

Halifax. Generally, we agree, and on many occasions I have heard with great satisfaction the expression of his opinions. I think he must have misunderstood my remarks on this question. I did not ask for the immediate settlement of the Mackenzie Basin; it was its protection that I advocated.

HON. MR. POWER—The hon. gentleman said that the time had come to organize, and that means to divide up the country into townships.

HON. MR. GIRARD—I stated clearly, that I did not insist on the Government incurring large expense for the settlement of that region at the present time—that Manitoba and the North-West demand the immediate attention of the Government, and until they are settled no large scheme of colonization farther north should be undertaken. What I have been asking for is protection, lest some organization from the west side of the Rocky Mountains by way of the Yukon or some other river of Alaska should penetrate to the Mackenzie Basin. I know that an expedition could enter the country that way: one of our parties who started from Providence crossed the country to Alaska, and that avenue would be equally practicable for an expedition from the west to the Peace River and the Mackenzie Basin. No doubt communication by way of the Arctic Ocean and the Mackenzie River would be more difficult, but with the progress of science in these days it might become an easy matter. My object in making this motion is to direct the attention of the Government to the necessity of protecting that country against any organization which might try to take possession of it. We might sell that country, as Russia sold Alaska. The United States paid for Alaska \$7,000,000, which is less than the annual revenue derived from the Territory. We could sell ours, but I would not advise the Government to part with it. I would prefer to keep it for our own people. We do not need it now, but it will be of immense value to those who are to succeed us. I hope my explanation will satisfy my hon. friend, and enable him in the future, as in the past, to agree with me on public questions.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—As my hon. friend from Halifax misunderstood the statement

that I made, it is possible that others may also have misunderstood it. I stated very distinctly, and in very guarded terms, that what the Government proposed to do was to send an expedition to this Territory, to ascertain the facts—to get all the information that would be necessary for them to determine what, if anything, they ought to do. That is what the Government proposes to do. I think my hon. friend is a little hard on the Mackenzie Basin, and he is directly at issue with the evidence given before the committee, and the report of the committee to the House. I think the fact that two hon. gentlemen who take such interests in public affairs as my hon. friends from Halifax and Winnipeg differ so much from each other in their appreciation of the character of this report is sufficient proof that the Government are taking a wise course in sending up an expedition to procure and report to them all the facts as they are with regard to that Territory.

The motion was withdrawn.

THE PAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE.

ENQUIRY.

HON. MR. POWER enquired:

Whether or not the Government have invited the Mexican, South American and Central American delegates to the Pan-American Conference at Washington to visit Canada before returning to their respective homes?

He said: I am afraid, from what I have heard recently, that this question comes almost too late. I believe some, at all events, of those delegates to the Pan-American Congress have gone home. However, it is just as well that we should know whether the Government have done their duty and asked them to come here while they were still within reach of an invitation. These delegates spent some months in Washington. During a great part of that time one of the members of the Dominion Government was in Washington, and it would have been very easy to have invited those representatives of Mexico and the Central and South American States to come and see Canada before returning to their own countries. I am afraid that, looking at the fact that they have not been able to enter into any very satisfactory agreements with respect to trade with the United States Government, there would not be very much