

entitled to it, but succeeded, because owing to the length of time which had elapsed, or in some other way the department could not produce the necessary evidence. It seemed to him that the system at present, which made the arbitration final, was the best one in the interest of the public. It offered security and justice in the class of cases likely to come before it. The only result of allowing further appeals would be to delay decisions on questions until the evidence had been lost. So far as his experience went, and he had had some experience as a Provincial arbitrator, he found that nine out of ten of those old cases which had been revived and brought before the Courts of Law had no merit in them, and the public had, on more than one occasion, to pay large sums to persons who were not really entitled to the money. As to the motion for the return asked for, Government had no objection to it.

**Mr. Mackenzie** quite concurred in the remarks of the Minister of Public Works on this subject. The abuses consequent on the location of public works had been so extensive that attention had been frequently drawn to them, and it was quite clear that every possible check should be applied to such practices. He was astonished at the statement that \$50,000 had been paid on one of these claims, and said it was questionable whether the Government ought not to have carried the matter to a still higher tribunal. They had been constantly paying for damages claimed by persons living along the line of the Beauharnois Canal; so much so, indeed, that already it was said that fifty times the actual value of the land through which the Canal ran had been paid.

**Mr. Kirkpatrick**, as a member of the old Provincial Board of Arbitrators, said they had given no decision in the case of the Beauharnois Canal.

**Mr. Blanchet** in reply instanced a case of great hardship, and said that the people in his part of the country were strongly in favour of the right of appeal to juries, as was the case in France and England. Even if the Government should lose 100,000 pounds, it was better so than that a private person should be wronged out of a single cent. (Laughter). At any rate he expected the present Government to be more reasonable than gentlemen opposite had been when they were in power.

**Hon. Mr. Holton** thought that in the peculiar sense meant the honourable gentleman

[Mr. McDougall (Lanark North).]

would find the Government exceedingly reasonable. In the case of hardship spoken of, the person probably tried to speculate on the necessities of the Government, by purchasing land he knew they must have. He had known such cases.

**Hon. Mr. Johnson** said juries invariably gave decisions against governments and corporations, whether right or wrong.

After a brief reply from the mover in explanation, the motion was carried.

It being six o'clock the Speaker left the Chair.

#### After the recess.

**Hon. Mr. Holton** moved for an address praying His Excellency to withhold his sanction from the Bill to incorporate the St. Lewis Hydraulic Company, passed by the Legislature of Quebec. The honourable gentleman explained that his object was to draw the attention of the Government to a matter of very considerable importance. He knew the difficulty of drawing the line closely between the jurisdiction of the local and general Legislatures, and therefore was anxious to hear an expression of opinion from the Government on a matter of this importance. The motion he was about to place in the hands of the Speaker related to an Act which had failed to receive the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor, and concerning which the fair inference was that the Government of the Province of Quebec had great doubts as to the propriety of allowing the Bill to become law. He thought he might even be justified in the further inference that the Government had occasioned it an improper Bill to pass. His only object was to call the attention of the Government to the matter, and obtain from them an expression of opinion on the subject.

**Hon. Mr. Johnson** dreaded a conflict between the Local and General Legislatures on these matters.

**Hon. Mr. Galt** said that they could not possibly act in this matter without having the Bill before them.

**Mr. Shanly** trusted the address would be granted.

**Sir John A. Macdonald** was glad his honourable friend had brought this matter up, as the subject was one of great importance. This was a measure which affected one of the greatest properties they had—the River St.