

# A BLAST FROM THE NORTH

## DEPUTATIONS IN REGARD TO THE PROPOSED JUDICIAL DISTRICTS.

### Rivalry For the Positions of Judicial Centres—Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, Huntsville and Bark's Falls to Present Their Claims—A Proposed New County With Orillia as the Chief Town.

Because of the proposal to create two judicial districts out of Parry Sound and Muskoka a mighty host from the North descended upon the Government Wednesday. The questions to be decided by the Government are:—How many judicial districts are to be created, what are to be the boundaries of them, and what places are to be the judicial centres—Bracebridge, Gravenhurst, Huntsville and Bark's Falls each claiming this honor—and finally to what extent, if any, are these districts to be given municipal powers. The scheme for the creation of a new county, with Orillia as its centre, is related to these plans because it is proposed to include in it a portion of the District of Muskoka.

#### THE ORILLIA SCHEME.

The Attorney-General, Hon. A. M. Ross and Hon. G. W. Ross were interviewed yesterday by a large deputation, who urged upon them the formation of a new county, to be formed of portions of Simcoe, Ontario and Muskoka, with Orillia as the county seat. They were introduced by Mr. Drury, M.P.P. for East Simcoe. Mr. J. B. Thompson, Mayor of Orillia, presented Mr. Mowat with a map, in which the new county was made up thus:—The Townships of North and South Orillia, Matchedash, Medonte and Tay and part of Oro, the Village of Midland and the Town of Orillia; from Muskoka, the Townships of Morrison, Muskoka, Medora, Gibson and Baxter; and from Ontario the Townships of Mara and Rama. When the Mayor said that it was proposed to call the new county "Mowat," the Premier smiled and said it was hardly fair to take advantage of his vanity in that way. The Mayor went on to say that the present County of Simcoe was much too large, and that its Council, composed of 57 members, was unwieldy. The attendance of witnesses, jurors and County Councillors at Barrie was an expensive and troublesome matter. At Orillia there were the Northern and Midland railways, and the C.P.R. would soon pass either through or near the town. The distance between Barrie and Orillia was 27 miles, and between Barrie and Collingwood, 35 miles. The people of Rama and Mara Townships, which they proposed to take from Ontario, did all their business in Orillia, and it was a hardship to compel them to go to Whitby as their county town.

Ex-Mayor McCosh, of Orillia; Peter Thompson, Reeve of Mara, and Archibald Thompson, Reeve of Orillia Township, also spoke in favor of the new county.

Mr. Mowat said that if any scheme was adopted it would first have to be submitted to the ratepayers, and he asked the deputation to leave with him a statement of the facts and figures by which they support the proposal.

In reply to a question from one of the deputation, Mr. Mowat said that the Government proposed this session to make temporary judicial arrangements regarding Parry Sound and Muskoka, pending a permanent arrangement, and give them the right to exercise some of the powers of County Councils if they desired it. The arrangement would be merely provisional, and they did not propose, for in-

stance, to put them to the expense of erecting county buildings.

#### THE DISTRICTS HEARD FROM.

After the House adjourned and some other deputations had been heard the Council-room was filled by the deputations from various portions of Muskoka and Parry Sound. They were introduced by Mr. Armstrong, M.P.P. for Parry Sound, and Mr. Marter, M.P.P. for Muskoka. Among those present were the following:—

From Bracebridge—Reeve S. Armstrong, Jas. Boyle, J. W. Dill, Geo. Spencer.

From Gravenhurst—Isaac Cockburn, J. McNeill, J. H. Lovering, Geo. Longford.

From Huntsville—L. E. Kinton, Reeve of Bracebridge; John Armstrong, Reeve of Chaffey; Dr. Howland, J. W. Bettes, ex-M.P.P. for Muskoka; George Paget, J. W. Jacobs, F. W. Clearwater, Huntsville Forester; W. Wright, Capt. Denton, R. Godolphin, F. Francis, R. Ballantyne Sinclair, R. Scarlett, H. S. May, Arthur Baines.

From Bark's Falls—A. R. Town, J. P., chairman of delegation; Hugh Hunter, Reeve of Armour, E. O. Taylor, James Sharp, R. H. Menzies, W. A. Kelsey.

There were also present:—Geo. Draper, Spencer; W. Wiared, Morrison; Geo. Morrison, Reeve of North Hansworth; Reeve Muir, of Strong; Wesley W. Brisbane, Sundridge; Wm. Ramsay, Franklin; Wm. Gray, Reeve of Brunell; A. McGillivray, Navarre; Thomas Scott, Reeve of Humphrey; Reeve Wilson, of Cardwell; Angus Morrison, Reeve of Muskoka Township; Moses Dickey, Reeve of McLean and Ridout; Reeve Langford, of Macaulay.

#### THE GRAVENHURST MEETING.

L. E. Kinton, Reeve of Bracebridge, was the first speaker. He informed the Premier of the result of a meeting of Reeves and Deputy-Reeves held at Gravenhurst last night, of which he was chairman. The meeting unanimously resolved that they were strongly opposed to any movement for municipal government in the districts until the people feel themselves strong enough to bear the burden of county taxation.

Mr. Mowat said that the Government did not propose to put the people to the expense of erecting county buildings. The question was whether they should authorise the Reeves and Deputy-Reeves to meet and agree upon carrying out works of general utility to the district.

A somewhat desultory conversation followed, in which Messrs. McNeil, Brisbane, Armstrong and others took part. There was some disagreement upon the question of whether the Reeves should be given the powers suggested by Mr. Mowat. The question of the selection of the centres of the judicial districts was not touched upon, the idea being that the claims of each place are to be presented separately to the Government.

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