

inion, I beg to tell him that the profits from that investment have already been sufficient, and more than sufficient to pay the entire claim of the Hudson Bay Company. Probably the reason which has caused gentlemen opposite to drop the old argument as to the purchase of the Territories, is the grant within recent years of 116,550 square miles of the same territory to the province of Quebec. More than that, the Prime Minister now is proposing to make free gifts of the same territory to Quebec, Ontario, the new province of Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, although in the case of the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, it would not be a gift but simply a request that they should administer the territory. The old argument that this territory belongs to the whole Dominion must have been abandoned by the present government, or otherwise they would have no warrant for making these free gifts to the old provinces.

The Prime Minister has appealed to the precedent of Manitoba as a reason for withholding the public domain from the new provinces, but he deliberately disregarded that precedent in 1898 when he had a Bill passed through parliament giving to the province of Quebec a vast area, nearly one-half the size of one of the new provinces. If there is any doubt as to the statement I have made, I would like to lay before the House a few extracts from an Order in Council of the Quebec government dated the 24th of April, 1898, upon which the legislation was subsequently framed. Attached to this Order in Council is a report from Mr. E. H. Taché, assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands, who, after discussing the question as to the province of Quebec making a demand for that portion of the coast of Labrador which is under the jurisdiction of Newfoundland, goes on to say :

The claiming of that territory would result in serious diplomatic complications which the Dominion government certainly will not raise, but it seems to me that a compromise might be arrived at which will prove acceptable to all those interested. The claims under the old French regime, thus altered, would still include a vast extent of territory, which in extent and value would be a good equivalent to the territory claimed by Ontario. The claim might be framed in the following manner :

He then goes on to define in detail the boundary line as it was finally adopted in the Bill passed by this parliament, and he says :

The definition of the limits means an increase in area of 116,550 square miles. In my opinion to go further, as far as the Hudson Strait would be too grasping.

Too grasping even for the province of Quebec in a matter of this sort ; so grasping indeed that the deal might not be put through parliament. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to protest in any way against this accession of territory to the province

of Quebec. I think it was a perfectly correct policy ; I believe that the province of Quebec could administer that territory far more satisfactorily than it could possibly be administered from Ottawa. Some day there may be a great rush of people into that country for all we know, and then I am quite certain that the provincial management will be more satisfactory to these people than could possibly be the management of the more distant central government at Ottawa. But, Sir, this incident forms a precedent set by the Prime Minister himself, which surely he ought to follow in this case of the new provinces. I am afraid, however, that what is sauce for the goose in this case is not considered sauce for the gander.

Now, I would like to ask whether there is any similarity whatever between the conditions which prevailed in Manitoba in the year 1870, when Manitoba became a province of this Dominion, and the conditions of the Territories in this year 1905. If there is no similarity whatever in conditions, there can be no precedent. At that time Manitoba was under the paternal government of the Hudson Bay Company. In the debates of 1870, you will find the opinion expressed that the people of Manitoba were scarcely fit for a provincial form of government. A doubt was expressed as to the 'fitness of a people just emerging from the conditions of serfdom'—that was one of the phrases used. They were also referred to as an ignorant people. They comprised in all some twelve thousand souls, and they were at that very time in the throes of rebellion. Is there any similarity whatever in the condition of Manitoba at that time and the present condition of the Northwest Territories, who have a responsible government, a constitution, limited certainly as to its powers, but one which they have enjoyed for a great many years past ; who have carried on a liberal and progressive government, a government which is, I think, second to none in any of the other provinces of the Dominion, and also with a population, as I have just stated, larger than that of the majority of the provinces of the Dominion.

Then, if any hon. gentleman will look through the debates of the House of Commons for many years succeeding the formation of the province of Manitoba, he will find that the opinion on both sides of the House was always in favour of the principle that the public lands in the province should belong to the province. I have culled a number of opinions from the great men of that time—Mr. Mills, Sir John Macdonald, Sir Leonard Tilley, Mr. G. W. Ross, by all of whom to a greater or less extent that principle is recognized. The reason given in nearly every case for withholding the lands from the province was that it would not pay the province to hold them—that the administration of the lands would

Mr. LAKE.