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THE N. W. LEGISLATURE

FINISH OF PREMIER'S SPEECH.

Railway Exemptions, School Lands, Justice to the Territories, Banff Park.

(Continued from last week.)

However well disposed a government might be the conditions that existed in Parliament today would prevent any adequate amount being given to them. He made that statement; he believed that was the case. So long as the Territories remained in a dependent position so long would it be impossible for them to secure even that adequate recognition without which they could not carry on. The North-West had gone through the preliminary stage. They had been founding their institutions for a number of years, and they had fairly well exhausted the power that had been given them. They had founded their institutions, and had got out of their foundations. The time had arrived for them to begin the superstructure. (Cheers.) They had laid the foundation well; they had exhausted the powers they possessed; and although he would not say that further progress was impossible, yet he did say that progress to a large amount was not possible, and to develop was not possible under the existing institutions. (Hear hear.) They had, as the hon. member for Yukon has said, grown out of their clothes. He did not believe their present institutions were suitable to their present conditions. The question arose, why should their jurisdiction be limited? They had been accorded very largely the duties of a province. The part given was of more importance than the part withheld. They had arrived at a time when something more was necessary, some larger power given, and then left to work out their own salvation. They could not look to the Dominion Government. The surrounding conditions would prevent any development from having a free hand. It could never be done satisfactorily until their institutions were so developed that they were put in a position to develop their own resources. Hitherto their governments work had been mere administrative. Having had a small vote they had been deprived of doing more than looking after the interests of the country. They wanted more. The question was: What should we do? Should we simply stand still? He gathered from the expression of the House that they should never stand still. They must ask for further powers and demand more money. Why should not they?

TAKE THE VITAL PLUNGE? When they had arrived at the actual point, both the financial point, and the constitutional point, they might not be so difficult about the further step. That step was to go to the very limit allowed by the British North America Act. Even if tomorrow they were formed into a province or provinces, apart from the financial question to be settled, he did not fancy that any person in the whole Territories would feel that a large revolution had occurred, because after all the provincial institution, as it touched the every day life of the people was much the same as at present. They were driven and driven by necessity, both by the fiscal and conditions and constitutional position, to consider the assumption of provincial institutions. The question was, within what time? He did not think it would be desirable to involve the House in a discussion as to fixing the actual date of an event they had no power to bring about. After all, they had not the fixing of the date and any expression of the opinion of the House on the subject would only have weight in proportion to the unanimity with which it was expressed. But there was a certain date within which it ought not to be taken, but within which they could be settling ready. (Hear hear.) Next year there will be

A CENSUS TAKEN.

No action could be taken until the census was taken. The population of the country was the basis of the per capita grant.

Mr. Bennett—Not impossible, only inexpedient.

Mr. Haultain—Nothing was impossible. The Federal Parliament could bring in a bill tomorrow and make a dozen provinces if it so wished. Nothing was impossible, but it would be absurd for any parliament to attempt to lay down the terms and conditions until a census had been taken, as population was their basis. More than that! It was rather a significant coincidence that the term of the present legislature ran out in 1902. They would have completed their term then and if things went along in their ordinary course the census would be completed just before the Assembly had completed its labors. A third part of the confidence was that there would be a new Dominion Parliament between then and then. All of these facts falling together seemed to him to establish, not only a significant time, but an opportune time.

THE TIME WAS NOT TOO LONG. Some things had to be understood, so many opinions to be expressed, so many claims to be enforced, that the short space of two years was not a bit too long for the full discussion of the subject, for its consideration by every member of that House and every man in the North-West Territories. As he had already said, although the time was good, still the mere fact that they knew perfectly well no province or provinces could be established this year or next year, and before such province or provinces could be established, it would certainly be in the interest of the Territories, and of any portion of them that the fullest consideration should be given to all the important subjects he had indicated. There was another point that might be raised in regard to the subject. What right had they to act now, what right or what mandate had they to express even a theoretical opinion? It might be said they had no authority from the people to plunge them into the discussion. He would say, however, that it was not a new subject. They had been sufficiently clear indications that it would be a subject for discussion in the Assembly, though not with the view of making a deliberate statement as to whether they would have it or not. The subject involved too many questions for that. But it was he believed before the House last summer and it was a theme of discussion from one end of the country to the other. He

himself referred to the subject in a speech he made to the House in September 1898, shortly before the general election. He referred to the matter when introducing the estimates. Then again he used only refer to the general election of 1898 when he made much the same statement as he had made in the House. He stated that the time had arrived, and would be the last work of the new legislature. Therefore, he now repeated, if they needed any mandate for taking the step, he asked the House to take that mandate had been fairly indicated. After all, they were not assuming the part of the people of the Territories; they were making an agreement. They simply asked that negotiations should be opened. Indeed, the main result that would follow from the resolution would be the further discussion that would take place throughout the country. The people needed to be brought face to face with the question; they needed to have explained to them the actual position in which they were. If nothing else resulted from the resolution than the discussion throughout the country, the necessary education, in a sense, in regard to these important rights, would be in itself a sufficient justification for beginning the discussion at the present time. But it was

A LIVE QUESTION TODAY.

It was a practical question. Under what institutions were they going to live and carry on the development of the country? The question had been discussed during the last few months, and it was discussed today. All over the Territories the subject was looming up larger than any other. The whole country was considering it, and was not opposing it. It had been said that if a bill were taken the question seven out of ten would vote down an autonomous resolution. Perhaps they would it did not understand it. But at any rate the country was not opposed to the discussion of the provincial idea. What it was opposed to was a radical, immediate change.

The people were somewhat alarmed by the speech he had made at Yorkton. They thought the direct route would be direct taxation, the establishment of municipalities, and a large number of other things laid up. Doubtless wherever the question of a province was raised. There was no necessity for any such alarm as that. If a certain amount of misapprehension existed it was their duty to get rid of it, not by shrinking from it but by discussing it, not by singling out these highest, direct taxation and municipalities, but by an intelligent discussion of what would be the only financial terms they could reasonably expect. He had always made it a province, proper financial terms. He would never consent to the establishment of a province under such terms as were

GRANTED TO MANITOBA. They would be better as they now were than they were. No, he had always coupled with any proposal, that a direct understanding must be given in regard to proper means to carry out both duties and obligations. There should be no misapprehension in regard to the matter, but no desire to plunge the country into it without a settlement of those important questions. He had no intention of rushing into direct taxation or municipal institutions. With the powers they had possessed for fourteen years, direct taxation and municipal institutions could and be used except the modification sense they had used them already in their legislation. No legislation would plunge the people into these institutions. It was a matter for the people themselves. Now, his principal argument for the immediate taking up of this question with a review to settlement and discussion, was that they must make progress in this country, and without a change that would almost be impossible. Education was the instrument of progress, and without discussion progress would not take place.

Mr. Haultain continued by saying that he now came back to the resolution. "Whereas parliament had certain powers. Remember that parliament had power to deal with the eight drivers before it got out in the position of self governing colonies like Prince Edward Island and British Columbia, which could please themselves whether they be federated or not and could dictate their own terms. The Territories were simply the

casualty or the dominion parliament, and without reference to the Territories, were it so inclined, it could make a province or provinces. But they did claim as a moral right to be treated in analogy with the other provinces; they claimed the right to discuss and negotiate; and if they had not the power to dictate terms, or to be a party to an agreement, they claimed to be treated in the same way as citizens in other parts of the Dominion were treated. The resolution had left out anything that could be called the controversial side of the question. The question whether there should be one, two, three or a dozen provinces was not for them to discuss. It was one of the most difficult things in drawing that resolution to do so as to avoid controversy. They might waste a great deal of valuable time in discussing these controversial points, and yet get no nearer a solution. He had, therefore, purposely refrained from putting anything of a controversial nature into the resolution. They said at once that it was understood that parliament had the power to do what they liked in the matter, and they had the right to do so without any consultation with the people of the Territories. Again, the Territories were not in the position of a province seeking to enter confederation. Parliament had power to carve the Territories out into as many provinces as it saw fit; but the House could ask for an opportunity of expressing its views upon the Government. They did say that their interests and their future were so much bound up that they should at least assert a moral right to negotiate and discuss. For that reason the resolution had been put in the way it was put, so as to keep out of the controversial side of the question. They did not wish to throw, or indulge in an academic question, or indulge in themselves as divided House, or end of little groups, each one with its pet idea. Furthermore would then say "These people do not know what they want, they do not help us in coming to a conclusion. We will deal with it ourselves." But he did say there were important sides of the financial question and the

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