

the other. The severity of the labor which these men have to undergo in crossing over in these small boats would not be believed by those who have never crossed the strait. I think the Government should provide for the building of sheds for the boats of these men; as it would only require a small amount, and as the men themselves are very poorly paid. The Government has nearly the united support of the representatives from the Island; there is only one member in opposition to them in this House and another in the Senate, and if they go on with this work I believe they would have the support of the whole Island. The Minister of Railways told us last Session that the surveys had not been completed; but that is not the case at the present time, and when the papers come down I hope we will have some light on the subject.

Motion agreed to.

RETURNS.

The following motions for returns were severally agreed to:—

Return showing the cost of the surveys and location of the second 100 miles west of Red River of the Canadian Pacific Railway, from 1st January, 1879, to 1st February, 1881.—(Mr. Guthrie.)

Statement or estimate of the quantity and value of the iron for bridging on the Canadian Pacific Railway, from Selkirk to Kamloops, and for such information as to the number, length and character of the bridges as is in the possession of the Government.—(Mr. Glen.)

Correspondence in relation to the purchase of a property for the establishment of a Post Office in the Town of Sorel.—(Mr. Geoffrion.)

Return showing the names of all persons employed: 1st, as permanent French Translators; and 2nd, as Sessional French Translators, of this House, from the 1st of January, 1874, to the 1st of February instant, with the amount of money paid per month or per day, as salary or wages to each of them respectively, for each month within the same period.—(Mr. Scriver.)

House adjourned at 10:20 o'clock, p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, 14th February, 1881.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

PRIVATE BILLS.

The following Bill was read the third time and passed:—

Bill (No. 27) to amend the Act 43 Vict. Chap. 61, intituled an Act to incorporate the Assiniboine Bridge Company.—(Mr. Scott.)

THE LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Mr. HESSON moved for copies of all papers and correspondence between this Government and the Government of Ontario, in relation to the debt said to be due by the Dominion to certain townships in the Province of Ontario, under the name of the Land Improvement Fund; also, for copies of that portion of the award made and confirmed between the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, relating to the settlement of the Crown lands and Common School lands account, whereby so large a sum as \$226,456.86 is said to be due to certain Ontario municipalities; also for all Orders in Council in relation thereto. He said: This is not the first time I have brought this matter to the attention of Mr. Yeo.

the Government. This Land Improvement Fund was established by 16 Vict. Chap. 159, Section 14 of which reads as follows:—

"It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to reserve out of the proceeds of the school lands in any county, a sum not exceeding one-fourth of such proceeds, as a fund for public improvements within the county, to be expended under the direction of the Governor in Council, and also to reserve out of the proceeds of unappropriated Crown lands in any county, a sum not exceeding one-fifth as a fund for public improvements within the county, to be also expended under the direction of the Governor in Council; provided always, that the particulars of all such sums, and the expenditure thereof, shall be laid before Parliament within the first ten days of each Session; provided always that not exceeding six per cent. on the amount collected, including surveys, shall be charged for the sale and management of lands forming the Common School Fund, arising out of the one million acres of land set apart in the 'Huron Tract.'"

This 1,000,000 acres of land appears to have been set apart a short time previous to 1859, and the price was fixed at \$2.50 per acre for the school lands and \$2 per acre for Crown lands. Settlement proceeded very slowly. The country was then known as the Queen's Bush, the roads were very bad, and it was found necessary to establish a more liberal policy. That was done upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Doctor Rolph, by an Order in Council, and the price was reduced to \$2 per acre for school lands, and to \$1.50 per acre for Crown lands. Payments were made from time to time to the municipalities interested in this fund, under this Act, at the rate of one-fourth of the proceeds of the school lands, and one-fifth of the proceeds of the Crown lands, until an Order in Council was passed on the 6th of March, 1861, cancelling further payments from future sales. I contend that that Order in Council did not apply to the proceeds of any sales made prior to the Order in Council, that it could not be retroactive, and that the municipalities interested in that fund cannot possibly be deprived of the receipts arising, after 1861, from the sales made up to that date. I hope to have, in this matter, the assistance of the hon. leader of the Opposition, for I find that when that hon. gentleman had the honor of representing the county of Bruce, he made an effort to obtain, for the municipalities chiefly interested in that fund, their proper rights. On reference to the journals of the Legislature of Ontario for 1869, under date of November 25th, I find the following:—

"On motion of Mr. Blake, seconded by Mr. McKellar,"

"*Resolved*—1. That by the Land Act of 1853, it was enacted that it should be lawful for the Governor in Council to reserve out of the proceeds of the school lands in any county, a sum not exceeding one-fourth of such proceeds, as a fund for public improvements within the county, to be expended under the direction of the Governor in Council, and also to reserve out of the proceeds of unappropriated Crown lands, in any county, a sum not exceeding one-fifth, as a fund for public improvements within the county, to be also expended under the direction of the Governor in Council.

"2. That on the 7th of December, 1855, an Order in Council was passed, reciting that applications had been made for aid from the Improvement Fund created by the said Act, and directing that the Crown Lands Department should appraise the Inspector General of the amount at the credit of each county for the proceeds of sale of both Crown and School lands, so that the proportions accruing to the Improvement Fund might be set apart by the Receiver General for that purpose.

"3. That the petitions presented to this House on the subject of the Land Improvement Fund, be referred to a Select Committee, composed as follows:—The Hon. Messrs. Wood, Richards; Messrs. Ferrier, Finlayson, Galbraith, Pardee Boulter, McKellar, and Blake; with power to send for persons and papers."

I find that that Committee made a report, and I desire, for the information of this House, to read that report in order to support the claim I am now making on behalf of the municipalities that are asking to be paid the proceeds of the sales of lands made prior to 1861. The Report reads:

"REPORT of the Select Committee on the Land Improvement Fund.

"To the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"The Select Committee to whom was referred the petitions relating to the Land Improvement Fund, begs leave to report as follows:—

"The Committee have held many meetings, and examined numerous witnesses and papers, and carefully considered the matter referred to them, and they find unanimously: