

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 24, 1868

The Speaker took the Chair at 3 o'clock.

G. T. DENISON AND THE GEORGIAN

Mr. Morrison presented a petition from George Taylor Denison, of Toronto, praying compensation for damages caused by the improper seizure of the steamer Georgian.

ECONOMIZING

Hon. Mr. Rose gave notice that he would introduce on Friday a Bill to regulate and restrict the contingent charges of the Department of Public Service.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CANADA

Hon. Mr. Langevin moved the second reading of the Bill respecting the Department of the Secretary of State for Canada.

Hon. Mr. Holton said he had understood that all the Bills for the organization of the Department would be brought up together, and that the whole policy of the Government on the subject would then be brought under the review of the House. Not seeing the leader of the Government in his place he would suggest whether the Bill might not be postponed.

Hon. Mr. Cartier said the Minister of Justice did not desire the discussion referred to be brought on in the absence of their two colleagues, Messrs. Howland and Tilley, who at present could not attend on account of illness. He hoped, however, this Bill might be allowed to be proceeded with, as it was for the organization of an old Department, and the discussion as to the constitution of the Department generally would, with more propriety, be raised in connection with the new Department.

Hon. Mr. Langevin then proceeded to repeat the explanations he had given of this Bill in the early part of the session on introducing it. He stated that the Secretary of State for Canada would have, for the whole Dominion, the duties of the late Provincial Secretary for Canada, and as well as Secre-

tary, would be Registrar-General for the whole Dominion; besides he would have under his control the affairs of the Indians throughout the Dominion, and also the control and arrangement of the ordnance lands, which had been transferred by the Imperial authorities to the late Government of Canada. In framing the Bill, the Government had given special attention to securing, as far as possible, uniformity in the system of management of Indian lands throughout the different Provinces.

Hon. Mr. Fisher said in New Brunswick there were large tracts of Indian lands. On its Tobique River there were something like 10,000 acres of these lands. There were on these a great number of settlers having large clearances and large stocks of cattle. The policy of the Government had been not to disturb these people, but to sell them these lands at ordinary prices. He hoped it would be the policy of the Dominion Government that the rights of these people should be preserved. As regarded the ordnance lands, he had himself introduced a Bill placing them under the charge of the Secretary of State for War, and there had been no cession of them to the Province.

Sir John A. Macdonald explained that the ordnance lands referred to by the Secretary were certain ordnance lands which had been surrendered to the late Province of Canada. The ordnance lands had been held by the Imperial Government for naval purposes, canals and fortifications; but some years ago, except these at Quebec and some other points, they were transferred to Canada in trust for certain funds by which the Militia was to be kept up. By the Union Act the lands so surrendered to the Old Province of Canada became the property of the Dominion, and as there was no Commissioner of Crown lands in the Dominion, they were transferred to the Department of the Secretary of State. This Bill did not at all effect the Ordnance Lands spoken of by the member for York.

Mr. Jackson said there might be a valuation. He did not propose that the respective Provinces should pay more for these lands than they could collect.

Mr. Jones (Leeds) said he could understand the reluctance of the Premier of Ontario to assume the responsibility of managing the Indian lands. He thought, however, the feeling of the people of Ontario would be in favour of such a transference. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the expense of the management of Indian lands in the United States with their management here, although the quantity of Indian lands was vastly greater than in Canada. In 1863, the whole expense of the departmental management at Washington of the Indian lands was \$5,000. Here, even after the reductions made by the Secretary of State, the expense of the management at Ottawa of the Indian lands was \$5,140, being more than the whole expense of the management at Washington. He would take another opportunity of showing that the expenses of our Dominion Department were greater than the whole department expense at Washington. The people throughout the country were looking at the retrenchment effected in Ontario, and were expecting something of the same sort here. He thought the number of departments might very well be reduced. If there had been one Minister for New Brunswick, one for Nova Scotia, two for Quebec, and three for Ontario, the due proportion between the Provinces would have been preserved, and the whole number of Heads for Departments, instead of thirteen, would only have been seven, the same as at Washington. He found that the departments here had 243 employees, a greater number for managing business of three and a half millions of people than were employed at Washington to manage the business of thirty-five millions. He intended on a future occasion to urge more at length his views on the question of retrenchment, which he felt it his duty to press, even though his doing so might at times place him in opposition to his honorable friends on the treasury benches.

Mr. Sproul supported the view suggested by Mr. Jackson as to the transference of the Indian lands, on equitable terms, to the Local Legislatures. He suggested, also, that the land trust might be converted into a money trust.

Hon. Mr. Langevin said the expense of managing the Indian lands was necessarily increased by their being widely scattered in different parts of the country. The expense was borne by the Indian funds derived from the lands which were only held in trust by the Dominion. As regarded the suggestion by the member for North Bruce to convert the

[Mr. Jackson (Grey-South).]

land trust into a money trust, in order to promote the settlement of the country, it should be remembered that these lands were a sacred trust held for the Indians, that they were the property of the Indians, and that no change should be made which could in any way interfere with the value of the trust so held for them. He went on to give some details as to the management, sales and prices of Indian lands. He stated that the Indians, under the system adopted towards them by this Government, were increasing in number, instead of decreasing as in other parts of the continent, and he hoped the House would assist the Government in continuing to the Indians that sense of security which they now enjoyed.

Hon. Mr. Dorion stated that at Caughnawaga the Indians were constantly fighting, and a strong effort ought to be made to get these Indians to commute their lands. If Government could succeed in getting them to do this, a great remedy would be applied to the present derangements, and the Indians would be really benefitted. He would say let such of the Indians as wished to settle get a lot each, and let the remainder of the land be sold. Such an arrangement would be greatly to the benefit of the Indians themselves and the surrounding white population.

Mr. Mackenzie's experience of the Indians led him to a very different conclusion. He had lived for 20 years in the vicinity of a large tribe, and believed if the Indians commuted their lands and scattered, they would be anything but benefitted. The money they would get for commutation would soon find its way into other hands. Far better to let them settle on the lands. The true policy with regard to Indians, he believed, would be to endeavour to remove them for settlement from the vicinity of large towns.

Hon. Mr. McDougall said that when he had the honour of being in the same Government with the honourable member for Hochelaga, he had endeavoured to get these Caughnawaga Indians to come to some such arrangement as that advocated, but without effect. In Upper Canada the Indians had been treated as the proprietors of their lands. They were consulted regarding the disposal of these lands, and the practice had been found to work well. With reference to the propriety of handing over these lands to the Local Government, he would say the full power of administering these lands lay with the Federal Government, and it would be impos-

sible for this Legislature to hand over to any other hands the control or disposition of so important a matter; but if the Indians consented to dispose of their lands, as alluded to, the difficulty would be obviated.

Mr. Snider showed that it was the speculators, and not the actual settlers, who had caused loss to the Indian Department in the land sales. He contended that where white men went on Indian land they greatly added to its value, and that many such men who had gone into the bush had been badly treated by the Government. In his opinion, if the Government had given every mile of Indian land away, they would have benefited the country. As for white men taking timber on Indian land, he had never heard in his experience of such a thing, though he had heard of Indians damaging the white man's land.

The Bill was then read a second time and referred to Committee of the Whole—**Mr. Jones** in the Chair.

The Committee rose and reported the Bill with an amendment, and the Bill was ordered for a third reading on Friday next.

MARINE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

Sir John A. Macdonald then moved the second reading of the Bill for the organization of the Department of Marine and Fisheries of Canada, from the Senate.

Hon. Mr. Holton thought that the Government, in moving this Bill organizing a new Department, ought to explain not merely this particular Bill, but their views regarding the organization of the new Department to be proposed by the Government.

Sir John A. Macdonald said that such a discussion would be obviously proper, and had hoped that it would have come on to-day, but the absence of the Minister for Trade and Customs, and the Minister of Inland Revenue had caused a delay. He would consent that the third reading should not be taken until after such discussion, which might take place once and for all upon the general merits of all the Bills. Upon continued objection from **Mr. Holton** he consented, however, not to press the second reading.

On motion of **Sir John A. Macdonald**, the Bill for continuing the Parliament of Canada in the case of the demise of the Crown, was read a second time at length, and ordered for a third reading on Friday.

EXTRADITION TREATY

Sir John A. Macdonald moved the second reading of the Bill entitled an Act Respecting the Treaty Between Her Majesty and the Government of the United States of America, for the apprehension and surrender of certain offenders. He explained that the object of the measure was the extension to the Dominion of the provisions of the Act previously in force in the Province of Canada, with the addition to the officers mentioned in the old Imperial Act of Commissioners who would be appointed under the Great Seal of Canada, to further the operation of this Act.

The Bill was read a second time.

On the motion to go into committee,

Mr. Chamberlin hoped the House would not resolve on going into committee on this measure now, as there were important differences of opinion regarding at least one of its provisions.

Sir John A. Macdonald had not the slightest objection to postpone going into committee.

The Bill was ordered to be referred to Committee of the Whole on Friday next.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Hon. Mr. Rose moved the House into committee on the following resolution:— "That it is expedient to appropriate the sum of \$30,000 per annum for five years from the 1st day of July, 1867, to defray the expenses of the Geological Survey of Canada—any surplus in any one year to be applied towards the expenses to be incurred in other years."

Mr. Street was called to the Chair.

Hon. Mr. Rose explained that it was now considered essential to have this Geological Survey extended to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and it would not take less than five years to bring this great work to a conclusion. The sum voted was estimated by **Sir W. Logan** to be sufficient to perform this service.

Mr. Mackenzie—The Ontario Government will charge him for a license. (Laughter).

Hon. J. S. Macdonald had great doubts that the benefits derived from these geological surveys had been commensurate with their cost.

Hon. Mr. Rose totally differed with the honourable member.