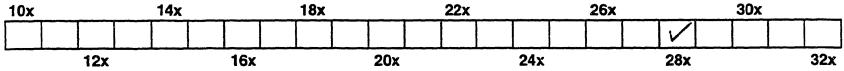
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2d Session, 5th Parliament, 19 Victoria, 1856.

BILL.

An Act for the protection of Squatters in the Townships of Lower Canada.

Received and read, first time, Thursday, 28th Feb., 1856.

Second reading, Monday, 3rd March, 1856.

Mr. J. B. E. Dorion.

TORONTO:

PRINTED BY JUIN LOYELL, YONGE STREET.

An Act for the protection of Squatters in the Townships of Lower Canada.

ONSIDERING that the permanent settlement of wild lands is of the very highest importance and that extensive tracts of land in the Prenuble. Townships of Lower Canada were formerly granted to certain individuals with the view of facilitating such settlement, and that many of these 5 persons have never fulfilled the conditions stipulated in the letters patent;

Considering that a large number of these grants of land have fallen into the hands of persons who are absent from the country and who do not make themselves known:

Considering that the lines separating these grants of land from the Crown 10 Domain are very imperfect and in many cases imperceptible, and that a great number of the inhabitants of Lower Canada and of the British Isles have settled upon wild lands the proprietors of which were unknown, under the impression that they were settling upon the lands of the Crown;

Considering that these settlers have cleared large tracts of land, have 15 improved them and adapted them for cultivation, have opened roads, erected houses and barns, and constructed drains, bridges, &c., &c., &c., of great value, that they have paid the local taxes and developed the resources of their respective localities;

Considering that the laws as they at present exist do not afford any pro-20 tection to these settlers, and that they are unjustly deprived of the fruits of their labor without any compensation therefor, and that no one is justified in enriching himself at the expense of another; Therefore Her Majesty, &c., enacts as follows:

I. Any settler or individual who shall have established himself upon any Settlers hold-25 lot or part of a lot of land in the townships of Lower Canada, who shall ing possession have enjoyed undisturbed possession thereof for a period of five years prelands to be vious to the passing of this Act, and who shall have improved the same entitled to all with the view of becoming the bond fide proprietor thereof, and to settle improvepermanently thereon, shall be entitled to all the improvements made upon ments. 30 such lot or part lot of land.

II. Any person who shall thus have held possession of any lot of land, Who shall be shall have cleared the same or any part thereof, and followed the rules of deemed a holder in good husbandry in cultivating the same, shall be deemed to be a holder faith. in good faith for all the purposes of this Act.

III. In all cases in which the settler and the proprietor shall not be able Arbitration to to come to an amicable understanding with respect to the conditions of ascertain purchase or sale or to any transactions whatsoever in relation to such value of improvements in lots of land, the value of the improvements shall be ascertained by arbitration in due course of law, and it shall not be lawful for the proprietor to eject the settler until he shall have paid him the value so determined of all his improvements.

This Not may be pleaded in suits pending before the Courts for the ejectment of settlers, it shall be lawful for the latter to plead and avail himself of the whole or any part of the provisions of this Act, and the Judges before whom such causes shall be pleaded shall be bound to give judgment in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Possession by V. This Act shall not affect the possession of property by virtue of 10 prescription not affected.

Public Act and extent of application. VI. This Act shall be a public Act and shall apply to Lower Canada only.