

Mr. GIROUARD. My impression is that it was in 1873; but as I say, it is not material to the debate whether this territory was acquired in 1873 or 1877; and really hon. gentlemen opposite must be very fond of interruptions to make one like this. Now, it will not be out of place, in order to understand what the Government has done for that territory to mention exactly its area. I do not refer to the changes which have been made by the last decision of the Privy Council on the boundary question; I do not think it will affect the result very much. I have here a table of the areas of the North-West Territories and the several Provinces of the Dominion, together with the areas of some of the nations of the world, showing the comparative extent of our own domain:

	Square miles.
Manitoba.....	123,200
Territories—	
(1876) Keewatin.....	450,000
(1882) Assiniboia.....	95,000
" Saskatchewan.....	114,000
" Alberta.....	100,000
" Athabaska.....	122,000
Territories undivided.....	1,784,252
	<u>2,665,252</u>
Total.....	2,788,452
Prince Edward Island.....	2,133
Nova Scotia.....	20,907
New Brunswick.....	27,174
Quebec.....	188,688
Ontario.....	101,733
British Columbia.....	341,305
	<u>681,940</u>
Total.....	3,470,392
Russia, $\frac{1}{4}$ of terrestrial part of the world.....	8,387,816
China, $\frac{1}{4}$ of land of globe.....	4,419,150
Brazil.....	3,275,326
United States.....	3,095,245
British India.....	868,244
Austria.....	240,942
German Empire.....	212,033
France.....	204,177
United Kingdom.....	120,832
Italy.....	114,296

Therefore the Territory which we acquired in 1869, with the addition which was made to it in 1873, or, if the hon. gentlemen opposite prefer, 1877, Canada contains one twenty-eighth of all the land in the world, and is fourteen times larger than France, and twenty-three times larger than the United Kingdom. This valuable country was very little known even at the time of its purchase by the Canadian Government. In fact Hon. Joseph Howe who had paid a flying visit to it during the winter of 1869 conceived such a poor opinion of its value that he returned determined to advise his colleagues to have nothing to do with it. Although it was visited for nearly 150 years by Montreal fur traders and Canadian voyageurs, no one but Catholic missionaries and the officials of the Hudson Bay Company had the slightest idea of its importance for agricultural purposes. The buffalo robes and furs collected by the North-West fur traders were always on hand in the markets of Montreal and London, but no one could have the slightest suspicion that the buffalo would so soon disappear before railways and civilisation. The population of the whole North-West then consisted of 1,000 white men, 33,000 or 34,000 Indians and a few settlements of half-breeds, numbering 12,000 or 13,000. There were no means of communication except the canoe, cart, traîneaux, or snow shoes. There was only one steamer, the *International*, which plied between Lake Winnipeg and a town I believe called Georgetown in Minnesota. In 1869-70, Hon. William Macdougall took 14 days to travel from St. Paul to St. Vincent, a distance travelled to-day in less than eighteen hours. In 1871, Bishop Grandin took fifty-two days to proceed to St. Albert from St. Boniface, which, as hon. members know, is opposite Winnipeg. Mail service was almost unknown. There was a monthly mail service to the outside world; but as to inland service it was almost

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unknown. I need not say that the laws were very simple. Property could, of course, be transferred by deeds in writing, which were recorded in the office of the Hudson Bay Company, in just about the same way as transfers of property were recorded in the Province of Quebec in the office of the seigneur, but it could also be transformed by verbal agreements. There was no registry office. There was a court of justice at Fort Garry; but so far as courts of justice in remote districts were concerned, they were unknown. I need not talk of jails; there was no necessity for them. The whole of the district was governed in a paternal manner by a Governor and council, assisted by some sub-council as at remote points, and also by the officials of the company. Most of the trade consisted of exchanging the furs of the half-breeds and of the Indians for other commodities of life which were to be found in the stores of the Hudson Bay Company. In fact the Hudson Bay Company had a monopoly of the trade up to about 1858. In all the remote settlements or posts, it could hardly be said that there was any organised Government. Major Butler, speaking of the very district where the recent rebellion took place, wrote to Governor Archibald in 1871:

"The institutions of law and order, as understood in civilised communities, are wholly unknown in the regions of the Saskatchewan, inasmuch as the country is without any executive organisation, and destitute of any means to enforce the authority of the law."

This want of authority was also felt in the most central post, Fort Garry. About five weeks ago I was reading in one of the Manitoba papers that about 1858, Louis Riel, father of the present Louis Riel, went to the Court House, and there found the judge sitting. One of his countrymen had been arrested for having traded outside of the stores of the Hudson Bay Company,—and that was his crime. He went to the judge and told him: Your Honor, I am not willing that my brother should remain in jail (there was a jail at Fort Garry) for ever; I give you till one o'clock to try him. The judge commenced the trial at once. At the hour fixed, the trial was not over. Riel advanced in court and said: May it please the court, I declare the prisoner acquitted. *Vive la liberté*. A very remarkable fact is this, that Louis Riel and his followers who set the prisoner at large were not molested for fear of more serious trouble ensuing. I give you, Mr. Speaker, this incident to show that even in the very central post of the Hudson Bay Company, Fort Garry, it was some times impossible to enforce the authority of the law. Such was the state of the country when the Canadian Government took possession of it in 1869. To save expense the intention appears to have been for a time at least to govern it as it had been governed for more than a century by a Governor and council. The hon. gentleman who has last spoken said that when we took possession in 1869 we considered the population of the country as a portion of the territory. Was it not to be governed as it had been for years and for almost a century before that time? That population had been governed by a Governor and council; and is it not worthy of admiration that instead of displaying any contempt for that government, Canada wished to continue the government and institutions which had prevailed in the Territory for almost centuries. As early as 1863 a temporary Act was passed, for the government of the North-West. It provided for the appointment of a Governor and a council not exceeding fifteen nor less than seven members to administer the affairs of the country, with such powers as might be from time to time conferred on them by the Governor in Council. It is not necessary to enter at length into the events that followed; but allow me to say, in answer to a remark which fell from the lips of the last speaker, that the rebellion of 1870, if you want to call it so, was very different from the present rebellion. In 1870 when the Canadian Government sent their surveyors and Mr. Macdougall, as the Canadian Governor, to take posses-