

AFTER RECESS.

DOMINION LANDS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

THIRD READING.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS moved the House into Committee of the Whole on Bill (77) "An Act to amend the Dominion Lands Act. He said: I will state that the amendments to the Dominion Lands Act have grown out of the necessities of the case; and perhaps it would be more satisfactory to the House that each clause should be considered and discussed as it comes up, and I will make the explanation in that way rather than make the statement before the consideration of the clauses. The first clause of the Dominion Lands Act of 1879 is merely re-enacted. The second clause makes provision with regard to the width of the roads. From 1872 the width of the roads has been 99 feet; by this Bill power is taken by the Governor in Council to reduce the width of the road to 66 feet, which is the ordinary width in Ontario and most of the provinces of the Dominion. It was thought when this width was taken for the public roads that when fenced there would be heavy snow drifts, and that there would be difficulty in clearing out snow; and, by a good width of road, they would have one portion always where the snow would not be drifted. But, in consequence of the introduction of wire fences, which will not hold the snow or gather drifts, it has been found that the width of the roads may well be reduced, for two reasons. It not only effects a saving in the land, but it reduces the labor necessary to keep those roads up. It also makes provision with regard to the number of section lines that are to be run. At present every section is bounded by a line; by this clause power is taken by the Governor in Council that the number of these section lines may be reduced one-half, or in other words the amount of surveying in each township is reduced by one-quarter; the saving in land by reducing the width of the road is calculated at 436 acres and the cost of surveying will be reduced one quarter by dispensing with some of the section lines.

The clause was adopted.

Hon. Mr. Aikins.

On the 3rd clause,

Hon. Mr. AIKINS — Provision was made in the original Bill that the land fronting on the Red River and Assiniboine should be surveyed differently from the ordinary surveys of the townships; in other words, that they should front on the river. By this Bill provision is made that the land fronting on large rivers, such as the Saskatchewan, in the west, may be surveyed in the same way.

The clause was adopted.

On the 4th clause,

Hon. Mr. AIKINS — The 4th clause amends the Dominion Lands Act in this way. Under the provisions of the Act, no one person can purchase more than 640 acres of land. By the provisions of this Bill it is amended in this way: that the Governor in Council may have power to sell larger quantities than 640 acres, but not at a price less than \$1 an acre —

Hon. Mr. REESOR — Is there any limit to the amount?

Hon. Mr. AIKINS — No, there is no limit to the amount. Provision is also made in this clause that the land may be sold at public auction. It is well known to hon. gentlemen in this House that a portion of the Mennonite reserve has not been occupied by them, in fact there has not been so many of those people settled in the country as was thought would go there. That land has now become valuable, and is worth \$4 or \$5 an acre, and provision is made that this land may be sold by public auction.

Hon. Mr. MILLER — Or any other land.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS — Or any other land, but it is intended particularly to apply to the case I have mentioned.

The clause was adopted.

On the 5th clause,

Hon. Mr. AIKINS — This clause makes provision that section 24 of the Dominion Lands Act is repealed and a form substituted. This form is changed to enable lands to be entered up for homestead by agents. At present no one except the person intending to occupy