

all told in the Northwest Territories—I heard it myself on many platforms—that the proper thing for us to do was to trust the Liberal party, that with their record in the past they would be sure to give us fair and liberal terms. We have been told quite recently and told triumphantly that the seven Liberal members of parliament who come from the Northwest Territories would support the Bill in its present form. If so, then I think it must be due to a sudden change of opinion on the part of at least two of those members. The two hon. members who were in the last parliament. They have put themselves definitely on record in regard to this matter. I refer to the hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) and to the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott). The hon. member for Edmonton, on the 13th of October, 1903, said this :

I said in this House last session, and I take the liberty of repeating it, that if the House will give the Northwest Territories the terms asked for in the draft Bill contained in these papers, I will certainly support it most strongly. We will support it. These are the terms we want.

That statement was placed on record. Then the hon. member for West Assiniboia a couple of years previously had placed himself on record as asking very similar terms to those which were subsequently comprised in the draft Bill which was submitted by the Northwest Territories. Therefore, I hold, Mr. Speaker, that if these two hon. gentlemen, at any rate, from the Northwest Territories, had any mandate from their constituents in that country, that mandate would certainly be in the terms in which they had placed themselves on record in their public utterances.

I regret that after having for years advocated the granting of provincial autonomy to the Northwest Territories, I am unable to welcome the measure which has just been introduced. It does not contain the 'fair and just terms' for which the people of the Territories ask and it does not give 'complete and absolute autonomy' such as we were promised by the Prime Minister. It creates two new provinces of an inferior type and of a lower grade than the other provinces of the Dominion of Canada, and I contend that the people of the Territories are justified in their demand to be placed on the same level as is occupied by the other province especially as they have a population larger at the present moment than the populations of four of the seven existing provinces of the Dominion. Their disapproval of the Bill which has been introduced has been amply proved by the great number of protests which they have made and which have been placed before this House. I am sorry that there are two provinces instead of one. The assembly of the Northwest Territories was strongly in favour of having only one province for the whole of the Territories. They had voted on that question and

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had endorsed that position by a large majority. The whole country had given their opinion on it when they voted as they did at the general elections to which I have referred. The late Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) committed himself on only one particular point and that was with reference to the matter of one or more provinces. Although I was not present at the time I am told on credible authority that both at Regina and Indian Head he stated that he was in favour of one province. The Solicitor General (Mr. Lemieux) has given the reasons why apparently the government considered it would be undesirable to make the whole of the territories into one province. He was afraid that the progress and the prosperity of one large province would become such that the influence of that province upon the rest of Canada would be too great. I regret also to see the name of Assiniboia disappear from the map. The most thickly settled portion of the eastern province, has borne that name for a long time past. The magnificent wheat producing fields of that district have made the name famous in the great markets of the world. Assiniboia contains the largest portion of the population of the eastern provinces, and therefore I think when a choice of names was being made Assiniboia should have been retained. No matter what the opinion may be as to whether it was a good name to choose in the first instance, it was sanctioned by usage, and should have been preserved rather than the name Saskatchewan.

However, there are other and greater questions than these involved in the Bill and I shall leave these minor points and proceed to deal with two or three of the main points at issue, as shortly as I possibly can. I shall take up for a few minutes the limitation of the powers of taxation which are being imposed on the people of the new provinces in these Bills—I refer of course to the question of the exemption of the Canadian Pacific Railway from taxation. One would imagine from what one constantly hears in this country that the Canadian Pacific Railway had been built in order to open up the Northwest and that therefore the Northwest should pay for the Canadian Pacific Railway. But was that the case? Let us turn back for a few moments to the Quebec resolutions. Section 69 reads as follows :

The communications with the Northwestern Territory, and the improvements required for the development of the trade of the great west with the sea-board, are regarded by this conference as subjects of the highest importance to the federated provinces, and shall be prosecuted at the earliest possible period that the state of the finances will permit.

That is to say this question of building a railway into the west was looked upon as a subject of the highest importance to