

timber that extend along those streams, which must be very useful at no distant date to this country, we cannot fail to be impressed with its importance. If we remember its lakes, teeming with as fine fish as can be found in any part of the country, from that point of view also we must be struck with its importance. Then look at its climate. Hon. gentlemen have been pleased to say in this House that it has a very inhospitable climate, but measuring its climate from the depth of snow, from the length of the summer and the length of the fall, or from the number of months during which its rivers are navigable, we find that it compares very favourably with the climate of many other parts of the country largely populated and wealthy to-day. If we look at its grasses and its plants and vegetables, we find that they are the same as those found in other parts of the country about which we know a great deal more to-day. I saw only a year ago a single potato that was brought down from Port York which lacked only one ounce of two pounds weight, and which being cut through, appeared to be of the very best quality; and the carrots brought down from there, both as regards size and the quality of the root itself, are decidedly much superior to what we find in the best parts of Ontario and Quebec. I say, considering the importance of the subject, no matter in what light you view it, it must be a matter of considerable interest to the people of the Dominion, and the people of Ontario especially, because a large extent of this territory belongs to Ontario, and when we remember that in a short time we will have opened up a large portion of the country, some 400 or 500 miles in length, with a railway, we will see the necessity of bringing in some way prominently before the eyes of the world the resources of the territory that will be opened up for settlement there. The hon. member for Muskoka said, that, from his knowledge of the country, he was inclined to believe there was a great deal of broken land in it, but only a few years ago I heard a gentleman, who apparently had opportunities of being conversant with the country, say there was not 10,000 good acres in the Manitoulin Island; that it was a place that could not be settled; that no large number could reside there and support themselves on its products; yet, in travelling through that country, although we must confess there is a large amount of broken soil, that is not an unmixed evil; because it cannot be used directly in the raising of grain, it is very useful for the purpose of grazing, and some of the finest cattle of this country that cost the smallest amount of money has been raised in Manitoulin. From the meagre information that we have, we learn that in every part of it there is found some of the best arable land known in the Dominion. If the soil and climate, if its waters, if its altitude from the sea, if its depth of snow, the length of its winters, the mildness of its summers, are the same as in other parts of the world, well known and amply tested, and found suitable for agricultural purposes, we must admit that it compares favourably with other known parts of this country. It is important that the information asked for should be laid before the country through this House, because any information we have had heretofore has been extremely meagre. I was pleased to find that the hon. member for South Perth was ready to accept the information, coming from a source which he would, perhaps, look upon as more valuable than that coming from any other source—the information given by a representative from the Ontario Government. I am pleased to find that there seems to be every chance of our receiving information which will satisfy those that are skeptical, as the investigation proceeds, as pioneers reach different parts of the country and send back reports, which will only be found to corroborate the reports we have as to the richness of the country. I am glad the hon. member for Algoma has put this notice on the paper. I hope it is only the opening up of a great question which will be ventilated year by year and be

Mr. SPROULE.

brought home prominently before the attention of the people of this and other countries, and I doubt not that at no distant time this region will be found to be one of the richest sources of wealth to Ontario and the Dominion.

Mr. O'BRIEN. I do not propose to add anything to what has already been said, in regard to the value of this country for the purposes of settlement, but what I wish to say is, that that value is, so far, merely theoretical, and will be of no avail to the wealth of the Dominion until more extended railway communication is given to it. Not a day passes on which I do not receive letters from those I represent, asking, in almost despairing terms, when are they to have the benefit of railway communication. There are settlers in some parts of that country who are raising large crops of grain, who are entirely dependent upon the lumber interest for their market, who are 50 miles away from any source of obtaining supplies, and who are every day looking most anxiously to see whether the long promised railway is likely to reach them. If ever there was a case in which the interests of the poorer class of settlers deserve consideration, it is the case of those men who, at a time when the North-West was not entering into competition with it and under circumstances of the greatest possible hardship, made homes for themselves in what was then almost an unknown wilderness. I do trust that the Government will, at the very earliest possible moment, take the claims of these people into consideration and carry out the promises made long ago—promises made only, I might almost say, to be broken—to give them the means of obtaining what has become to them a matter of necessity. I only say this, not that I have any fear but that the expectations held out will ere long be realized; but, on their behalf, I would take this one opportunity, the last that will probably occur, of impressing upon the Government the great necessity there is, not for action, but for speedy action; and I venture to say that next summer, if the opening of next season does not show that steps have actually been taken for the completion of this work, my place in this House will be a very useless one, for there will be such an emigration from that country that I shall have very few people left to represent. Some have already gone. In many townships there are less people now than when the Census was taken in 1881, and if speedy steps are not taken for the construction of the railway, the population will diminish in a still greater ratio; and I think it is hardly worth while for us, when we are building up Provinces so far from ourselves, to do it at the expense of depopulating a country which will, in many respects, compare favourably with the most fertile portions of the North-West.

Motion agreed to.

#### OFFICIAL ARBITRATORS.

Mr. BLONDEAU moved for a statement giving the names of the Official Arbitrators and Secretaries to Arbitrators, appointed to office since 1st July, 1867, up to the present time, the statement to show the date of appointment, the salary allowed, the duration of tenure of office, and the salary actually paid yearly in each case. In case of appointment having been made by Order in Council, or the salaries having been increased by Order in Council, copies of such Orders in Council in each case to be annexed to the statement.

Mr. LANDRY. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity, now offered to me by this motion, to draw the attention of the Government to the appointment of these different Official Arbitrators. I think that in appointing these officers the character of the work they have to perform and the surroundings in which they are called upon to discharge the duties of their office should be borne in mind. Quite recently the Arbitrators have had to hear evidence and to decide several cases connected with the construction of the branch railway to St. Charles. On that