

but too long for me to read at this late hour, and during the discussion of these reports Mr. Gladstone proposed ten resolutions, two or three of which I will read :—

1st. "That the country capable of colonization should be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Company."

4th. "That such jurisdiction should henceforth rest in the basis of Statute."

7th. "That in reference to Her Majesty's Government to consider how the land capable of colonization, detached accordingly from the jurisdiction of the Company, should be settled and governed under free institutions."

And it must always remain a matter of regret among Canadians that those resolutions, so comprehensive in character, and so tersely worded, were lost simply by the casting vote of the Chairman, Mr. Ed. Ellice, a large stockholder of the Hudson Bay Company, and shortly afterwards its Governor.

Had I time I would like to read portions of the evidence taken before this Committee, and in the light of subsequent investigations, some portions would appear very ridiculous to hon. gentlemen, who would find it difficult to believe that no wheat could be grown where its export has since reached up into the millions of bushels. However, the report of this Commission closed the door of enquiry for many years. It is true that the people of Upper and Lower Canada still believing that their opinions about the British portion of this continent might possibly be as good as those entertained in England, continued to seek information from Professor Hind and from Simon J. Dawson, Esq., C.E., now a member of Parliament, yet so effective was the result of the enquiry in the British House of Commons to which I have referred, that Dawson was looked upon by many as a dreamer of dreams, who gave illusionary visions of fertility in a land which had been looked upon in the Old Country "as a place where the frost never left the ground, and where musk-rats and frogs disported themselves on the slightly thawed surface." Another Commission, however, (and this time of the Senate of Canada) put an end to all doubts and fears when in 1870, after the examination of a number of witnesses, they submitted the

following report, which can be found in the Senate Journal of that year :—

"The vast extent of country capable for cultivation, the favorable accounts given of its agricultural qualities, and the salubrity of the climate leave no room for doubt, on the minds of the Committee that the Region, North of the United States boundary, West of the watershed of Lake Superior, and extending north of the northern banks of the Saskatchewan River, is a good wheat and vegetable producing Territory.

The principal drawbacks would seem to be distance from navigation and railway communication, absence of markets for agricultural products, occasional visits from grasshoppers, and the cold of winter. But the testimony of all the witnesses examined upon this latter point tends to establish the fact, that although the thermometer indicates a much lower degree of temperature at Red River, in winter months, than in Ontario, yet the cold in its effects upon individuals, produces scarcely if at all more inconveniences in the former than in the latter country.

The Committee are satisfied that if measures are taken at an early date to afford facilities for access through British Territory to the Red River, it will be found to be not only a very desirable home for immigrants, but will materially enhance the prosperity and promote the best interests of this Dominion."

This report was adopted, and five thousand copies of the report itself and the evidence attached, were ordered to be printed.

I need not recapitulate my estimate of the great value of that report to the immigration, and other interests of Canada, and will content himself with saying that I know many prosperous and contented settlers in Manitoba who have been induced to go there by the reading of this report, and I might now add that all the conclusions then arrived at, have been borne out by subsequent practical facts, and the very proper suggestions of possible drawbacks have not proven to be such as would materially lessen the value of the country nor retard its progress.

As to the value of the present report, it is not for us but for the House to determine. I can only express my gratitude to the members of the Committee for their unwearied patience in its almost daily sittings; their zeal in the procuring of evidence, and the valuable information given by themselves on subjects which engaged their thoughtful attention when