

well be worse, and I am certainly convinced that the people of the Northwest could very easily make it better and produce a better result than we see at the present time.

Now, I hold that the people of the Northwest would know just what was the best policy to follow with regard to the lands. I am not going to criticise that part of the government's policy that gives a quarter section to each farmer who goes in there with the intention of settling. Every man who has been in the Northwest knows that the moment he lands in Winnipeg he is run up against by the agents of the big land companies and land corporations, and land sharks of all kinds, under the present conditions. I think if a little attention was paid by the people who are living there, who would look after the bona fide settlers that go into that country and see that they are properly taken care of and properly treated, it would be much better than the conditions I found prevailing there when I visited the Northwest some time ago. It is true that the revenue from the lands has been inflated and shows well in our revenue returns, from the fact that they take credit for having paid off a lot of scrip to satisfy some sentimental claims that the half-breeds are supposed to have in that country. Well, we know there was far more land handed over to the half-breeds than they had any right to. In many sections all that was necessary to get half-breed scrip in the Northwest was a dark complexion and an elastic conscience. So if these claims for the half-breeds were paid in that way out of the land, I do not know why they should be put in the revenue returns and credit be taken for the Dominion of Canada as if it was revenue from the lands. I think we might well treat it as a matter apart altogether, because we have actually lost over a million dollars in administering the affairs of that country. Now, I want to point out that under present conditions large tracts of that land have been sold to companies and sometimes at very small price, by this government. The actual settler finds himself in this position, that while these companies have reserved the alternate quarter sections, the intending settler is wedged in between the lands of the company; and when the intending settler comes in and homesteads a quarter section, he finds on both sides of him land that belongs to some company for which he has to pay \$6, \$8 or \$15 an acre before he can occupy it. How much better it would be if the lands were handled by the local government, who would hold them for the use of the settler, selling them in alternate quarter sections at a reasonable price, receiving a much greater revenue, and affording greater encouragement to settlement than is the case to-day.

Now, Sir, I want to say a few words with regard to the school question. There seems to be a good deal of criticism by hon. gentlemen opposite of the policy of the opposi-

tion. They say we are hard to satisfy. I think our position has been made fairly plain. Our claim is that the Northwest people should manage their own educational affairs. Could anything be more simple than that? If they find in their wisdom that separate schools are best for the people there, they will undoubtedly continue separate schools. There is one phase of this question that I will take the liberty of discussing. I find that this legislation recognizes only two classes of people, namely, Protestants and Catholics. Now it would be interesting to know what is meant by Protestants. I had always understood that the term 'Protestant' meant Christians that came out at the reformation in the time of Martin Luther. In the broadest sense in which we can use the term, it means any Christian whose antecedents date no further back than the time of the reformation. When Ontario and Quebec went in together, when the rest of the provinces confederated together, that classification practically included all the people in Canada with perhaps a few exceptions, but since then the Northwest has been opened up, foreigners have been pouring in, and we have thousands of people there to-day who are neither Protestants nor Roman Catholics. I would like to know what, under the provisions of this Bill, is going to become of them. I have looked up the census of the Northwest, and I find that in the Territories there were at the date of the last census report 30,073 Roman Catholics, 27,806 Presbyterians, 25,366 Anglicans, 22,151 Methodists, besides a number of other smaller bodies quite numerous. What I want to point out is that you have four of the largest bodies almost the same as regards population. Now, we have a number of Anglicans coming out from England to settle in that country, who will bring out with them their English ideas. They are in favour of a state church, in favour of having control of their own education, and they have just as good a claim for their separate schools as have our Roman Catholic friends, sentimentally, legally or in any other way we may look at it. Why should we adopt a system and force it on the Territories which they might find it necessary to extend in a few years. Because I hold that to give to any one branch of the Christian religion the right to have a school of their own and deny it to any other (branch), is showing a partiality in favour of one branch of the Christian faith, that is not recognized in any other civilized country in the world. We might as well be honest and admit that while that condition of affairs lasts in Canada or anywhere else, you are always going to have agitation or the conditions which may bring about agitation at any time. If it be true that the people of the west are satisfied with their present school system, what objection can we have to letting them continue it or not just as they see fit. I