

convenience to the people of that country. I think every member from the Northwest knows that as well as I do. There are many letters coming all the time from our constituents asking us to see the land department at Ottawa and to arrange matters for them. A very large proportion of the people of the Northwest have business to do with the land department, and it would be very much more convenient for them if they were enabled to do their business on the spot. Besides, I do not consider that the administration of lands from Ottawa is at all what it should be, and is far less satisfactory than it would be on the spot. There are many points I might specify in which I think the administration at Ottawa is decidedly not in the interest of the country. At this moment I will not say any more about that, there will be other opportunities later on. But I make the assertion that I do not think the administration of the lands in the Northwest Territories is what it should be, or is what it would be if the administration was carried on from a central point in the Northwest Territories. It stands to reason that it is very much more easy to interest the members of a House sitting right on the spot and composed of gentlemen who are all acquainted with the circumstances of the country, than it is to interest a large House such as is assembled at Ottawa. For instance, we have ten members for the Northwest Territories, and if anything is going wrong in the Northwest Territories it is necessary for some of those ten members, possibly a very small number of them to acquaint the whole of this large House with the circumstances, and to get this House of 214 members interested in the matter. That is especially difficult in view of the fact that so many other matters of vast importance have to be dealt with here.

I think it might be taken for granted as a general principle that the administration will be better on the spot than it can possibly be if the administration takes place from a centre, 1,500 miles or more away. The hon. member for West Assiniboia apparently thought it would be unwise to trust the local assembly with the administration of affairs up there. I think the right hon. First Minister has shown that human nature is much the same everywhere and that there is as likely to be as good administration by the direct representatives in the local house of the affairs of the new provinces as there is likely to be if they are administered from Ottawa. The hon. member for Assiniboia, also, I think, asked the question as to how it would be possible to carry on the local government at the present moment without the revenue which is to be granted by the Dominion government as compensation for the loss of the lands. I looked at the Auditor General's Report a few minutes ago just to see what the revenue derived from Dominion lands amounted to, and what the act-

ual working expenses were on account of these lands and I find that the net revenue from lands and timber agencies, less certain refunds which were made, amounted to \$890,152 last year, and that for the previous year it had been \$113,287 greater than that. The expenditures on current account, Dominion lands offices, salaries, examination, and protection of timber lands and so on amounted to \$247,282. Well, it seems to me that the difference between these two sums constituted what was really the revenue from Dominion lands during the twelve months ending 30th June, 1904, a sum which amounts to something over \$600,000. Of course, in addition to that there is a large expenditure on capital account for surveys and so on, but, I think, the government of the Northwest Territories would equally be able to raise a sum on capital account to meet such capital expenses as the expenses of surveys and so on. So, I gather from the Auditor General's Report that there is a very considerable revenue coming in at the present time from these lands, an income which was very nearly as large as the compensation which is to be granted for the first few years for the loss of the public lands. I have no doubt in my mind whatever that it would be quite easy for the local government to very considerably add to that income, thoroughly acquainted as all the members of the local house would be with the local conditions. A new point was introduced into the discussion also by the hon. member for West Assiniboia when he stated that the retention of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police was a consideration which had to be looked at in connection with this question of public lands. For my part I cannot see that the question of the retention of the Mounted Police is affected one iota one way or the other by the question as to whether the Dominion or the new provinces have the possession of the public lands. If the amount of compensation is being placed at this present figure on account of the retention of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police we should certainly like to hear some assurance from the government that that body will be maintained.

Mr. HERRON. Before this resolution passes I would like to add a word to what has already been said in reference to the lands in the Northwest. I was very much surprised to hear the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) state this afternoon that a great change has come over the people of the Northwest lately in reference to their lands. In my part of the country no change has come over the people. They are just as strongly in favour of having their lands to-day as they were one or two years ago, and I do not think anything will be done or anything can be done in this House to compensate the people in that country