

are not substantially affected. But the change proposed to be made is in relation to the proceedings to establish the value of the expropriated property. Under the present system, the arbitrators appointed by the judge go through the country hearing evidence as to the value of the lands affected, sitting in one place one day and in another place another day, being served by a clerk, employing a shorthand writer and bringing witnesses before them. After a delay of six months or so, and after they have heard contradictory evidence as to the value of the land—a question of fact—they render judgment. This is sent to the clerk of the court and is subject to appeal in the ordinary form before the civil courts. The costs involved sometimes amount to \$7,000, \$8,000 or \$9,000—and, when the proper time comes, I shall bring before the House some instances to prove the existence of grave abuses against interested parties under the existing law. This Bill provides that the powers of the experts shall be limited. They will have power to require the production of books, papers, plans, specifications, drawings and documents relating to the matter before them, and to enforce the attendance of the depositaries of those papers. They will have no right to take verbal or written evidence as to the value of the lands to be acquired; they judge for themselves the value of these lands, and make their report to the judge as already stated, in a determined delay. If the parties interested agree to the conclusions of that report, a judgment is rendered, and, this judgment being accepted by both parties there is no appeal. If after the report has been made to the court within the delay fixed, one of the parties will not accept the conclusion, he asks the judge to proceed in the ordinary way as in civil matters on trial. In that case the judge hears the case and renders judgment. After the judgment has been rendered and served on the parties, an appeal is allowed if the amount in question is over \$600, as provided by the existing law, the appeal being to a superior court according to the laws of the province in which the case arises. This is a much simpler and more expeditious method than the present. Under the existing system, three arbitrators are appointed who hold two or three sittings a day for which they receive from \$6 to \$10 a sitting, who pay a clerk and a shorthand writer and whose proceedings involve the costs of bringing twenty or twenty-five witnesses or experts on each side, although two or three could specify the value of the land, which, it may be, is only an acre or two. In sections 6 to 14 the words 'arbitrator' or 'award' are replaced by the word 'expert' or a 'report of experts' in order to enable the law to be understood.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

FIRST READING.

Bill (No. 31) to amend the Fisheries Act.—Mr. Sinclair.

QUESTIONS.

THE BOYLE CONCESSION.

Mr. AMES asked :

Has the Dawson legislature memorialized the government of Canada regarding what is known as the Boyle concession? If so, what action has been taken in regard to the same?

Hon. FRANK OLIVER (Minister of the Interior). No reply from Dawson has yet been received.

TUNNEL TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Mr. A. MARTIN asked :

Has the Hon. the Minister of Finance done anything, if so, what, to obtain the information referred to in reply to a question in the House of Commons on the 11th day of April last as follows, and also the nature of the information obtained, if any?

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance). We already have considerable information on the subject. Whatever further information be necessary in order that we may be fully informed as to the approximate cost of the tunnel or bridge should be obtained, and efforts will be made, so far as our engineers are available, the coming season to obtain a report. I shall do my utmost to get such information at the earliest possible moment?

Mr. LEFURGEY. Through the engineers of the department or special experts?

Mr. FIELDING. I think we have sufficient engineering skill in the various departments, but if the services of our engineers are not available undoubtedly we shall have to obtain expert opinion outside.

Hon. GEO. P. GRAHAM (Minister of Railways and Canals). The hon. member has moved for a return which will probably cover this question. A report is being made, and will be presented to the House.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MINISTERS.

Mr. FOSTER asked :

What is the amount of travelling and other expenses paid since March 31, 1907, to date, to each of the following ministers: Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Frederick Borden, Hon. W. S. Fielding, Hon. L. P. Brodeur, and Hon. Sydney Fisher?

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance). In addition to the expenses of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Frederick Borden and Hon. L. P. Brodeur, in connection with the Imperial Conference, as already stated, the amounts paid to date are as follows:—

Sir Wilfrid Laurier.	\$ 63 75
Sir Frederick Borden.	729 65
Hon. W. S. Fielding.	1,142 75
Hon. J. P. Brodeur.	507 69
Hon. Sydney Fisher.	939 14