

Canada, and if it be thought wise at a future date they can be added to the provinces which we are now forming.

Upon the question of the lands which has been discussed at some length, I have very clear and positive opinions. I regard the question of a successful settlement policy—and my opinion is not changed by the fact that this policy may now require to be carried on under somebody else's supervision—I regard the question of a successful settlement policy in Canada as perhaps one of the most important, if not the most important of all subjects with which we have to deal. For the last two or three years especially, we have seen the effect of the small beginnings of success of the policy of settling vacant lands of the west upon the general prosperity of Canada, and I think every serious minded man will admit that under no possible circumstances would this parliament be justified in taking any step which would imperil in the slightest degree the success of the immigration policy which we have been carrying on, and which the government proposes to carry on in the future. That is a thing which demands the most careful thought and consideration at the hands of this parliament. It was suggested by the leader of the opposition, and has been suggested by others who take the opposite view, that the handing over of the public lands of the Territories to the provincial government would not seriously interfere with the conduct of immigration. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have had on my shoulders the duty of carrying on a policy of immigration, and of harmonizing the operations of the lands department of the government and of the immigration department for the last eight years, and it taxes the efforts of the department to the utmost, when both the land department and the immigration branch are in the same hands and under the same control, to avoid the difficulties which constantly present themselves in the administration of this work. It would be difficult satisfactorily to carry on that work even if we had the land department in another branch of the same government; it would be embarrassing and difficult to an extent that few men appreciate who have not had the duty of actually carrying on this business. But if you hand over the land to three provincial governments—because you would have to treat Manitoba in the same way as you are treating the Territories—if you hand over the land to three separate provincial governments, each with its own ideas of policy, each with its own Minister of Crown Lands, and if the federal government has to deal with three provincial governments, every man who knows anything about doing business between governments must know that it would be absolutely impossible that satisfactory results could be achieved. It is

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not necessary to suggest that the provincial governments would do anything that is wrong, it is not necessary to suggest that they would be improvident, that they do not know how to carry on business as well as we do. The people of the west are just as capable as the people in any other part of the Dominion; they are extremely capable, and when they achieve provincial status, if these lands were handed over to them, they would do precisely what people in the other provinces would do, they would administer these lands just as they saw fit and in accordance with their own ideas of policy. The result would be that you would have three governments to deal with, each with its own idea of policy, each with its Minister of Crown Lands, and possibly no two of them with the same ideas as to the policy that should be carried out in respect to this subject. It might be, Mr. Speaker, and probably would be, that instead of administering these lands for the purpose of settlement they would administer them for the purpose of revenue, and I do not know that we could blame them very much if they did so. But if they did that, the result would be that the settlement policy of the country would stop.

It would be quite as impossible to give those lands to the provinces with a limitation that they should carry on a homestead policy. A homestead policy would have to be carried out by provincial officers. And moreover the very day you gave these lands to the provinces with any limitation whatever, you would find an agitation arising to remove all limitations, and you would have that question on the floor of the House at every session of parliament. So, Mr. Speaker, I am clear upon that point; and if there is anything I can say to the members of this House that I think should commend itself to the judgment of both sides, I would say that nothing could be done which would more certainly imperil a successful settlement policy upon which the greatness and increase in the financial strength and resources of Canada depend, than, under any circumstances, to allow the public lands of the prairie provinces to pass from the control of the Dominion government.

As to the financial provisions, Mr. Speaker, I think they are generous and liberal, but I do not think they are too generous or too liberal. We expect that these great provinces will play a great part in the history of Canada, and it is creditable to us that on both sides there has come nothing but approval of the liberal and generous treatment accorded by the government to these new provinces upon the inception of their provincial career. Let me say, however, Mr. Speaker, not wishing to say anything ungracious or to throw a note of discord into the discussion of this subject, that there is one suggestion which I desire to