

which were put into the Bill and which would rather tend to make confusion. The second amendment arises in the clause which continues the liability of the new company under the change of name for all the acts of the old company. The Bill, as it came to us from another place, contained no clause preserving the rights of parties under agreements made by the company, and we were asked to do that, and supply the deficiency in the Act as it came from the House of Commons, a not unfrequent occurrence, I am bound to say, with regard to these Bills when they come to us. This is a very important point, and the Bill has been altered so as to protect the interests of the public. There should not be any hesitation in adopting the amendments.

HON. MR. BOTSFORD moved that the amendments be concurred in.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill, as amendment, was read the third time, and passed.

IRRIGATION IN THE NORTH-WEST.

ENQUIRY.

HON. MR. MACINNES (Burlington) rose to—

Call the attention of the House to the importance of making preliminary surveys in that part of the North-West Territories lying immediately to the east of the Rocky Mountains, and in the neighborhood of the Cypress Hills and Wood Mountains, with a view to its irrigation; and enquire whether it is the intention of the Government to make such surveys, and also for the purpose of locating artesian wells, for farm and domestic purposes, in districts where they may be required?

He said: I rise to make a few observations on the motion of which I have given notice. There is doubtless a general lack of information in this country respecting the subject of irrigation. This is due to the fact that agricultural pursuits have been successfully carried on without it. We have no regions which can be called arid or come under the designation of arid regions. The subject may therefore be said to be a novel one in this country. It is of course well known that it has been, and is practised in some of the countries of Europe and in India, from the earliest times, and also on this continent, in Mexico, at an early period of its history, and the south-western states of the Union, in Utah some forty or fifty years ago in a primi-

tive sort of way, but it is only within the last ten or fifteen years that any real developments may be said to have taken place.

Irrigation developments within a comparatively recent period have taken place in Australia, and a representative from the colony of Victoria recently paid a visit to the United States for the purpose of investigating their methods. It may be of interest to us also to take a glance at the developments which are now continuously taking place in that country—the United States. They classify their lands as humid, sub-humid, pastoral and arid. The humid are lands on which agriculture can be carried on by means of the natural rainfall. The sub-humid are lands on which production, mainly grazing, can be greatly increased by the help of irrigation. The pastoral are range or ranching lands, on which the nutritious grasses thrive without the help of irrigation, although in some parts it is applied with advantage. The discovery was accidentally made about twenty-five years ago that the nutritious grasses which grow on the plains and foot hills of mountains, which cure so perfectly in the open air and without cultivation, are available for raising cattle, horses and sheep with no care save that of herding. This was how the discovery was made: Late in the fall of 1864 a waggon train hauled by oxen on its way to a military post in Utah was arrested in its progress by a severe snow storm, which compelled the people in charge to go into winter quarters. The oxen were turned loose to die, but instead of perishing, they grew fat during the winter months on the bunch grass, nature's hay, which covered the hills and valleys.

The knowledge of this fact was the beginning of ranching in the Western States, and which has since assumed such gigantic proportions, not only there, but in Canada also.

On the arid lands agriculture cannot be carried on without irrigation. They comprise four-tenths of their whole territory, and it has only been recently discovered that a certain percentage of these lands is susceptible of reclamation by means of irrigation, and that every acre of irrigated land is twice as productive as land depending on the natural rainfalls. This applies, I believe, to about 10 per cent. of this area for crop growing. The remainder, or a