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Nec aranearum sane testus tunc melior, quia ex se fila gignit, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNALS.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, February 14.

The Hon. Mr Partelow, a Member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, laid before the House—

Report from the Hon. Thomas Baillie, Surveyor General, in reference to the state of the Crown Lands, accompanied by a Plan, shewing the ungranted and cultivated Lands in the Province.

This Report being read at the Clerk's Table, is as follows:—

STATE OF CROWN LANDS.

Surveyor Gen Office, 7th Feb. 1849. May it please Your Excellency,—In November 1847, I was called upon by His Excellency Sir William Colebrooke, to submit to him a Report on the state of the Crown Lands of this Province; which Report was laid before the Honorable the House of Assembly on the 28th January, 1848, and with that document I believe Your Excellency is already acquainted.

As the time however appears to have arrived when the voice of those will be heard who desire to promote the Agricultural Interests of the Province, and render it less dependent on Foreign Countries for Bread Stuffs, I trust I may be excused, if, in submitting to Your Excellency this Report of the transactions of the Land Department during the past year, I shall exhibit some statistics connected with the improvement and permanent settlement of the Province; and should my remarks be considered as scarcely belonging to me officially, I have to crave Your Excellency's indulgence, and if it be a fault, that it may be attributed to the love I bear the Province, and not to any attempt impertinently to interfere in matters which do not strictly appertain to my office.

The transactions of this Department may be classed under three heads; viz: Lands, Timber, and Minerals.

The number of Petitions received for the purchase of Land from 1st January, 1848, to 1st January, 1849, is 969, which on an average of 100 acres each, would comprise 96,900 acres. Of this number 638 have required to be surveyed, at the expense of the applicant, of which 510 are not yet returned as surveyed, and consequently no further action has been had upon them. The total number of acres which have been surveyed within the year is 31,350, at a cost to the applicants £831, averaging about 6½d. an acre, or £2 14 2 per lot of 100 acres, a sum far exceeding that for which the same work could be performed by the Government under a systematic arrangement of Survey.

Having so frequently entered my protest against the present mode of allowing every person to cause a survey to be made of Crown Lands in any shape and in any position as may see fit, upon which, in too many cases, no money is paid into the Revenue, I have nothing more to urge at the present moment beyond the assertion, that the man does not live on the face of the earth who can correctly compile those surveys; and the truth of this will one day appear.

The whole quantity of Land purchased during the year 1848 amounted to 26,761½ acres, of which, 14,777 acres have been paid for in full, and upon which £1,789 19 3 have been received; leaving 11,984½ acres which have been sold under the instalment system, and upon which £473 3 4 have been received.

I feel it my duty at this place to state that no less a sum than £22,831 13 3 appears by the books of my Office, to be still due upon previous land transactions, but many of the original purchasers (I have reason to believe,) have abandoned the land and left the country, and yet their names still remain on the Books and Plans of this Office as having a claim to the land in question. The area covered by their claims cannot be less than 150,000 acres.

In addition to the above quantity of Land, most of which is held in breach of

the conditions of purchase, I have to Report, that from Returns made to me, I estimate that no less than 1,600 heads of families have taken unauthorised possession of Crown Lands, comprising an extent of 163,000 acres, which at 3s. per acre may be reckoned at £25,290.

These two items therefore present the sum of £48,121 upon which but little interest is paid, and only a small portion of the principal to all appearance will ever reach the Provincial Chest.

I am far from wishing to deal harshly with actual Settlers upon the waste lands of the Crown, and I would cheerfully bestow fifty acres upon every man who is or should be willing to become an actual and permanent Settler; but while I would extend this consideration to the bona fide Settler, I cannot think that it is dealing fairly with the man who purchases and pays the whole amount down, agreeably to the Government Regulations of May 1843, to allow unauthorised possession of any extent of the Crown Lands because it is in fact lowering the value of the Land to him who bought and paid for it according to Regulations, to permit its gratuitous occupation by another who sets laws and regulations at defiance. It is, I am aware, a difficult question to deal with, but it is equally certain that the longer its settlement is delayed, the more embarrassing will it become.

The great impediment to the due administration and management of the Crown Estate for some years past has appeared to me to have been the dread of incurring expense, because, however judicious the expenditure may be, objections are easily raised, and the measure is condemned before its results could possibly be ascertained; hence, the reluctance of the Executive Government to embark in any general and extensive measures for the amelioration of the Province, as connected with its Wild Lands, and the settlement of the Wilderness is attributable to the labour of the Squatters, and those few Settlers who are honest enough to pay for the land they have purchased and occupied.

It may be considered as a fact, that this Province presents eight millions of acres of vacant Crown Lands, of unexceptionable quality, fit for Agricultural purposes; and the question has to be determined whether this valuable estate shall be thrown open to improvement by a judicious expenditure of the Public Money in Roads and Surveys through the most eligible tracts, so as to connect distant settlements, and encourage the occupation of the intervening spaces, or whether the mere Squatter shall be permitted to continue, in point of fact, the chief engineer of the Province, for it is undeniable that wherever these poor people settle there the Bye Road Money soon finds its way.

It is right that the poor man should receive all the assistance that the Public Funds are able to afford, in improving that home in the wilderness in which he must suffer so many bitter privations; but while the Crown estate has been given up to meet the expenses of the Civil List, the public at large have a right to demand that those resources should be duly cared for, judiciously developed, and fairly administered for the general good.

It has ever appeared to me to be unreasonable to suppose that a vast estate, comprising an area equal to that of Ireland, can possibly be advantageously and properly managed without the annual expenditure of a considerable sum of money; and experience has shown that when the expenditure was the greatest, the Revenue was also in the same proportion.

That the Province is worthy and capable of great improvement, will not I trust be disputed, and that being conceded, it becomes a duty to enquire how those improvements can be most beneficially and economically effected.

I have always been of opinion that the first step in the improvement of a Wilderness Country should be the construction of Roads from one Town to another, or from one Settlement to another, as nearly in a right line as possible, having regard to the quality of the Land through

which the Road should pass. With the view of acquiring all the information in my power, to enable the Executive Government to deal with the question, I addressed the accompanying Circular Letter to many of my Deputies, requesting information on the subject; and herewith I have the honor to append the fund of information I have received, accompanied by a Map, more clearly to set forth and elucidate their views.

I am fully aware of the difficulties which have ever presented themselves in endeavoring to improve the Country by any regular and systematic outlay of Public Money, the beneficial results of which may be deemed remote. Yet, it appears to me, that a valuable and extensive tract of Land, lying between Boies Town and Dalhousie, and between the Grand Falls and Newcastle, must remain an uninhabited wilderness for ages, unless aided by some such means. The distance from the Grand Falls to Newcastle may be estimated at 120 miles, and a road could be opened from one point to the other, for about £125 per mile; or £15,000 for the whole distance. By connecting these two important sections of the Country, a healthy stimulus would be given to both, and the increased value of the Land would soon repay the cost.—But if only £5,000 were expended, and persons taking up land on the Road should be permitted to pay for the same by work upon the road, allowing every alternate Lot to be reserved for sale by cash payments, I cannot but think that the Road could be so constructed, and the adjoining Land be so improved, as really in a few years to leave a balance in favor of the undertaking.

The importance of connecting the upper part of this Province with Miramichi, would also, I think, be apparent, and productive of much good.

It may not be out of place here to state my opinion, that the low price of Crown Lands, instead of tending to settle the Country, is really productive of a very opposite effect, so far as inducing Emigrants of any capital to proceed to New Brunswick. Little is known of this province in Britain beyond the fact of its exporting large quantities of Timber, and having to depend almost entirely for its bread stuffs upon a foreign country. It can therefore be scarcely expected that any of the surplus Agricultural population, possessing any capital should resort thither. We have no Agents in any of the Shipping Ports, or elsewhere, to explain to the people that we have millions of acres of excellent land in a healthy climate, open for their exertions.

It would almost appear that we require no addition to our agricultural wealth, and that our prosperity is insured so long as the Lumber Merchant can keep his British Creditor contented by shipments of Timber and Deals. To whatever extent the Province may in years past have benefited, (and I fully admit that benefit has accrued to a certain extent) yet to make that trade our sole dependence, is, in my humble opinion, folly in the extreme. It is with the view, therefore, of enabling the Executive Government to develop the Agricultural resources of the Province, that I have so far ventured to dilate upon the capabilities of New Brunswick.

As I before observed, we have eight millions of acres of good land to be turned to account. The question would naturally present itself, How are we to raise funds to improve this domain? I should say that there could be no difficulty in raising one or two hundred thousand pounds upon security of this very estate, and by the judicious expenditure of that money, the value of the whole could be so increased as to enable the Province to repay the debt and interest.

The Timber Licenses for the past year, and which will expire on 1st May next, cover an area of 2,157 square miles, at an average rate of 16s. 8½d. per mile, producing to the end of the year £1,992 8s. The highest rate paid for any one lot was £20 1s. per square mile, being a Licence for nine square miles, situate on the left bank of the river Saint Croix, about 25 miles above St. Stephen. The

quantity of Land under Licence in 1847, was 5,360 square miles, which produced the sum of £3,585, 7 9, the highest price paid per square mile being £5, the whole quantity averaging only 10s. 5½d. per square mile. By the above your Excellency will perceive that the system of Auction has this past year produced some beneficial results, having increased the rate from 10s. to 16s. 8½d. per square mile, although only 68 lots were contested.

The Export Duty Act, intended to alleviate all the evils under which the Province suffered, has, to a great extent, proved highly injurious to the Trade. The Auction system in previous years has only been so in name, as the cases are rare where the Revenue has derived any benefit therefrom; and as in the performance of my official duty, I never could reconcile it to my ideas of common sense, that 640 acres of well Timbered Land should be permitted to be worked over for twelve months for 10s., so I have always considered that a most pernicious stimulant was thereby given to the speculator in the Lumber Trade. The simple question may be asked, would any man in his senses so dispose of his private property, and if not, why should the public lands be so dealt with? The Lumber Trade should not be the only branch of industry receiving such protection, which, in practice, has proved injurious by enticing into the woods a larger amount of men and money than the market could possibly remunerate.

I pray your Excellency's pardon for these remarks, which, perhaps, may be considered as inconsistent with the subordinate duties required of a Surveyor General, but I wish to raise my humble voice, now that the opportunity offers, of correcting the evil; for past experience has convinced me, that should such an improvement take place in the Lumber Market at home as would present the least prospect of profit, vast numbers of persons would again rush into the woods, in the vain hope of recovering what they had lost. Again the market would be overstocked; and again the same results would occur.

Independent of the prejudicial effects of the Export Duty Act, it is unjust in its operation, for whatever may be the intrinsic value of the commodity, the duty is the same. If therefore the Export Duty is still to continue, I cannot but hope that some more equitable scale may be established; for while the large square Timber could well bear a much higher rate, the Deals can hardly pay even six pence per thousand superficial feet of one inch thick.

Numerous objections have been raised against the manner in which the Crown Estate was managed previous to the year 1837. A reference to the accompanying Statement of Receipts for the last twenty years, will at least show that the Revenue for the first nine years, viz: from 1st January, 1829, to 31st December, 1837, amounted to £203,719, while that derived from the same source for the 11 subsequent years, has only reached the sum of £145,357.

The Mining transactions of this Department may be stated to be 23 Leases now extant, viz:—One in Gloucester four in Carleton, two in York, two in Sunbury, six in Queens, one in Northumberland two in Kent, one in St. John, one in Westmoreland, one in Albert, and two in Charlotte. The whole have realized the sum of £365 10s. Two rights only were sold during the last year, one for £35 and the other for £5. All these Leases are held subject to the Regulations which existed at the several periods when they were taken out. I believe the Province of New Brunswick possesses vast wealth in her Minerals and that in the course of several years, a large Revenue will be derivable from that source. Coal and Iron of the best quality, as also Plumbago, Salt and Silver, have already been discovered, and only require the application of capital to work them to advantage. But I respectfully state my opinion, that for the next 15 or 20 years, the utmost liberal extension should be given to those who are willing to commence