

gration and the question of the settlement of the public lands are closely associated. In most of the older provinces the amount of available land is not very great; at all events the land which is likely to attract settlers immediately is not very great—not so great as it is in the far west. Then, if we expect population to flow rapidly into the west, if we are to control the immigration policy, if we are to be able to carry out that vigorous policy which during the past few years has been converting that land into busy hives of industry in many sections, if, I say, we are to be able to carry on that vigorous policy which has built up the Northwest Territories in the last eight years, it is necessary that there shall be a retention of those lands in the hands of the Dominion government. But, if we make a mistake at this point we, at all events, have the comfort of knowing that we err in good company, in company which my hon. friends opposite will be bound to consider very good company. My hon. friend did not note the fact that when the province of Manitoba was created, just as we are to-day creating these two provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, the land question was considered and that for the very reasons which I have ventured to advance to-night the government of Sir John Macdonald decided that it would not be wise to give the province of Manitoba control of its own lands. If for good and sufficient reasons, the same reasons as those which have been advanced by this government, it was deemed well that in the case of the province of Manitoba, the lands should remain under the control of the Dominion, why is it not an equally sound argument to-day to say that the lands in the case of these new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan shall remain in the hands of the Dominion? But, that did not settle the question. After the lapse of some years the province of Manitoba revived the question. The province of Manitoba advanced the very reasons which my hon. friend has advanced in favour of having control of these lands. They were not content to rest under the constitution which had been given to them. They came to Ottawa and they asked the government, on more than one occasion if I am not mistaken, to change that provision of the constitution and to give the province of Manitoba control of the lands. I have in my hand the decision of the government of Sir John Macdonald in the usual form of a certified copy of a report of a committee of the honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 22nd May, 1884. The memorandum says:

The Committee of the Privy Council have named a sub-committee to confer with Hon. Messrs. Murray, Norquay and Miller, duly accredited delegates from the legislature of Man-

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itoba, upon the subjects embraced in the memorandum of instructions given by the said legislature of Manitoba to the delegates, as well as many other matters affecting the province.

The report deals with a number of matters. It is quite lengthy and I shall only be justified in detaining the House with the part of it which comes immediately in connection with the land question. After hearing these delegates, after hearing the very strongest arguments that could possibly be advanced, no doubt the very same arguments that my hon. friend has advanced to-day, why these lands should be placed under the control of the province, the government of Sir John Macdonald came to the following conclusion:

The lands of Manitoba hold a very different position in relation to the Dominion government from the lands of the other provinces. Shortly after the union of the old provinces, the government formed from that union purchased at a large price in cash, all the rights, title and interest 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 in respect to any other of the confederated provinces.

The purpose expressed in the memorandum of instructions—

That is in the memorandum of the Manitoba government—

—for which lands are sought, is that they may be applied to the public uses of Manitoba.

This purpose seems to be most fully met by the federal government already, viz.: in providing railway communication to and through Manitoba, in aiding the settlement of vacant lands, and in public works of utility to the province.

Further on the same report says:

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, are to have continued success and to be of advantage to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories your sub-committee 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 their 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