

principle, he would ask the indulgence of the House for a very few minutes whilst he stated some of the objections he had to the measure in its present shape. He considered that the bill was, in many respects, of a very extraordinary character, inasmuch as it made regulations of a most arbitrary character with respect to the public lands of the west. The regulations provided in the bill could actually be set aside by the Governor in Council—a very large power to be given to any Government. The most important feature of the bill, in his opinion, was the extraordinary power it placed in the hands of the local agent, who could decide every question whether a settler had complied with the regulations necessary to entitle him to enter into the possession of lands. That agent might act justly or unjustly, and yet he was exempted from punishment in case of unfair or arbitrary conduct. Then the bill laid down the remarkable proviso that all settlers entitled to land must be British subjects; and that too, at the very time we had emigration agents abroad in France, Belgium, and other foreign countries to induce immigration into Canada. He was quite positive that the effect of such regulations would be to prevent people from coming into the Dominion. He appealed to the hon. Secretary of State to remove this unfortunate clause of the measure. And the strange feature of the bill was the absence of any regulation regarding persons who may have settled on lands by a mistake which they may have only found out after they had made considerable improvements. Such persons would not be entitled to be indemnified for the improvements in question, and that he considered a great injustice. He had no particular objection to the mode of division, but he did think the system in vogue in the United States, by which large grants of lands were made for the construction of railways, was well worthy of consideration. About two hundred million of acres of land had been granted to companies for that purpose—no less than 125,000,000 had been granted to the Pacific Railroad Companies alone—and the results have been highly beneficial to the development of the resources of the country. The quantity of land so granted was equal to 300,000 square miles, or comprising more than the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois combined. He was in favor of assisting Education by public grants, but every care should be taken to avoid a repetition of such difficulties as arose in this country in the past. No one had forgotten

the questions of Clergy Reserves, or the Seigniorial Tenure. He trusted that every guarantee and security would be given to the parties who might receive these lands for the object contemplated by the Bill, so that the issue might be satisfactory to the peace and happiness of the community. He, as a native of Quebec, felt deeply interested in the future of Manitoba, for he believed very many of his fellow country men would find their way there in the course of time, especially when there was railway communication with the far western province. It was well known that the want of public works and manufactures as well as the character of the commercial policy of the country had tended to denude the parishes of many of the people, but he believed that with the development of enterprise in the province the emigration to the United States would cease, or the people would prefer seeking their fortunes in parts of Canadian Territory like Manitoba. He objected to the Bill, he said in conclusion, because it gave too great power to Government and to individuals. If he understood it aright, it was proposed to appoint another Department—he supposed another member, a Surveyor General, would be added to the Cabinet, and the number consequently made even instead of remaining as at present at the unlucky figure thirteen. He had strong objections to many features of the Bill, but nevertheless he would do his best, when the House went into Committee to perfect its details for all must confess that there was a great necessity for such a measure, and that it was the duty of every one to improve it as far as practicable.

Hon. Mr. LEFELLIER DE ST. JUST called attention to the 45th clause, and urged that sufficient encouragement was not given to individuals to discover coal beds.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS said that as respects immigrants the Bill was more favourable than the American law, for a settler could get his patent in three years, whereas it required five in the United States.

The Bill was read a second time, and it finally decided to go into Committee on Friday next.

The House then adjourned.

TUESDAY, May 7th.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock.

#### PETITIONS.

Hon. Mr. HAZEN—From Committee on Standing Orders and Private Bills, reported favorably on following petitions: Of