

Cobalt Lake Controversy.

TO ALL WHO VALUE THE HONOUR OF ONTARIO AND THE PUBLIC CREDIT

The following facts and documents relating to the Cobalt Lake controversy will be of interest.

In December, 1905, certain parties decided to explore in the Cobalt District. Their representative went to the Parliament Buildings, Toronto, and subsequently to Haileybury, and asked for all information as to regulations, etc., and the Government Officials gave him a printed copy of regulations and a map showing Cobalt Lake open for exploration. On the faith of this the work of exploring for minerals was proceeded with openly and to the knowledge of the Government representative in the district, who made no objection.

As the result of the expenditure of a large sum of money in such work a discovery was made on the 7th of March, 1906, and a claim of twenty acres provided for by the Statute and Regulations was staked out.

The Florence Mining Company, Limited, which became entitled to the claim, offered to submit proof in any form the Crown Land Department desired showing its vested right to the twenty acres, and prepared and submitted to the Department of Crown Lands affidavits proving their right to the property, but the Department refused to consider them. The affidavits were again submitted and again returned without consideration. Instead of the matter being dealt with according to law an ex post facto Statute was rushed through the Legislature, being read three times in one day. An extract from this Statute printed at page 16 makes it necessary to characterize the Legislation.

A petition was then presented, asking among other things that the territory in question should be dealt with under the general law and that the rights and claims of the petitioners should be investigated and considered. Counsel on behalf of the petitioners appeared before the Cabinet and urged the granting of the petition. An investigation was, however, refused and the Government attempted to sell the bed of the lake, including the twenty acres belonging to the Florence Company. After formal protests and the filing of a Caution a Patent was issued to the alleged purchaser, which it is contended was wholly unauthorized and is ultra vires.

Before this was done the Florence Company offered to submit the question as to whether Cobalt Lake was open for exploration at the time of the said discovery to the Court of Appeal and if this