. He had been associated with Major Shaw, a gentleman in whom he had the most unlimited confidence, and who had discharged his duties with an integrity which he fully appreciated. Hon. gentlemen should not claim that the valuations were too high and at the same time say that the action of the Government was reckless and extravagant. For the last five years a wail had been going up from this House that the settlers were being ground down, and that the policy of