

of that Province to consent to the demand made over the name of Mr. Trutch on behalf of the Dominion. I refused distinctly, knowing intimately the history of the union of British Columbia with the Dominion, and that the Government of Canada had no claim to any land within that Province, except within the railway belt, or to the same extent of land that might have been alienated by Crown grants or pre-emptions. They thought I was working against the interests of the Province, and that I should have joined with them in making such a recommendation. I am glad to say that, so far as I now know, the hon. members from that Province concur in what I said last Session, that the Government of Canada has no claim whatever on any land except those within the railway belt and those contiguous thereto, in order to make up what had been alienated by Crown patents or pre-emptions. In the next place, the question was presented to the Legislature of British Columbia, and that Legislature took a similar view to that which I have stated here. They passed an Act giving the Dominion of Canada everything to which it was entitled under the 11th section of the Terms of Union. The press took up the question and urged different views, not knowing the history of the railway clause in the Terms of Union, or the history of the railway land clause. Many people believed the claim was just, and almost persecuted the Local Government of the hour, seeking to embarrass them by pressing them to take a certain course. No longer ago than last November, some hon. gentlemen will recollect that a telegram flashed across the wires, stating that the claim had been renewed, and that unless the Government of the Province transferred the land, the railway land subsidy would be withdrawn. I have understood since, that that was a false statement; it was put forward, possibly, for some special purpose, but I have understood since that no such claim was made on behalf of the Dominion Government in the Province. During the present Session the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) deliberately stated in the House that a fraud had been perpetrated on the part of British Columbia when the land clause of the Treaty of Union was before Parliament. He went so far as to say that the Province had conspired with the Government of the day with the object of palming off poor lands for good lands. He went further, and declared his belief that the whole railway clause was in consequence void. Hence the question becomes an important one to British Columbia and an equally important one to the Dominion. It is desirable that no false information should be disseminated, deceiving the community and causing them to discuss subjects which have no foundation in fact. Now, Sir, I feel it is my duty to explain to this House the origin of the railway land clause in order that Parliament and the country may understand how it originated, and with that explanation I believe the country will be satisfied. I may premise that I gave considerable of my time during the last year to collect everything relating to this question that could be found in the Parliamentary library. Nothing escaped me, so far as I am aware, with respect to the land clause. Owing to the telegram I referred to, I caused the papers to be printed in order that they might be at my disposal, or at the disposal of this House, whenever occasion required. Now, Sir, let me draw the attention of the House to page 3 of this pamphlet, of which hon. gentlemen may get a copy. On page 3, and in section 11, clause 2, will be found the Terms of Union with British Columbia. It will be remembered that a claim has been sent in to the Government of British Columbia, that all lands found valueless within the railway belt, between Yellowhead Pass and Burrard Inlet, shall be made good from arable lands throughout the other portions of the Province. That clause reads as follows:—

“TERMS OF UNION.

“And the Government of British Columbia agree to convey to the Dominion Government, in trust, to be appropriated in such manner as Mr. DeCosmos,

the Dominion Government may deem advisable in furtherance of the construction of the said railway, a similar extent of public lands, along the line of railway throughout its entire length in British Columbia, not to exceed, however, twenty (20) miles on each side of said line, as may be appropriated for the same by the Dominion Government from the public lands in the North West Territories and the Province of Manitoba. Provided that the quantity of lands which may be held under pre-emption or by Crown grant within the limits of the tract of land in British Columbia to be so conveyed to the Dominion Government shall be made good to the Dominion from contiguous public lands; and provided further, that until the commencement, within two years as aforesaid, from the date of Union, of the construction of the said railway the Government of British Columbia shall not sell or alienate any further portions of the public lands of British Columbia in any other way, than under right of pre-emption, requiring actual residence of the pre-emptor on the land claimed by him. In consideration of the land so conveyed in aid of the construction of the said railway the Dominion Government agree to pay to British Columbia from the date of Union, the sum of 100,000 dollars per annum, in half-yearly payments in advance.”

In this I find nothing at all about the quality of the lands; all we find is the quantity of the lands—that they should not exceed 20 miles wide on each side of the railway, and that any lands sold under the provision for Crown grant or pre-emption should be made good from contiguous lands. Now, Sir, I wish to explain the origin of the railway clause. On page 1 of this pamphlet I read:

“TERMS PROPOSED BY BRITISH COLUMBIA TO CANADA IN 1870.

Sec. 2.—“The population of British Columbia shall, for the purpose of financial arrangements, be estimated at 120,000. British Columbia not having incurred debts equal to those of the other Provinces of the Dominion, shall be entitled to receive half-yearly, in advance, from the General Government, interest at the rate of five per centum, per annum, on the difference between the actual amount of its indebtedness at the date of Union, and the proportion of the public debt of Canada for 120,000 of the population of Canada at the time of Union.”

Sec. 3.—“The following sums shall be annually paid by Canada to British Columbia, for the support of the Local Government and Legislature, to wit:

“An annual grant of \$35,000, and a further sum, equal to 80 cents per head, per annum, of the population; both payable half-yearly in advance, the population of British Columbia being estimated as aforesaid at 120,000. Such grant equal to 80 cents per head, to be augmented in proportion to increase of population, when such may be shown, until the population amounts to 400,000, at which rate such grant shall thereafter remain.”

“(Amendments proposed by the Legislative Council: ‘That the Government be respectfully requested to strike out the figures \$35,000 and insert in lieu thereof \$75,000.’) (‘That figures ‘400,000’ be altered to ‘1,000,000.’)

SUMMARY.

80 cents per head on 120,000 inhabitants	\$96,000
Subsidy	35,000
Interest on difference of debt at 5 per cent.	82,000
	<u>\$213,000</u>

Now, the summary of this provision amounts to this: eighty cents per head of 120,000 of a population, \$96,000; subsidy, \$35,000; interest on difference of debt at 5 per cent., \$82,000; total, \$213,000. These were the terms proposed by British Columbia through its delegates to the Dominion Government. Now, let me give you a truthful account of the reason those terms were changed. I read from page 4:

“To understand this question thoroughly, it is necessary to know the origin of the Railway Land clause of the Terms of Union.

“On reference to pages 1 and 11, it will be noticed that British Columbia proposed that her population for financial purposes be estimated at 120,000; ‘but finally agreed to accept the basis of the actual population, namely, 60,000.’ On the basis the subsidies stood (see page 2) as follows:—

5 per cent on difference between actual and allowed debt	\$33,289 71
60,000 inhabitants at 80 cents per head	48,000 00
Annual subsidy	35,000 00

Total

That is all the subsidy the Government would agree to give, having reduced the population from 120,000 to 60,000.

“This total was nearly \$100,000 less than the Legislature of British Columbia had authorized the delegates to accept. Unless that sum could be made up in some way, it was useless to continue the negotiations. As no expedient was at hand to make good the deficiency, the negotiations were adjourned till next day. Next morning, Sir George Cartier entered the Privy Council Chamber and stated that Parliament