

head of cattle running on the ranches to-day which are not provided with one ounce of feed.

Mr. SCOTT. As I happen to represent a constituency which is divided by the line under consideration, I would like the privilege of saying a few words more upon the question. Like with many other questions, the selection of this dividing line was a compromise. There were people representing the interests affected who wanted the dividing line sixty miles further east, which would run in the neighbourhood of Crane lake on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. When we faced this problem, the first question to be decided was whether it was well now to grant provincial autonomy to the Northwest. That was decided in the affirmative, though not with absolute unanimity. The next question was whether there should be one or two provinces. That was decided in favour of two provinces, again not with absolute unanimity. Then the question arose as to how these two provinces were to be treated in regard to finances and other matters; and with perfect unanimity it was agreed that it would be well to treat them with absolute equality—to give them exactly the same financial status. Then came the question of selecting the dividing line, and, as I mentioned in the debate on the second reading of these Bills, each member who was under the responsibility of giving advice on that question was under a very heavy responsibility.

My own preference was that the present eastern boundary line of the district of Alberta should be selected as the dividing line. It would be about 50 or 60 miles further west than the line which has been chosen. However, the weight of opinion carried in favour of the fourth meridian line, which in this Alberta Bill is named as the eastern boundary of Alberta. After all, I have no very serious objection to urge against this line, although I still think that the eastern line of the present district of Alberta would be the fairest line, looking to the future populations of these respective provinces as we may expect them to be, considering the class of territory that composes the two provinces. The northern portion of the province of Saskatchewan, so far as our present knowledge about that country goes, cannot be expected to bear as heavy a population as the northern part of the province of Alberta. As I mentioned once before, the foot-hill country adjacent to the Rocky mountains, and even the Rocky mountains in the southern part of Alberta, will probably bear heavy population because of the large coal deposits which are there. Now I understand my hon friends from the Territories who sit on the other side of the House to contend that the ranching population is unanimously opposed to the selection of the 4th meridian as the divid-

Mr. HERRON.

ing line. My hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy), I understood, expressed that view. He read an extract from some newspaper or magazine which stated that view distinctly, and I understood him to endorse it. And he referred to a resolution that was accepted at a public meeting in Medicine Hat declaring that the placing of the dividing line on the 4th meridian was a great hardship to the ranching industry, because laws passed to govern a farming community would conflict with those necessary for a ranching country. That is a complaint, on the face of it, made on behalf of the ranchers who are to be left or placed in Saskatchewan, the eastern province. I ask the hon. gentlemen to state fairly if they have heard up to this moment a protest from any community of ranchers who are left in Saskatchewan through the selection of the 4th meridian as the dividing line, against these Bills as regards that dividing line. I have evidence to the contrary. I received on February 18th, before these Bills were introduced, a resolution by telegraph from the secretary of the Moosejaw Board of Trade, a non-partisan body, a body of business men, in the following terms:

Board of Trade unanimously of opinion that dividing line between provinces should not be further east than 4th meridian. Please use your best efforts.

(Sgd.) SEYMOUR GREEN
Secretary.

I also received, about the same time, a copy of a resolution adopted by the Liberal Association of Maple Creek. Of course, this association is a partisan body. I would call the attention of the House to the fact that if there is a purely range district and a successful and prosperous range district in the Northwest Territories, it is the district of Maple Creek:

To whom it may concern:

This is to certify that at a meeting of the Maple Creek Association held here to-day the following resolution was unanimously carried:

Moved by I. C. Dickson, seconded by G. W. Quick, that in the opinion of this meeting the time for the granting of provincial autonomy to the Northwest Territories has not yet arrived—

If the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) were here I would call his attention to this statement, which might help to explain to him why his party was not more successful in the Northwest Territories on the 3rd of November last.

—and we therefore trust that delay may be had in the proceedings in reference thereto. But in the event of autonomy being granted and two provinces formed we are of the unanimous opinion that the 4th principal meridian should be the dividing line. As a ranching district we have no fears of being isolated, as it is our opinion that a very large percentage of the ranching district lies east of the 4th meridian.

(Sgd.) D. KEARNS,
Secretary of Liberal Association, Maple Creek.