

AGAINST PUBLIC MORALS.

such as abusive language, cursing and swearing. In organized territories the municipal councils have the right to provide by by-law for the punishment of such offences. I think it is most desirable that a bill be passed placing people living in unorganized territory on the same footing, and give them the same rights as are enjoyed where municipal government is in force. This is a matter the people complain of very much, and I think, justly. In Algoma there is no provision made by statute for the collection of school rates in unorganized territory on non-resident lands. Nor are there any means of enforcing statute labour or collecting its equivalent. There are large tracts of lands taken up as mineral lands, which are really good agricultural lands. These lands are held for speculation, and are

NOT LIABLE FOR SCHOOL RATES

or statute labour; and whilst the actual settler is building school houses and constructing roads through those very lands, thereby improving the country and enhancing the value of those lands, not one cent can be collected for school rates or roadwork. I consider this very unreasonable and unjust to the settler. That country is only thinly settled, and it is with great difficulty that the schools are kept open, and in many instances the people are only able to keep them open six months in the year. I trust that the Government will give this matter due consideration, and pass a bill making it compulsory for the non-resident owners of lands to pay school rates and perform statute labour, and in the event of that not being done, have those lands returned to the sheriff and sold at the end of three years with ten per cent. interest added. Thus a great benefit will be conferred on the people living in unorganized territory. Education will be promoted and the roads very much improved in that district. I desire to draw the attention of the House to the

TWO CENT LAND TAX

in Algoma. I do not think that this tax should have been applied to resident lands in that district; the actual settlers in Algoma feel this tax to be a great burthen to them. No such tax is charged in any other district or county in the Province, and why in Algoma? It cannot be because there is no revenue derived from that district. There are large sums received by the Government from the sale of mineral lands and timber, also from Crown Lands, licenses, etc. I consider it unfair to impose a tax on the settlers of Algoma; that district—not all good land it—is intersected with mountains, lakes, muskegs, and rivers, and consequently cannot be thickly settled. I believe it is in the interest of this Province that every encouragement should be given to the actual settlers in our new districts. A great number of our young men are leaving our Province every year and going to the Northwest Territories and the Western States, and we are not only losing our best settlers, but the Province is being drained of its cash. The settlers in Algoma are nearly all from other portions of this Province, men who are well acquainted with clearing land and farming in a new district, and I claim that those are much better settlers than any foreigners we can get. We have millions of acres of wild lands awaiting settlement, and, comparatively speaking, of little value until it is cleared and cultivated. The expenditure of colonization road money has done much to advance the settlement, and although we cannot complain of the liberality of the Mowat Government in this respect, we hope to see more liberal grants in the future than in the past. The more roads that are opened up into good sections of agricultural lands the more settlers we will get located in our new district.

RAILWAY CONNECTION

is very much wanted in eastern Algoma. When I came to this house I had to travel 150 miles by team, and not one team only; we had to have three teams so that when one team got tired we put another ahead, and ploughed through the snow at the rate of three miles an hour. I was four days in reaching a railway station. It is estimated that the population on Manitoulin Island, Barrie, Cockburn, and St. Joseph Islands, and the North Shore from Sault Ste. Marie to French River, is 25,000, and these people are from 100 to 300 miles from a railway. Is there as large a population in the whole Province without railroad communication? I am sure it is in the interests of every section of our Province that our wild lands should be settled, and our mines developed. The construction of a railway through Eastern Algoma will promote the settlement of that district much more rapidly than anything else. With regard to mineral lands, it is a question in my mind whether it would not be better to abolish

THE TWO CENT LAND TAX

on mineral lands, as well as on agricultural lands in unorganized territory in Algoma. I am informed that at the last tax sale only one-fifth of the taxes then due was realized, although 350,000 acres were offered for sale. Some of those lands sold as low as six cents per acre. They are bought by people who will neither pay the taxes nor develop the mines. The Government have received one dollar per acre, and reserved the pine timber on those lands, the purchaser in nearly every case making the surveys. The parties who originally purchased those mineral locations have expended large sums of money in developing those mines, and I consider that where substantial expenditure has been made the taxes should either be reduced or remitted in full. There is a ten per cent. penalty payable in advance on the 1st Jan. each year, and if not paid is compounded, and doubles itself in six years. If this penalty was struck off and a reduction of fifty per cent made on the taxes now due on condition of prompt payment, and the tax reduced to one cent per acre, I think this would meet the views of most of the owners of mining lands in Algoma, and this would encourage the

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINERAL LANDS

in that district which is so essential to the prosperity and advancement of not only Algoma but the whole Province. I hope that the Government and the members of this House will grant the necessary legislation to meet the requirements of the people living in unorganized territory, and thereby assist and encourage the settlement and development of Algoma. (Applause.)

Hon. O. MOWAT—The Government have already had under consideration most of the subjects referred to by the hon. member for East Algoma. Algoma is entitled to our attention and has received special attention from the Government.

Mr. MEREDITH—About election times.

Hon. O. MOWAT—The hon. gentleman may confine his interest to election times, but we are interested there all the year round. The administration of justice is one of the subjects referred to, and the difficulties attendant on this referred to as one of the evils under which the people of the territory suffered. One arises from the difficulty in reaching the Sault where the officers of justice are, where the gaol is, and petition has come to hand largely signed suggesting an alteration of the division line between the Thunder Bay District and Eastern Algoma. The Government has considered the application and decided to remove the line from 65 degrees west longitude to 67 degrees. This will remove, as far as possible, the evils referred to. As to the taxes on Algoma lands it must be admitted that the tax of two cents an acre has operated injuriously, the amount yielded has been small, and it has been difficult to collect. We have come to the conclusion that the amount, as regards some, should be reduced, and to others be abolished. The lands occupied by actual settlers will be free from taxes, and other lands will be taxed one cent per acre, and that one cent we propose to give to support the schools in the district, so that practically the only taxes reserved will be applied to school purposes. This is embodied in a Bill introduced by the Treasurer.

Mr. MEREDITH—What about the arrears?

Hon. A. M. ROSS—We propose to print a list in The Gazette of the arrears, and give a discount of 50 per cent. if paid in a certain time.

Mr. MEREDITH said that the arrears on lands occupied should be remitted.

Hon. A. M. ROSS said the Bill proposed to remit all the taxes on land actually occupied.

Mr. MEREDITH generally approved of the measures suggested, but thought the Government should be careful they did not spend too much on the Administration of Justice in Algoma.

Mr. CONMEE said he was surprised to find Mr. Meredith advocating retrenchment in Western Algoma. When he was in the territory he advocated a more liberal policy, and told the people that the Government did not spend enough money there. He himself thought the Government did not spend enough.

Mr. ERMATINGER thought the amount realized from arrears should be devoted to improvements in the district.

The motion was withdrawn.

EXEMPTIONS.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton) moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Assessment Act. After alluding to the fact that the assessment for real property was \$400,000,000 and personalty \$25,000,000, and the difficulty of properly assessing the latter class of property, which included income, he said the Bill proposed to raise the exemption for income to \$1,000. Circumstances had