

Crown in Chancery to make out a new writ of election for the said electoral district.

THE PORTFOLIO OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Hon. GEO. E. FOSTER. Yesterday the question was asked as to when the vacancy in the Public Works Department would be filled, and I think the minister who was in charge asked that that question be repeated to-day.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). I see by the statement just made by His Honour the Speaker, that the seat of North Oxford is now vacant; and the portfolio of Public Works is also vacant. I am not in a position to make any statement to-day, but I shall have pleasure in doing so at an early day.

VETERANS OF 1866 AND 1870.

Mr. F. D. MONK. Before the Orders of the Day are proceeded with, I would like to call the attention of my right hon. friend to a matter of some urgency, and that is the request that was made a few days ago by the veterans of 1866 and 1870 for a grant of land from the government in recognition of their services. As my right hon. friend is aware, and the matter has been brought to my notice, the provincial legislature of Quebec is going to prorogue very shortly, and many of those interested in the petition which was presented a few days ago to the government are anxious to obtain some kind of answer from this government before that prorogation takes place, because upon that answer will largely depend the steps they intend to take with the government of Quebec. My right hon. friend will remember that when these gentlemen, who are deserving of the highest consideration, went before the Quebec government they were told by the provincial Prime Minister that their request would more properly be addressed to the federal government. Consequently, they are waiting with some anxiety for the answer of the government here in order that, before prorogation, they may, if necessary, bring the matter once more to the notice of the provincial government, and that the provincial government may, if necessary, obtain legislation for the purpose of satisfying the petitioners. I have received several letters in reference to this matter, and have been requested to call the attention of the government to the request of these claimants, and to ask for as prompt an answer as possible.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). I think it is obvious to any one, and my hon. friend (Mr. Monk) will agree with me, that if the veterans of 1866 and 1870 have a claim against anybody, it is the Dominion government, although I do not say that the veterans, from their point of view, have not done well to address themselves to the provincial government. Mr.

Mr. SPEAKER.

Gouin, the provincial premier, I do not think went further in his answer than to say that they should first of all address themselves to the Dominion government. This they have done, and the matter is now under consideration. But I must say, and my hon. friend will not be surprised, that up to this moment the government has had no time to take that matter in hand and give it the attention which it will require before we can come to a conclusion. The matter is under consideration, and without making any pledge, I will say that I will give an answer during the present session. When the answer will be given, I am sorry to say that I can give no indication to-day to my hon. friend, but certainly it will be given during the present session.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I may add that this matter has been mentioned to me by some gentlemen* residing in the province of Ontario who were on military service in 1866 and, possibly, in 1870; and I would like to make on their behalf the same claim for federal aid that has been made by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) for the veterans of the province of Quebec.

THE DEFAULTING LAND AGENT, NIXON.

Mr. FOSTER. I brought a matter to the attention of the Minister of the Interior six or seven days ago, one in regard to which it should not have taken him a very long time to furnish the information. It is a matter which is a little urgent and pressing, and I would like to call the attention of the First Minister to it. The new Minister of the Interior is not as punctual in getting in here at three o'clock as some of the older ministers, for instance, my hon. friend the Minister of Customs, and that is the only period when we can well refer to the matter without delaying proceedings. If the First Minister will mention it to him, I will bring the matter up to-morrow.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I have no objection. If the Minister of the Interior does not come in before the House rises to-day the hon. gentleman will have his answer, because it is ready.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTHWEST.

House again in committee on Bill (No. 69) to establish and provide for the government of the province of Alberta.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

On section 22,

Nothing in this Act shall in any way prejudice or affect the rights of properties of the Hudson Bay Company acquired, held or existing under and by virtue of the conditions of the deed under which that company surrendered Rupert's Land to the Crown.