

showing consideration to those who by the operation of this Act would be deprived of situations, the Government would be bound to consider what would have to be done in such a case, having regard of course to the public interest.

The clause was passed.

On the 36th clause relating to convict labor,

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD asked if the Government had any policy as to letting out convict labor by contract. The present authorities disapproved very generally of this system.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the Government had not decided upon any policy. Some tenders had been received up to a recent time, but had not been accepted for the reason that the Government were to consider, when the House rose, what was to be done in this matter. A great deal had been said on the care exercised by the contractors. The system worked well at the Central Prison at Toronto, but was liable to interruption from the failure of contractors or some cause in the business that might interrupt the whole work of the prison. In that respect perhaps it would be better if the Government were to adapt prison labor to such works as they could. The whole subject was to be reviewed by the Government after the session.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD was glad to hear the statement of his hon. friend. He believed the prison labor could be made profitable under proper surveillance if the right contractors could be found; but no amount of supervision could prevent some contractors from interfering with the moral improvement of the prisoners by giving them tobacco and spirits as a bribe to greater exertions in working. While it was important that the prisoners should be made to sustain themselves, it was still more important that they should be reformed if possible.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said he had an idea, which was not yet clearly defined, of employing the labor of convicts in carrying on the public works of the country. It was quite possible they might be able to manufacture the greater portion of the rolling stock required on the great railroads about to be constructed. That was one reason why he desired to locate the prisons in the Lower Provinces on some convenient place on the Intercolonial

Hon. Mr. Mackenzie.

Railway; but nothing had yet been decided upon by the Government.

The section was carried.

The Committee rose and reported the Bill. Report was received.

MR. PLUMB'S SPEECH.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said before recess he desired to call attention to the remarks of the hon. member for Kingston regarding the report of Mr. PLUMB'S speech. He (Mr. MACKENZIE) had always found reporters eminently fair where they were not directed by some parties in the interests of particular newspapers. There was an *esprit de corps* amongst all reporters that dictated fair reports, and hon. members must often have felt greatly indebted to the reporters for improving their speeches. In this particular speech it so happened that the reporters had taken a verbatim report of every part of Mr. PLUMB'S speech. He (Mr. MACKENZIE) could not conceive how it came to be stated that there was no report of it taken. The editor of the *Hansard* had sent him a copy of the report, and if the hon. member for Niagara could see the manuscript, he would no doubt find that his speech had been accurately reported. No time should be lost in correcting the erroneous impression that the reporters had been unfair towards Mr. PLUMB. It would, he was sure, be as gratifying to the hon. member from Kingston as it was to himself to learn that there was no ground for complaint against the reporters.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN MACDONALD said he had received a letter from the editor of the *Hansard* stating that a full report had been taken of Mr. PLUMB'S speech. He (Sir JOHN) had nothing more to say, but he might explain that his attention had been called, while the debate was going on, to the fact that the reporters at the table had not even pencils in their hands. The fact was noticed by at least twenty gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House. He was surprised to learn that a full report had been taken, though no mortal hand was employed in the work at the table, during the whole hour the hon. gentleman was speaking.

Mr. MILLS mentioned the fact that only one reporter took notes at a time, though there were generally two or three