

April 23, 1874

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, April 23, 1874

The **SPEAKER** took the chair at 3 p.m.

Prayers

WRIT FOR SOUTH OXFORD

Mr. OLIVER moved that Mr. Speaker do issue his warrant for a new writ for the election of a member for the South riding of the County of Oxford, in the room of E.V. Bodwell, who has been appointed to a place of emolument under the Crown.—Carried.

* * *

PETITIONS PRESENTED

A large number of petitions were presented praying for a prohibitory liquor law.

Mr. WILKES presented a petition from John Morrison and others, of Toronto, against a prohibitory liquor law.

Mr. DOMVILLE presented a petition signed by 95 of the principal merchants of St. John, New Brunswick, praying that no import duty be placed upon sugar.

Mr. RYAN presented a petition of the Montreal Board of Trade praying the Government to consider the scheme of the Huron and Ottawa Railway Company before deciding upon the route of the Pacific Railway.

It was suggested that an enquiry and survey be made before the Government adopted any particular route.

* * *

BILLS INTRODUCED

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE—To authorize the Incorporation of Boards of Trade in the Dominion.

Mr. OLIVER—To amend the General Railway Act.

Mr. BLAIN—To incorporate the Dominion Agricultural Insurance Company.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK—Respecting the Federal Bank of Canada.

Mr. BROOKS—To amend and assimilate the laws respecting libel, and the procedure for indictments for libel and other misdemeanours.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Mr. YOUNG moved that Mr. Cunningham (Marquette) be added to the Public Accounts Committee.

* * *

MANITOBA LANDS

Hon. Mr. LAIRD introduced a Bill respecting the appropriation of certain Dominion Lands in Manitoba. He said that ever since the present Government came into office, the settlement of a number of claims in that Province had engaged their attention. 1,400,000 acres of land had been appropriated for the settlement of the claims of children of half-breed heads of families, but no provision had been made to extinguish the Indian title in the heads of families themselves. It was deemed advisable that the half-breed heads of families, as well as the children, should receive grants of land, and that in them, also, the Indian title should be extinguished. It had been found, also, that while the settlers in the old settlement belt had free grants of land those in outlying parishes who had settled for as long a time as those in the settlement belt had no provision for free grants. They had only pre-emption rights. It was deemed advisable that they should have the same rights as those in the old settlement belt.

By the Act 36 Vic., 49,000 acres were appropriated for the Selkirk settlers, that is, those who came in under the auspices of Lord Selkirk. It was supposed then that there would be only about 250 claimants under that Act, but when the census was taken it was found that there were 530. The original intention was to give 140 acres to each person, but the quantity of land appropriated would give only 94 acres. It was deemed advisable that the original quantity should be secured to each of these settlers.

It was also ascertained that a number of settlers in Manitoba came in about the same time as the Selkirk settlers, though not under the auspices of Lord Selkirk. This Bill provided that these settlers should also have 140 acres each. Under this head the number of claimants would probably be 250.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD called the attention of the leader of the Government to the question whether this, being an appropriation of land, should not, like an appropriation of money, be commenced in Committee of the Whole.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said he was not quite sure whether the right hon. gentleman was correct or not. He would look into the matter. He was not quite sure whether the original bill was so introduced or not.

The Bill was then read a first time.