

NORMAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. TOOLEY asked whether it was the intention of the Government during the present Session to make provision for the erection of a Normal School in Western Ontario, and if so where the school was to be located.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said it was not the intention of the Government during the present session to make provision for the erection of a Normal School in Western Ontario.

MUNICIPAL LOAN FUND DISTRIBUTION.

Mr. CRAIG (Glengarry) asked whether any distribution of the Municipal Loan Fund Adjustment would take place this year, and if not, when such a distribution was likely to be made.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said the distribution of the Loan Fund Adjustment would take place this year. The money was ready for the parties whenever they applied for it. (Hear, hear.)

FREE GRANT DISTRICTS.

Mr. LAUDER moved for a return showing the numbers of various lots, with concessions and townships, which have been located in the free grant districts during the years 1872 and 1873, giving the names of such locatees, with the dates of settlement; the said return to show whether or not the said lots have been abandoned by such locatees. He said he thought it important they should have this information before being called upon to vote more money in aid of this system. They had paid a great deal of money for surveys and other works, and it was desirable before they made further grants they should see what had been the result of former expenditures. Another reason why he asked for this return was that they saw going on in the newspapers a good deal of discussion by gentlemen who seemed to know something of the free grant districts. These gentlemen represented that the scheme was a failure, that the free grant lands had not been taken up by those they were intended for, and that many persons were dissatisfied with the lands they received, and had gone to the United States. He (Mr. Lauder) saw one statement to the effect that a very large number of Germans had left at one time through dissatisfaction. They found other gentlemen contradicting the statement, and saying in reply that the German settlers were not dissatisfied with the free grant districts. He considered it was important they should know who was telling the truth, and whether these lands were permanently occupied, or whether they were abandoned by the locatees. The House ought to know whether the free grant districts were a success or not. He thought the experiment of the township of Ryerson had been found to be a failure. However, the present Government was not altogether to blame, as the scheme was initiated by the previous Administration. Whether it was intended to pursue this scheme by the present Government was a matter for future consideration. The return he had asked for would prove a great benefit, and would settle the disputes and show what had been the result of the expenditure upon this system.

Hon. Mr. PARDEE regretted that the hon. member for South Grey should even suggest that the free grant system had been a failure simply upon a casual statement in the newspapers by some discontented correspondent. If his hon. friend only took the pains to look at the reports brought down by his (Mr. Pardee's) predecessor, or wait for the return which would be brought down this year, he would find that the system had not only not been a failure, but had been a decided success. (Hear, hear.) Large portions of the good lands had been taken up and settled; and he was happy to inform the House, and through the House inform the country, that the settlers were generally doing well and were well satisfied with their own condition and progress. (Cheers.) The hon. gentleman would find the information he desired upon pages 65 to 69 of the report for 1872, where the number of townships settled, the number of persons located, the number of purchasers, and the number of acres purchased were shown. His hon. friend, in addition to this, wanted to know the concession, the number of the lot, and the name of the person settled upon that lot. The Government had no reason for withholding the information asked for, but to procure it would cause a good deal of expense and take up a great deal of time. He therefore submitted to his hon. friend that the report of '72 was good for all the information he desired, and surely it could not be an object of interest to the House or the country to know the names of the parties settled upon the free grant lands. He re-

peated that the Government had no object in refusing the information, but if the hon. member insisted upon having it, upon him let the responsibility of the trouble and expense rest.

Mr. CAMERON said it was only necessary to get the information from me for already in the possession of the Government, and the expense could not be great, as it would merely consist in some amount of copying. There were statements abroad to the effect that in some places at least the free grant system had not been all that it was stated to be. He hoped those statements were incorrect; indeed, he believed they were incorrect. (Hear, hear.) But the return asked for would not cost much, and he hoped it would be of such a nature as to entirely dispel any doubts that might exist upon the subject.

Mr. BOULTER said the free grant system in his part of the country had not been a failure. (Hear, hear.) He did not find one family out of five hundred who wanted to make any change. (Hear, hear.) He commented upon the difference between the settlements on the old Hastings road and the section of country adjoining, and the settlements upon the lands now set apart for free grants. He would like to see some more townships in the rear of his part of the country set apart for free grant purposes; and he mentioned one case within his knowledge in which there were no less than 50 settlers in one township. His experience of free grant lands was that there were portions of them poor, but there was always enough to furnish settlement for a large population, and those who had so settled were generally doing well and were highly satisfied. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. DEACON pronounced the free grant policy a complete success so far as his experience of it went, and he assured the House that he should be very sorry to hear that it had turned out a failure in any other part of the country. He had no doubt that it would turn out that many lots of land located at one time had been abandoned but that had always happened, and would always happen in future. Sometimes the settler was mistaken in the quality of the land he had selected, and sometimes it was abandoned on account of the unfitness of the settler to cultivate it properly. We laboured under a difficulty with respect to the licensing system which was very injurious to successful settlement; but for this neither the present Government nor their predecessors were responsible. Sometimes the interests of the settlers and the license holders clashed, and he advised the Government to take into consideration some plan whereby, in those townships which are being settled, the license holders should be restricted to the cutting of red and white pine, and not permit them to take such timber as cedar, ash, and such other kinds as were most valuable for farm use. He would be sorry should the return asked for tend to show that the free grant system had been in any measure a failure, and he repeated that, so far as he was concerned, he thought it had been a complete success. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. DEROCHE said the free grant townships in the district he represented had been quite a success. (Hear, hear.) The few failures which had occurred arose as a rule from the faults of the parties themselves, and not from the working of the system. He agreed with the remarks of former speakers as to the mischief which arose from the present state of the licensing system; but he defended the expenditures which had been made by the Government for colonization roads in the rear townships, and asserted that no money could be better expended than that spent in this way. He hoped the free grant system would be extended, and showed that by so doing the sons of farmers who were unable to purchase land for their families would be kept in the country, and would not go to the Western States of the Union, as they did sometimes at present. He hoped the Government and the House, in dealing with those people, would be as liberal as possible, and he had no doubt but the return, when it came down, would prove that the system so far had been eminently successful. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. McCALL said the House and hon. members should be very careful not to allow the idea to get abroad that the free grant system was a failure. He had the best information upon the subject, and he declared that that information justified him in asserting that the system in Muskoka and Parry Sound, and other similar districts had been a splendid success. (Hear, hear.) He also was opposed to the evils which arose from the license system, and hoped they would be remedied.

Mr. READ also gave his testimony to the