

## MANITOBA LANDS.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS moved the second reading of the bill with reference to unpatented lands in Manitoba. He explained that its object is to settle disputed land claims by reference to a Commission consisting of the Chief Justice and the two Puisne Judges. In the old settled portion of the province there might be two thousand occupants of lands who have not received any title from any one. The period had arrived, however, when the Government is in a position to deal with the issuing of patents.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU regretted exceedingly to find that the Bill had not been printed in French for the information of many like himself who were not as conversant with English as they would like to be. He certainly admitted that the bill was a move in the right direction, but there were many details which he wished time to consider. He hoped under these circumstances the hon. gentleman would defer the bill until the following day, when it would be printed in French, and in the hands of gentlemen who would consequently be in a better position to understand its character.

Hon. Mr. SUTHERLAND admitted the general principle of the bill, and that it was very necessary. He took exception, to the fact that one provision appeared to be made for those settlers who received grants from the late Earl of Selkirk. He understood, however, that the hon. Secretary of State intended making an amendment which would probably cover the difficulty.

Hon. Mr. MILLER thought as the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bureau), admitted the principle, he might allow the bill to pass.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU again urged his objection as necessary, unless French was to be eliminated entirely from the proceedings of the House.

Hon. Mr. GIRARD said that he had only just arrived from Manitoba, and had hardly time to look over the bill as carefully as he would like, especially as it was not printed in French. He admitted that such a bill was necessary; but it would have to be carefully considered in view of the interests involved.

Hon. Mr. BOUTSFORD enquired whether it was not unusual to refer such matters to judges, who might subsequently be called upon to deal with them in a judicial capacity in case of an appeal from an inferior tribunal.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL explained that for 30 years in Ontario committees of the judges met twice annually for the purpose of considering claims of a similar character, and no difficulty had ever arisen in that

province, such as that apprehended by the hon. member.

The order of the day was discharged, and the second reading of the bill made the order for Thursday.

The House then adjourned.

THURSDAY, 20th March.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 o'clock.

Hon. Mr. DICKSON, from the Committee on Standing Orders and Private Bills, reported favorably on petitions of Three Rivers Bank; Isolated Risk Insurance Company; St. Francis and Megantic Railway Company; W. B. Howland and others; Union Forwarding Company.

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Hon. Mr. AIKINS moved the second reading of the bill with respect to unpatented lands in Manitoba.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU, after directing attention to the important nature of the bill, went on to say that there were two points to which he wished more particularly to refer. First of all, he contended that they had properly no jurisdiction to deal with such a matter. Manitoba had the same rights as Ontario and other provinces enjoy, and it could alone legislate upon all matters affecting the civil rights and property of the people. In Manitoba, indeed, the position of things was quite different from that in Ontario. When the Hudson's Bay Company sold their rights to the lands of the North West they gave up all their claims and privileges with respect to those lands. They received a certain amount of money, and besides that, large blocks of land. Now he was informed, on good authority, that a good number of settlers at the time of the transfer of the territory to the Dominion, were owing to the Hudson's Bay Company part of the price of their land, but in his opinion it was not, and never intended by the Manitoba Act, that anything could be recovered by the company against those settlers. So much so that it is stated that they will be entitled to have their patents for such land free. The word "free" was not stated but it was certainly understood. The 18th clause, in his opinion, ought to be struck out because it is a violation of the agreement made between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Dominion Government. By that clause claims, providing they were registered, could be enforced against the half breeds who might be indebted to the Company in spite of the patents granted