

where. In those dry years that I have spoken about, the sloughs dried up. Places where there had been ponds when I went into the country, they are cutting hay on now. You bore down where those sloughs have dried up, and the land is so hard that you could run a railway train over it, and you would not find an impression after taking off the sod, so hard is the subsoil. I have known a farmer to dig a well 108 feet deep without getting water. The same man dug two wells, and was quite disgusted at his failure. He had to pay \$2 a day for the use of the machine, and board the man. He dug two wells without succeeding in getting water, and then commenced to dig a little piece off, and got water. The water does not percolate through the soil, it is so hard. This resolution of my hon. friend does not go far enough. He confines himself to a portion of that country where there are no people. My idea would be to confine himself to that part of the country where there are people—that is, eastern and western Assiniboia. We find great difficulty in getting water there. We do not require it for irrigation purposes, for five out of seven years there has been an abundance of rain. Everything grows well, but we require water for our cattle and for domestic purposes. We have the Qu'Appelle River north of the railway, and we have the Souris River south towards the boundary, and running into each of these rivers there are brooks such as you have in eastern Canada—or rather they are brooks in the spring of the year when the snow is going off. It is a great level prairie country, but everybody will concede this fact, that a prairie country, where there is no forest, is a dry country, because there is no protection, no mulch by the trees to keep the water on the land. It is very hot in the summer time, and naturally the moisture dries out of the soil. The snow drifts into the ravines in the winter season and in the spring of the year it melts away and runs off towards the ocean. It is hardly to be expected that the farmers of that country will undertake any extensive work, but if the Government would grant a sum of money to build dams to make reservoirs in those ravines, and retain the water, it would be of use in dry years and would largely help the settlement of that country. It would be a benefit to the settlers in watering

their cattle, besides being useful for domestic purposes. At present the farmers have frequently to haul water three or four miles in dry seasons. Many of them have dug three and four wells without finding water, though it might be procurable if they only knew the right place to dig for it. After living eight years in that country I have more faith in it to-day than I ever had before. It is bound to become—I do not care who says no—the greatest country in the world, because it has the resources in the soil to make it that. All that is necessary is that the people learn how to work it, and they are beginning to understand the proper system now, so that in the near future you may be sure it will develop into a great country. I had a contract a few years ago to supply beef to the Indian Department—it was in that dry year, 1886. I had undertaken to fatten old oxen in New Brunswick and almost lost money on them, but in the North-West I have seen cattle feed on straw or hay in the winter time and fatten without any other feed. I have bought steers and oxen, and they were in better condition than I have been able to fatten them on the best hay and roots and mill feed that I could procure for them in the east. They get as fat as you can desire to have them in that country on the grass alone. I have bought two steers that weighed 785 lbs. apiece at two years and five months, a three-year-old that weighed 630 lbs., while yearlings commonly weigh from 400 to 500 lbs. That is the sort of country we have in the North-West. No man thinks of feeding a steer anything but grass. You can get a steer anywhere you like in the country and he is ready for the knife; there is no such thing as having to fatten cattle in the North-West, because they are always fat. The grass in the wet places is not so good. It is just like your hay in eastern Canada after it gets a certain age because the frost kills it; but on the arable lands, the broad prairies, the grass is good at any time of the year when the cattle can get at it. In the sloughs the frost takes the substance out of it. I think it is very desirable that the Government should appropriate a sum of money and make some effort to get a water supply for the people in that country in the dry years. It is a serious disappointment to the settler to have to be without water at any time of the year. I know people who have had to go four miles for water this