

more than another which should commend this Bill to the consideration and admiration of the House, it was the fact that it would relieve us from the whims and fancies of partisan valuers. I would like to know how the farmers of North Hastings take those remarks—those who have the power of electing from among themselves the officers who know the value of the farms surrounding them, who know the value of each and every parcel of property in their townships, and whose appointments come direct from the people—whether or not they will consider that an insult has been thrown at them, when they are told that they are unfit, that they are too partisan, too low in their political instincts, to consider their own welfare, or the welfare of the nation. I think, Sir, with the hon. member for Shefford, that an insult has been cast upon the rural constituencies of the country. When they are told that they are unfit to value, that they are too partisan in their character, and that, therefore, they must have officers appointed by the Central Government, perhaps some petty lawyer, who will come to the rural districts and dictate to the people what is the value of the property for which they are assessed. I think the rural constituencies of the country have most to complain of in this particular, and I think the insult will be resented. I hope these hon. gentlemen who have cast such slurs on the honesty and integrity and ability of those gentlemen who are annually selected by the farmers of this country, will retract them, and will remove the obnoxious clauses from the Bill. It may be true to the instinct of hon. gentlemen opposite to protest against the people of this country deciding for themselves as to the value of their property; but I contend that the simple and just machinery which has been in existence in the various Provinces is a machinery that is more satisfactory to the people, and will give a sounder basis on which to found the voters' lists than that proposed in this Bill. We have the judgment of gentlemen selected by the people, revised by the entire councils of the various municipalities, and again subjected to the revision of the judges of the land. All that is to be set aside as unworthy of consideration, in the view of hon. gentleman opposite; and they are to be so careful in the selection of their officials that they will be able to send lawyers throughout the country, who will be less partisan in the valuation of property than the honest farmers of the country. I think, when hon. gentlemen come to consider this matter seriously, they will see that they have not only cast a slur on the rural communities, but on the ability and competency of the farmers of this country, and the citizens of our various towns and cities, who now select the officers to perform this duty.

Mr. BOWELL. I am not going to enter into a discussion with my hon. friend as to whether I have insulted the honest and intelligent farmers of North Hastings or not. I shall be quite prepared, when the time comes, to discuss that question with him.

Mr. PLATT. I referred especially to the hon. gentleman's assertion that at present we are under the influence of the whims of the partisan assessors who are elected by the honest people of the country.

Mr. BOWELL. The assessors are not elected by the people; they are appointed by the council who are elected by the people; and the revising barristers will be appointed by the Government which owes its existence to the people. But we leave that matter to the farmers of the country. Perhaps, I could meet the views of hon. gentlemen opposite, if they would accept what I propose, by adding these words at the end of the clause:

Provided that the assessment roll, as finally revised for municipal purposes, shall be *prima facie* evidence of the value of such property.

Mr. MULOCK. I am glad the hon. gentleman has made this remark, more particularly because he has accompanied

it with the hope that the suggestion would, to some extent, meet the views of the Opposition. It is the first expression I have heard falling from any gentleman on that side, to indicate that they are prepared to consult the judgment and feelings of hon. gentleman on this side. It is the first intimation given that the slightest consideration would be paid to our arguments and views. I am glad to know that we are approaching a more cordial understanding on the subject, and I trust, as we go on, that wherever it appears the Bill can be improved, so that the machinery finally provided will be such as will afford the cheapest and most convenient means whereby every person entitled to the franchise shall be on the roll, amendment will be made. If we proceed in that spirit, perhaps the Bill will not be so vexatious as it appears on its face.

On paragraph 18, "real property,"

Mr. WELDON. I would suggest that that be amended by making it read, "belonging to or fixed to the land." Otherwise, a saloon upon wheels or a photographer's van would be real property under this paragraph.

Mr. BOWELL. I move that the words, "forming part thereof," be added.

Amendment agreed to, and Committee rose and reported progress.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN moved the adjournment of the House.

Motion agreed to, and House adjourned at 3.10 a.m. (Tuesday.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, 5th May, 1885.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

MOUNTED POLICE RECRUITS.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. leader of the Opposition asked me yesterday about the number of recruits engaged for the Mounted Police. Since the 1st of March 230 recruits have been engaged and 113 horses purchased and reported to the Department. Other purchases have been made by the officers of the force, but not yet reported.

THE DISTURBANCE IN THE NORTH-WEST.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I beg leave, in consequence of a remark made by the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) yesterday, to read a paragraph of a letter from Mr. Street, who is at the head of the Half-Breed Commission, to my hon. friend the Postmaster-General, as follows:

"There are stories abroad that the half-breeds to whom we gave script at Fort Qu'Appelle went and bought rifles and ammunition with the money. You may give this a most unqualified denial. We have taken trouble to enquire, and we find that no half-breed has bought either a rifle or powder since we were there. Their wives have spent a good deal of money in finery, and the men have bought horses and cattle, and paid some of their debts."

ENQUIRIES FOR RETURNS.

Mr. BLAKE. Before the Orders are called, I once more desire to call the attention of the hon. leader of the Government to the fact that the papers on which the proposals relating to the Canadian Pacific Railway are based, have not yet been laid before the House. At the same time I