

gard. I do not know enough about the history of the province of British Columbia to be prepared to offer an opinion upon the wisdom of the administration of the public domain of that province. I know that in my own province I do not approve of the way the Crown lands have been administered; they have been sold instead of being leased under proper control as to cutting upon them. In Quebec, as I understand, there is a system of leasing which perhaps may not always have been carried out very wisely, and in Ontario there is also a system of leasing and I believe in respect to the Crown lands, in respect to minerals, in respect to the public domain generally, it would be wise for the province to retain the ownership and lease subject to annual rentals as far as that policy is reasonably practicable. It has been followed with great success in Nova Scotia with respect to minerals and if it were not for the revenue derived from minerals, Nova Scotia would have an annual deficit of a large amount or the public services would have to be provided for much less liberally than they are at present.

Mr. WILLIAM WRIGHT. I am strongly of the opinion that the lands ought to be handed over to the management of the Northwest. I submit that they could manage them much more economically than they can be managed from Ottawa no matter what party may be in power. They are the people on the ground. We have in this House ten representatives for the whole Northwest to voice the views of the people there, but in the two legislatures that will be formed there will I think be fifty representatives, there will be representatives from every section of that country. I submit that they are much more interested than we can possibly be in the development of that country. I have different reasons why I would like to see the land in the hands of the people there. I do not think the right policy is being followed now in regard to the administration of these Northwest lands. Under the immigration arrangements that were introduced by the Interior Department, the government were I believe giving each alternate quarter section to prospective settlers, and I think selling the next quarter section in order to raise a revenue sufficient to carry on the management of the lands. Now it is proposed to hold these lands as a source of revenue. If this policy is carried out, we might ask ourselves how much revenue we are to get from it. If we have lost more than \$1,000,000 in the past, will we not lose a million in the future if this policy is continued, so that ultimately these lands will be all gone and nobody will have been benefited, because I submit that in giving a quarter section to each settler we are not fulfilling all our duties in re-

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

gard to settlement, because as any one who is familiar with that country knows, a quarter section is not sufficient to establish a settler in the west.

Provision should be made for at least another quarter section to every prospective settler; and I think that the ex-Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) when he proposed putting a motion of that kind some time ago, intended to allow the settler to have the opportunity of buying the quarter section alongside of him. That, I think, would be a move in the right direction. It would be an improvement on the present policy of giving the quarter section at a nominal rate to some company or partnership or individual who will hold the land for speculation. To allow such lands to be held for speculative purposes is a natural hindrance to the settlement of the Northwest, because it augments the price which the settler will eventually have to pay; and every dollar added to the price of the land is so much in the way of the settlement of that country. The proper policy would be to extend the present condition of giving a quarter section by providing that the actual settler, who cultivates the ground, will have the opportunity of buying another quarter section at a reasonable price. To-day, after he gets the first quarter section for nothing, he finds himself against the land of some speculator, and is forced to pay from \$6 to \$15 an acre before he can get the next quarter section. Two or three days ago I had a conversation with a man who tried to get land out there and found the difficulty so great that he actually came back in disgust and refused to settle under the present conditions. These people say that if proper conditions were imposed, they would move out there this spring and become settlers, but of course greater inducements are given to Doukhobors and Galicians and so on than to the young men from other parts of Canada. One gentleman that I saw said that he went up there to a land office and was pointed out a certain number of quarter sections upon which he might locate. After going out at considerable expense and selecting one, when he came back and tried to enter for location he was coolly told that they promised to hold it six months for some man in Ottawa, and that if he would wait until the spring and this man did not want the land, he could have it. After two or three similar experiences he came away in disgust, and has probably given up any notion of locating in the Northwest. If the present policy be continued, it will materially affect the settlement of that country. I do submit that if the people there had the management of the lands, they would administer it economically, promote settlement to a larger extent than is being done to-day, and save a large sum of money to this government. Even looking at the question from the standpoint only of economy, we would be making money for this Dominion and the Northwest by allow-