

RETURNS

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE laid on the table a supplementary return to the Address for papers connected with the Northwest Territories.

On the orders of the day being called,

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INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Act respecting the construction of the Intercolonial Railway. He said that, as he explained on its introduction, the object of the Bill was simply to invest in the Government the powers now exercised by the Railway Commissioners, as the Government believed that they would be able to concentrate the business in one office, do it much cheaper, and save a great deal more expenses than if it were continued in the hands of Commissioners, as at present.

He had mentioned, on introducing the Bill, that the Chairman of the Commission resigned his office some time ago. He did not have anyone appointed in that gentleman's place as a Commissioner, but simply had Mr. Trudeau, the Deputy Minister of Public Works, appointed *pro tem*, and that, of course, saved some expense and delay.

He regretted to learn, from a note received from Mr. Walsh, that he was understood to say when introducing the Bill that Mr. Walsh was discharged. Mr. Walsh was not removed but sent in his resignation, as he intended taking part in the elections and wished to be in a position to do so. He (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) made this statement in justice to Mr. Walsh. (*Hear, hear.*)

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said he had no objection to the Bill. He supposed that taking the present state of the road into consideration it would be better for the Government to assume the contract and the management of the work for the remainder of the time. He reminded the House of the causes which led the late Government to commit the construction of the road into the hands of Commissioners. It was contemplated by the late Government to introduce a similar measure, and had they had an opportunity of doing so, such a bill would have been introduced. It would be remembered that the existing measure brought in by the late Government met with universal approbation; in fact, there was not a single dissident to it.

As a leading member of the Government, he had a very painful remembrance of the occurrences in connection with the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway, and he desired to avoid any such difficulties in this case while the road was being constructed. He knew very well, he said, that if the Government kept the thing in their own hands they would be charged with using the patronage connected with it improperly, and that, also, he wished to avoid. It was found, however, that the ultimate responsibility of the Government was as heavy as ever, the

Commissioners referring all matters of importance to the Government, and throwing the responsibility on them, instead of acting with the necessary amount of independence. He saw no objection, but rather an advantage, in the Government assuming the control of the construction of the road.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the Government had found that the practical decision of everything rested upon themselves. He dared say, however, that although the hon. gentleman, in appointing the Commissioners, expected to get rid of the patronage, he had not done so. (*Hear, hear.*)

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: Oh, very much. (*Laughter.*)

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE: It was a laudable motive, however, which he could not help appreciating, as he did appreciate it. He might say further, in explanation (*Renewed laughter*) that the Government found it would be quite impossible for them to finish the road within the present year, although as a matter of fact, the greater portion of the work was about at an end, the bridges over the Miramichi and Restigouche Rivers being notably in such a position that it would be impossible to complete them in less than twelve or fourteen months. By appointing another gentleman to take charge of the completion of the work they had been enabled to relieve the Chief Engineer, and he would now be at liberty to devote his whole attention to the greater work in which he was engaged.

The Government hoped that the arrangement that had been made to expedite the work would effect a considerable saving of the public money.

The Bill was read a second time.

The House then went into Committee of the Whole on the Bill, **Mr. MILLS** in the chair.

The various clauses were agreed to and reported without amendment. The third reading was appointed for Monday.

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN NEW BRUNSWICK

Hon. Mr. DORION moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Act respecting the prompt and summary administration of criminal justice in certain cases as respects the Province of New Brunswick. He explained that the object of the bill was to extend the powers of Police Magistrates, Recorders and County Court Judges.

The bill having been read a second time, the House went into committee, **Mr. PÂQUET** in the chair, and reported the bill without amendment.

The third reading to be on Monday.—Carried.