

lature in Canada was corrupt and turning handspings with the public resources, and he gave that as reason why new provincial legislatures should be endowed with public resources. We cannot expect that versatile gentleman, however, to keep in his mind one day what he said the day previous or to be guided by any fixed principle; and when he talks about some ulterior, dark, hidden political purpose animating the present government, no one in this House really takes him seriously. Had he taken the trouble to look up the records, he would have found that there have been other governments in this country which have dealt with this same matter of public lands. More than twenty years ago, there was a Conservative government in this country, led by the late Sir John Macdonald, and that government dealt with the public lands in a new province. Does the hon. member for South York think that the late Sir John Macdonald had any ulterior, political motive in the policy he then pursued?

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. He may have had.

Mr. SCOTT. I have here a portion of the record on that subject, contained in the journals of Manitoba for 1884. I find here the report of the subcommittee of the Ottawa government, which reads as follows:

After having very fully discussed with the delegates all the points embraced in the said memo and the other matters referred to, report as follows:

That following the order of the memo of instructions the delegates urged with great earnestness:

1st. The right of the province to the control, management and sale of the public lands within its limits, for the public uses thereof, and the mines, minerals, wood and 'timber thereon, or an equivalent therefor, and to receive from the Dominion government payment for the lands already disposed of by them within the province less cost of surveys and management.' And they, the subcommittee, have given to all the views advanced by the delegates in support of this claim the fullest consideration, and with every desire to meet their wishes as far as possible, in the general interests of the Dominion cannot advise Council to recommend to parliament to grant this request.

The lands of Manitoba hold a very different position in relation to the Dominion government, from the lands of the other provinces.

This applies with equal force to the lands of the Northwest Territories.

Shortly after the union of the old provinces, the government formed from that union purchased at a large price in cash, all the rights, titles and interests of the Hudson Bay Company in and to the territory out of which the province of Manitoba has been formed. It incurred further a very large expenditure to obtain and hold this territory in peaceable possession, and at a still further cost which is continuous and perpetual, is extinguishing Indian titles and maintaining the Indians, so that the Dominion government has a very large pecuniary interest in the soil which does not exist

Mr. SCOTT.

in respect to any other of the confederated provinces.

Further on I find the following:

Parliament pledged its faith to the world that a large portion of those lands should be set apart for free homesteads to all coming settlers, and another portion to be held in trust for the education of their children.

This was a statement of the government of Sir John Macdonald that parliament was not free to transfer these lands to the local government of any province without attaching to them the condition that the free homesteading policy should be continued:

No transfer could, therefore, be made, without exacting from the province the most ample securities that this pledged policy should be maintained; hence in so far as the free lands extend there would be no monetary advantage to the province, whilst a transfer would most assuredly seriously embarrass all the costly immigration operations which the Dominion government is making mainly in behalf of Manitoba and the Territories.

The great attraction which the Canadian government now offers, the impressive fact to the mind of the men contemplating immigration is that a well known and recognized government holds unfettered in its own hand the lands which it offers free, and that that government has its agencies and organizations for directing, receiving, transporting and placing the immigrant upon the homestead which he may select. And if the immigration operations of the Dominion, which involve so large a cost, is to have continued success and to be of advantage to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, your subcommittee deem it to be of the utmost importance that the Dominion government shall retain and control the lands which it has proclaimed free to all comers. Were there other considerations of sufficient force to induce them to recommend this transfer to Manitoba, and as a consequence and by precedent the surrender to the provinces to be created from the Northwest Territory, all the lands within their boundaries, then they would advise that the provinces holding the lands should conduct their own immigration operations at their own expense.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. From what is the hon. gentleman reading?

Mr. SCOTT. From the journals of the assembly of Manitoba for 1884.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Would the hon. gentleman read what follows—what the people said in answer to that?

Mr. SCOTT. I think I have read sufficient.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Well, if the hon. gentleman will give me the page, we will have some one else read it.

Mr. SCOTT. It is page 142 of the journals of the provincial assembly of Manitoba, 1884. Does the hon. gentleman (Mr. W. F. Maclean) dispute that the portion I have read conveys the real meaning of the report of that subcommittee?