

question of the exemption from taxation and all the unsettled land questions on a satisfactory basis. I may state, while I think of it at the moment, that in reference to the exemption of Canadian Pacific Railway lands, I have received several petitions from the Northwest Territories, which I have presented to this House, asking that something should be done before we become a province by which we shall be relieved from the burden of the Canadian Pacific Railway exemption on their rolling stock, roadbed, yards and everything of that kind. I do not think that any one in the Northwest expects this government to step in and cancel the contract that exists between the Dominion government and the Canadian Pacific Railway. I do not think that is at all the idea, but I believe the people of the Northwest think—and I do not see what objection there can be to it—that this government should try to deal with this question in some way which would make the Dominion government to some extent responsible for the exemption clause in the Canadian Pacific Railway contract. I think that every hon. member in this House knows that when that railway was built across the continent it was not built expressly for the benefit of the people of the Northwest. It was built to fulfil a political compact made by the Dominion of Canada. When British Columbia came into confederation in 1871 she came in on the understanding that this railway would be built so as to connect British Columbia with the eastern provinces in ten years. It is not necessary to go over ancient history, to recite the efforts made by different parties in the Dominion of Canada to induce the building of this road, but it is sufficient to state that in the final bargain that was made with the Canadian Pacific Railway an exemption clause was inserted in the contract. We claim that this exemption was not given to help the people of the Northwest, but to get British Columbia into the confederation, that it was given for the benefit of the whole Dominion, and we think, therefore, that this parliament should deal with the question. We do not expect this government to repudiate previous contracts with railway corporations, but I think we are justly entitled to believe that the parliament of Canada should step in and deal with that question, and that the people of the Northwest should not be further burdened. But that is not the worst feature. We have that burden on our shoulders at the present time, but now we are going further. We are going into another land deal, we are going into provincial autonomy, we are going to establish new provinces, and this Dominion parliament is going to retain the balance of the public lands in that country. I have already pointed out that by improving our lands in the Northwest Territories we are advancing the prices of lands held by private corporations, and we are going to be burdened in the same way by reason of the Dominion gov-

Mr. HERRON.

ernment retaining control over these lands in the Northwest. We had looked forward to the time when we should get provincial autonomy and be able to deal with our own lands, which we believe would in some way counterbalance the disadvantage we have been subjected to in reference to Canadian Pacific Railway and other railway corporation lands in that country. But what is the result? The Dominion government is going to retain our lands in the Northwest Territories, hundreds of millions of acres in extent, that we believe rightfully belongs to the people of the Northwest. It is not only that they are going to own them, to receive the benefit of them and that the money is going to be put into the treasury of this Dominion, but we, the pioneers of the Northwest, the men who have made that country, who have been cultivating and improving their lands for the last twenty years, are the ones who, by their efforts and by their taxation, will add to the value of those lands which will be worth from \$10 to \$20 an acre. Yet a body entirely outside of that portion of the country is to derive the full advantage of the labours and taxation of the people who are there.

Mr. SPROULE. Do they pay any taxes in the meantime?

Mr. HERRON. I do not suppose the Dominion government will pay any taxes in the meantime. They never have, and I do not suppose they will be more liberal in the future than they have been in the past.

Mr. SPROULE. I mean the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. HERRON. That is one of the objections we take to the provisions of these measures in respect to the lands. We also think we are as capable of dealing with the land question in the Northwest Territories as they are here at Ottawa. I wish to state most emphatically that the Dominion lands in the Northwest Territories, in a great many instances, are not used for legitimate purposes. A great many land deals are going on as side issues for political advantage in that country. I wish to make an exception of some of the land officials in that country, who are just as good officials as there are in any country, who know their positions and who have not interfered in Dominion politics, but I wish to say, on the other hand, and I say it without fear of contradiction, that quite a number of land agents have been nothing more nor less than common political organizers. It is easy to prove that statement, and I think this is one reason why the Dominion government is so anxious to retain our lands.

As I said before, I am not going to take up much of the time of the House in discussing these questions as I am not a speaker, and shall not attempt to make any great speech on this subject. But I do think that before the government com-