

or only \$1.10 per head. With Manitoba I will make no comparison, because that province, I think every one admits, is not under fair terms. In 1899, with an approximate population of 250,000, Manitoba drew only \$524,281 from lands and subsidies, as against a little over \$1,000,000 for Saskatchewan with the same population. For the last two years Manitoba has been selling railway lands and increasing her annual revenue. But that cannot long continue. In 1903, even with these sales of nearly \$300,000, Manitoba's total lands and subsidy revenue was \$826,175 with a population of 255,000.

I think, that as a whole, these comparisons will show that the terms which have been granted to the people of the Northwest Territories while not over-generous, are fair; they simply place the people of the Northwest Territories, judging by the conditions of the other provinces, in a fair and equitable position to carry on their affairs of local government.

Attention has already been called to the fact that I gave expression to some opinion in this House on the matter of dealing with the lands when the question of autonomy came to be settled. That is perfectly true. I may be permitted to read again some of the very good doctrine that I then uttered, as it is preserved in 'Hansard.' In 1901 I said:

If the proper principle is adhered to, if the principle of absolute equality be observed, if parliament places the new provinces upon an equitable basis, the local government will be given a proper grant for government, also the per capita subsidy, and be given what may be shown to be due as the debt allowance; and they will be put into possession of the public resources, lands, timber and minerals, in the same way as the other provinces were put into possession of these resources.

I might point out that that is not an absolutely accurate expression. These other provinces were not put in possession, but left in possession of these resources. Very young members sometimes fall into these inaccuracies.

I appeal to the House whether it would not be unwise and impolitic to create provinces on any different basis from that on which other provinces stand. Entire equality is the only sure guarantee of the permanency of the confederation structure.

I think that is a perfectly true sentiment.

Is it not a fair proposition that the citizen of the Northwest should be looked upon in all respects as equal to the citizen of any other province. The proper policy for this parliament to pursue is to make the Northwest citizen in all respects equal to the citizen of any other province of Canada. The subjects that come under the purview of the local government affect the people more closely than those subjects dealt with by this parliament, and the best way to promote the progress of that part of Canada will be to give as much financial ability as possible to the local legis-

latures to deal with their local affairs, so that education, public works, and all local services may be efficiently and adequately dealt with. My opinion is that by no other means can parliament do as much at one stroke to promote the progress and the true welfare, not of the Territories alone but of Canada as a whole, as by placing the main portion of Western Canada in a strong, efficient, capable position as concerns its local government.'

It will be observed that the burden of my statement related not so much to the question whether the lands should be transferred to local management as to the question whether these local governments should be given an equitable financial status in comparison with the local governments in the other provinces. And that object is achieved in these propositions presented by the government, not precisely, as I then urged, by actual transfer of the lands, but by a method, which, I am convinced, is financially even better for the local governments. I was a strong believer in the principle of the ownership of the lands by the province, or at all events, that the province should have the right of the beneficial interest in them. I am a strong believer in that principle still, and it is that principle that is practically assented to in this measure. But I may say, that in 1901, when I made that statement, and even later, the principle found no general acceptance in this House or amongst any of the people east of the great lakes; and my main purpose in uttering these words here was to try and impress upon the people of eastern Canada the necessity of recognizing the right of possession or, at least, of the beneficial interest in the lands of the Northwest Territories by the people of these Territories. Now, this House has already heard the very clear and ample statements made on this subject by the ex-Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) and by my hon. friend from Edmonton (Mr. Oliver). They have made arguments which in my opinion are unanswerable. There has been no genuine attempt on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite to answer them. At all events those arguments were sufficient to convert me to the proposition that it is absolutely better for the people of those new provinces to have the lands administered here, so long as the provinces obtain a sufficient sum in lieu of lands to place them in an equitable position to carry on their educational system, their public works, and, generally, their local affairs. And I am the more confirmed in that view by the expressions which have fallen from hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. The hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), who, we assume, is the chief financial spokesman for the Conservative party in this House, gave expression on the 15th of March, to the following with regard to the financial terms embodied in these Bills. Addressing the Minister of Finance, he said: