

the policy of the provincial government is to give free grants of lands. To hear some of our hon. friends from the west, one would almost think that the people of the province of Ontario were not given free farms in the northern parts of the province to settle. Let me read from the regulations under the 'Free Grants and Homesteads Act':

Persons desiring to take the benefit of the Free Grants Act must apply to the Crown lands agent for the district in which they intend to settle. The agent will give them information as to what land is open for settlement, and will furnish them with printed forms of affidavits which are necessary to be made by the applicants.

On being properly located by a Crown lands agent and on performing of settlement duties, a single man over eighteen, or a married man, without children under eighteen residing with him, or the female head of a family having children under eighteen residing with her, is entitled to a free grant of one hundred acres. If the hundred acres selected consists of a considerable portion of rock, swamp or waste land, the Commissioner of Crown Lands may make an allowance for such waste land, and may increase the quantity of land located to any number of acres not exceeding two hundred acres. The male head of a family having a child or children under eighteen residing with him or her may be located for two hundred acres as a free grant. And such male head of a family is permitted to purchase another hundred acres at fifty cents per acre cash at the time of location.

So you see there is some inducement for people to come from the old country and elsewhere, and for the surplus population of Ontario and the other older provinces of Canada, to locate in the northern section of Ontario. I do not understand why the government of the two provinces that are to be created on the 1st day of July next—if these Bills get through the House before the 1st of July next, there seems to be some little doubt about that at the rate they are going; however, when the two provinces are inaugurated and each sends twenty-five representatives to their legislature for the purpose of taking care of their provincial interests, these men will represent every section of those two great provinces, they will understand the local conditions, they will understand the requirements of the people who are residing there and who are coming in to settle; and when they meet together in their provincial legislatures I am of the opinion that if the lands were given to the provinces, these 25 men in each legislature would be well able to administer them in the interests of the people; and if, after due consideration, they decided that the best policy was to give the lands free to the settlers, or if they adopted that policy and it was found after experience that a small charge should be placed upon the land, then it would be for them to do as they wish; and if these representatives did not adopt a policy in the best interests of the people, the electors would

take care of them when they went back for re-election. So they would have the matter entirely in their own hands, they would have an opportunity of developing the country and appropriating their lands in the way they considered best. Men can go into those provinces now and receive free grant lands; but in five years from to-day it may be considered prudent that the new settler should contribute a small amount per acre for his land. I do not think that would be a very harsh provision, the proceeds would go towards helping the settlers. This would bring in a considerable amount of money to the provincial treasury, and if they did not have the land they would have the money. I think it was stated the other day by the Minister of the Interior that the new provinces would require an enormous amount of money to build their roads and other purposes, and it would be for them to say whether it would not be good policy to derive some revenue from the lands. If these lands were given to the provinces, as I think they should be, they would still form part and parcel of the Dominion of Canada, they would be given to the sons and daughters of the people who live in older Canada, men who are going from other parts to help develop that country. I do not think that the federal government at Ottawa is in the better position to administer and control these lands, and to adopt the best policy for the settlement of that country. I am rather inclined to think that a provincial government would be in a better position to administer the lands for the best interests of the country. Therefore I am not in favour of clause 20 of this Bill. I submit that in my humble opinion the policy of giving the lands to the provinces as they were given in Ontario and Quebec, would offer a stronger inducement to people to go out and settle there. I think it would be one of the very best policies that could be adopted by this government for the further settlement of that western country.

Mr. A. A. WRIGHT. If it be true, as the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat (Mr. Blain) states, that it is possible we may be discussing this Bill until the 1st day of July, there is one feature of this Bill that I think we might spend a good deal of the intervening time in considering, and which affords one reason why the Dominion should own the lands in the Northwest instead of handing them over to the provinces. As you know, Mr. Chairman, there is a large extent of territory in both of those to-be-provinces of what is called arid lands; but these lands, when they are properly irrigated become the most fertile and productive lands we have in the Northwest. It is true also that in the neighbouring state of Montana, there is a large amount of the same kind of land. Now in order to carry out this irrigation scheme it is necessary to have a sufficient amount of water to irrigate these lands. It so happens that there are two of