

of the Canadian Pacific Railway and up there where there were no lines, but where to-day there are lines stretching parallel and crosswise at the present time there was great doubt if large proportions of these lands were good agricultural lands. Within twenty years out of those areas which are well known now, but were not then so well known, the proportion of really good land has risen very high indeed, and the proportion of really unserviceable land has diminished almost to a minimum quantity so that in these large areas now better explored and better known there is very little of what you might call waste land; the greater part of it is land which is valuable for what it will actually produce and which becomes more valuable as railway and transport facilities are brought every year nearer to it. You have to take the same possible progression of things in connection with the northern part of the old provisional districts and the new provisional district which you have taken in and as year after year passes, in the course of fifteen, twenty or twenty-five years, how much of that land of which I have spoken, lying farther to the north in the old provisional districts and in the one to the north of the Saskatchewan will become absolutely as good and as valuable, treated generally as the same quantity of lands farther to the south? You will say there are arid belts in the northern portion and so there were said to be arid belts in the southern portion. There is no doubt that there are, but the arid belts that were thought so serious a few years ago in the southern portion do not have any great depressing influence on us now when we forecast the future of that country. Whether the seasons have changed, whether agriculture has done its work in to a certain extent changing conditions there, we cannot tell the reason, but these are the facts of the case, that the area of what was thought to be unserviceable or arid land has gradually and constantly receded and the area of what is serviceable and useful has gradually and continually grown. I think that probably the same change and the same course of events which has taken place with reference to the southern portion of it will take place with reference to the northern portion of it, so that the whole trend of my argument is that we have not by any means exhausted the serviceable land, and in the areas which are to be put in these two great provinces if you allow the same progress and development to go on in the future as in the past with accelerated rapidity as will be the case twenty or twenty-five years, we will see not only the area of serviceable land largely extended, but the area of transport facilities equally as largely extended and consequently the value of the lands will become greatly enhanced.

There is the patrimony which, I think,

Mr. FOSTER.

ought to belong to these provinces; there is the patrimony which to-day you are selling for \$37,500,000, and you are selling it for \$37,500,000, why? Simply because you do not see how you are going to finance your province through unless you take the ready cash and give up your patrimony. Is there not another way? I have no doubt there is. Suppose a business corporation had 228,000,000 acres of that land, would it be an impossible thing for that corporation to set off a certain proportion and to raise money upon these lands for actual current purposes from year to year, and hold the power of redemption of these lands, and hold the power of the management and of the sale of these lands as well? That is not a difficult thing. My hon. friend has said that within a certain number of years that would make away with a certain number of millions of dollars. Would it be a difficult thing by way of their lands, a certain proportion of them as security, to raise that money which is necessary for the provinces in the initial period? It is not a difficult thing for business people to do, and why should it be a difficult thing for a legislature? But, Sir, there is another way in which it might be done, and I throw this out for what it is worth. The Dominion of Canada is proposing to pay in lieu of lands and as compensation for these lands; it is proposing to pay, outside of all the other sums which it gives to each province, one per cent for a certain number of years on \$37,500,000, and so on upwards. That is, for a certain number of years they will get \$375,000 a year out of the Dominion treasury; after that, and when the population comes up to a certain figure, they will be paid each year from the Dominion treasury \$562,500, after that for another certain period \$750,000, and after that they will be paid for all time \$1,125,000 per year. Would it be a difficult thing, in the interest of both the Dominion and of those provinces, that the Dominion should undertake to advance that amount of money for that length of time—just exactly the amount it is proposed to give now—and that it should hold in trust as security for that money a certain number of acres of the lands of these provinces set off in certain divisions? Suppose, for argument's sake, you were to set off 25,000,000 acres of land for one of the provinces out of your 228,000,000; set off 25,000,000 acres of fairly serviceable lands, and suppose that you should hold these lands without having any necessity placed upon you to sell from year to year under present conditions and at the present price; suppose that you could hold these lands, selling as the price suited you (the price coming up to a good fair amount alongside of your settled portions), selling a certain number of acres of these lands each year, as much as you deem prudent and wise, but not by necessity forced to sell them, and so on, for a period of ten or fifteen years; do you not think that the rise in the price of the lands from \$1.50 an