

acre, which is now the upset price, would become so much greater that it would be worth while to make some arrangement by which you could husband these lands until they became more valuable, and at the same time provide for your current expenditure during that time? And in the end, when your lands did become valuable, you would have the patrimony which would last, not only for your necessities of ten or fifteen years, but would be an endowment which would largely meet your necessities for all time to come. Take, for instance, a calculation—you may vary it according to your practical view—But I take this as not being far out of the way: Suppose you were to set aside 25,000,000 acres of land and keep them for ten years. Am I right or wrong in saying that that 25,000,000 acres of land, after the progress of ten years, with your railway building, your increased settlement, your homesteading, your development; am I wrong in saying that those lands would rise to the value on an even basis of \$6 per acre?

Mr. LAMONT. Might I ask the hon. gentleman just what that would include? Would it include the even-numbered sections as well as the odd-numbered sections?

Mr. FOSTER. It is a matter of arrangement.

Mr. LAMONT. Would the hon. gentleman allow settlement on these 25,000,000 acres?

Mr. FOSTER. I should think it would be a wise thing to provide that settlers would percolate through the part you set aside and get their 160-acre free homesteads, and thereby become the absolutely necessary purchasers for the lands you held close by.

Mr. LAMONT. Has not the great grievance of the Northwest settlers been that they could only settle on the even-numbered sections, and is not the fact that they have been debarred from the odd-numbered sections a great hardship on the settlers?

Mr. FOSTER. They could buy the adjoining sections, and they are buying them now in innumerable instances. Much of that land now belongs to railway companies and other companies. But suppose a reasonable government were looking at it, they do not want to retard settlement, they do not want to charge the settler who comes there more than is reasonable, but if they have the acreage set apart and it fringes on to the homesteads that are taken by the settlers that come in, does the settler to-day in the Northwest, if he can get good land next to his homestead at \$5 or \$6 or \$7 per acre, does he think he is paying too much for it? Hundreds and thousands of them are paying for it to-day, and they are glad to get it at that. I am just opening out what may be a possibility in the way of financing this

matter, which would be good for both the Dominion and the provinces. But not to keep you too long; suppose at the end of ten years the land became virtually worth \$6 an acre, there would be an endowment of \$150,000,000, which, at 3½ per cent, would give a yearly income to you of \$5,000,000. Under your present arrangement after your population gets to 1,200,000 you get \$1,125,000 per year, no more and no less. There is a finality then. All your years of progress in the future bring you nothing more than that unless you sit in your seats to-day and say: We will take care of that when the time comes; we will look for better terms.

Mr. FIELDING. Why stop your land value at ten years, why not carry it on to one hundred years?

Mr. FOSTER. I am going to carry it on; I will satisfy my hon. friend in that respect, I say you have to carry on this in a reasonable way. You cannot set your 25,000,000 acres off and say you will not sell a single acre of it, but you can be careful to sell it as a reasonable price and if you can sell what you do sell, and as little as is necessary for \$5 or \$6 per acre, you will have the remainder of it to sell later on at an enhanced price. Suppose that you kept it for fifteen years. With the tide of progress and development going on continuously, and accelerated as it will be, is it too much to say that your land at that time will be worth \$8 per acre, intrinsically worth it? If you saved a portion of it, and a considerable portion, unsold for twenty years, you would have land which would be certainly worth \$10 an acre, intrinsically worth it. If you had 15,000,000 acres left, you would have at the increased price a still larger endowment upon which you could draw for all time to come. Now, you can pick flaws in that arrangement if you please; you can settle down on the plan which you have thought out and are going to put through, or which you have not thought out still are going to put through. But it is not outside of fair financial ability and of fair practical arrangement with reference to the best interests of that country to take some such measures as that, and to raise for your present necessities, either on the security of your land, which it would pay you to do, or on some such arrangement as I have outlined with the Dominion government, what you require, and to keep your patrimony intact as a large endowment for your future needs. That would accomplish two things. The Dominion government would be lending a helping hand at the present. It would get back everything it had advanced. The government of each province would be getting what was necessary for it during the time of its adolescence, its infancy, so to speak, and it would be saving that patrimony for an enhanced endowment for the future, when it could