

temporary transfer might be made as soon as the company building the road from New Glasgow eastward had expended not less than \$400,000 on the line, and had given security to the satisfaction of the Government that it would be properly stocked and worked. The money has been expended and we have the certificate of the Nova Scotia Government to that effect; but the other conditions may not be complied with at an early date. In the meantime we are not satisfied at what date the road can be transferred, or whether we can have security, at an early day, to the satisfaction of the Government, as to the management of the line, and until such time as they have completed the whole—that condition being the paramount one which governs the transfer of the road—the transfer cannot be completed. I ask that the motion should not be proceeded with on that account; at all events, no information could be given other than what I have stated.

Motion, with leave of the House, *withdrawn*.

THE THOUSAND ISLANDS.

MOTION FOR STATEMENT OF SALES OR LEASES.

MR. JONES (South Leeds) moved for a statement of all sales or leases of the islands in the River St. Lawrence lying between Brockville and Kingston, known as "The Thousand Islands," during the years 1874-5, 1875-6 and 1876-7; showing what islands or parts of islands were sold or leased; names of said islands; quantity of land in each sold or leased; time for such leases or sales to run; the names of purchasers or lessees, with the amount to be paid *en bloc*, or per acre, for such purchases or leases. He said that many of the islands were of considerable area, containing from five to one thousand, or even two thousand acres, and had been converted into fine farms. Contiguous to those were very small islands containing from half an acre to three acres, and the persons occupying farms had endeavoured to make arrangements for their purchase from the Government. He made application in 1876, on behalf of his constituents for some of those small islands. He

MR. MACKENZIE.

was told by the then Minister of the Interior (Mr. Laird) that the islands were not for sale or lease, and that the Government had not yet finally determined what they would do with them, but that probably the smaller islands would be sold under the hammer. In 1876 and 1877 some of the islands had been leased or sold, and he submitted the present motion in order to ascertain the probable disposition of the islands, which some of the farmers had used for pasturage for 80 years, and in order that the islands might not be sold over their heads without their knowledge. Opposite the town where he lived and within a short distance of his house, an island had been leased for 99 years; the lease had been granted to a respectable person and no great harm was done. Some of the islands, however, were now used for shebeens and more might be used for similar purposes. A complaint had been forwarded to him by a person who had made an application for a small island lying contiguous to his farm, that he had been brought before a Justice for having taken loose granite from an adjoining island to build a fence, and he had been fined \$20. He would be glad to ascertain from the Government what disposition was proposed to be made of the Thousand Islands, which it was desirable should be maintained as a General Park for the Dominion.

MR. MACKENZIE: The policy of the Government, in the first place, was to preserve the timber, without which the beauty of the islands was, in great measure, destroyed. Several years ago we found that people came there, carelessly cut down the timber, and carried it off for various purposes; and we employed an additional officer to guard the islands and prevent the wanton destruction which was destroying the actual beauty of the scenery. With regard to the final disposal of many of the islands, there is a difficulty; the desire of the Government was to retain all the small islands, at all events, and those which were comparatively worthless for agricultural purposes, in their natural state. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the islands are now private property, that is, the