

Government to carry a railroad and telegraph line through the Territories must have the effect of opening up the country and of facilitating transfer through it, and in this way cannot fail to give an impetus to the agricultural interest of the Territory."

Well, Sir, the hope held out to Bishop Grandin was that this Pacific Railway, built on the line which hon. gentlemen opposite say it should have been built on, gradually, as settlement went on, some day or other would reach them, and that they must keep their courage up until that event occurred, when probably they would have the advantage of the transportation that line could afford then. He goes on :

"The second, third and fourth heads referred to by you, are all matters which come especially within the province of the Local Legislature.

There was not much encouragement in that.

"With regard to the third head, I may remark that the Dominion Lands Act makes provision for a liberal land grant to aid general educational purposes in the Territories, and so far as the Indians are concerned, the Dominion Government will, no doubt, be prepared, when the Territory is surrendered, to make the same provisions there as elsewhere by treaty for Indian schools. In the meantime, I am directed by the Minister to transmit to Your Lordship an official cheque for the sum of \$300 in aid of the school at St. Albert, authorised by Order in Council of the 22nd October, 1873. As is assumed from Your Lordship's report, that the average attendance of Indian children at this school is not less than the number required by the Order in Council, viz., twenty-five.

So that \$300 seems to have been the whole extent of the answer given to these several propositions of Bishop Grandin :

"Any one of the other schools which Your Lordship may think proper to select will be entitled to a similar one for the current year, provided, of course, the average attendance of Indian children throughout the year is not less than twenty-five.

"As to the fifth head, namely, concessions of lands for orphan asylums and model farms, the Superintendent General is not prepared at present to make any definite pledge on behalf of the Government. On this point, the Superintendent General will be able to speak more definitely after a treaty has been made, and when the question of the extent of land asked for, for the purposes above mentioned, is more accurately known.

"The sixth head refers to large question of public policy, on what it would be manifestly too premature at present to pronounce an opinion. The settlers of the North-West have good grounds for believing that the Dominion Government will deal liberally with them. There is a sufficiency of land in the Territory for all of them and their children, and it is earnestly to be hoped that they will cultivate as much of it as possible, and secure for themselves comfortable homes in the country to which they belong.

"As regards the seventh head, namely, the reserves for the Indians. This matter has hitherto been fully provided for, and all treaties made with the Indians, by which assistance in money and agricultural implements has always been secured to them, and there can be no reason to doubt that these matters will be dealt with in a similar spirit of liberality in future treaties.

"The reservation secured to the Indians will, no doubt, have a fair proportion of arable land, and will include, when it is practicable, any fishing lakes which the Indians may desire to avail themselves of."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was the answer to the petition of Bishop Grandin, and I will ask hon. gentlemen opposite whether it gave much encouragement to his Lordship to hope that his prayers would be acceded to. There was, in addition to this answer by the Lieutenant-Governor, an answer by the hon. Minister of the Interior himself to similar requests, which was dated on the 17th March, 1878, and in that we have this statement of his views of the position of the half-breeds of the North-West, and the manner in which they should be dealt with :

"The application of the petitioners to be aided by the Government with seeds and agricultural implements in their farming operations, I confess I am not disposed to view favorably. I do not see upon what grounds the half-breeds can claim to be treated in this particular differently from the white settlers of the Territories.

"The half-breeds, who have in some respects the advantage over new settlers in the Territories, should be impressed with the necessity of settling down in fixed localities, and direct their energies towards pastoral or agricultural pursuits, in which case lands would be no doubt assigned to them in the same way as the white settlers. But beyond this they must not look to the Government for any special assistance in their farming operations."

So that was the opinion of the late Minister of the Interior, the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills). He took the ground that the half-breeds, if they consulted their own
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interests and the interests of the country, would settle down and become ordinary settlers, pointing out to them that in doing so they had large advantages over white settlers, they being old residents of the country and knowing a good deal about it. So much for that matter. Then there was the question of surveys, about which a good deal has been said. I think no one will pretend to say that so far as the question of surveys was concerned this Parliament is not omnipotent. The law was passed in 1871 which fixed the method of survey in the North-West. The law was continued by hon. gentlemen opposite, and the surveys were made on the same principle. As they began, so the present Government continued, and the instructions went to the surveyors that whenever they found settlers upon land, and those settlers desired survey on the river lot principle, the surveys were to be given to them on that principle, and they were as a matter of fact so given to them. The only place where those surveys were not given was in the famous parish of St. Louis de Langevin, and, as we know from the evidence already furnished to the public, at the time the surveys were made, there were but two settlers on the land, and, therefore, it was not a case in which survey by river lots could be adopted. Settlers went in afterwards and took up land, some of them according to the section or block system of survey, and some have made entry in accordance with that survey. They have asked since that the system be changed. They have been informed, and they have always been informed, that if they chose to take their lands in ten chains or twenty chains frontage, they would have the privilege of doing so; but that the principle cannot be recognised, that the Government having once surveyed territory unoccupied at the time of survey, persons going into that territory afterwards cannot demand that a different system of survey be adopted. I think there is nothing unreasonable and nothing improper in that, because, in so far as the surveys are concerned, it cannot be said that the half-breeds should have any more rights than any other class of settlers who might choose to go in, and a farmer from Ontario going into any part of the North-West and preferring the Ontario system of survey, might as well ask to have that plan followed—having gone in there after the surveys had been made—as that the half-breeds, who went in after survey could demand a change in the system. But, as I have said, they have been assured from the first, that if they desire to have the land in ten or twenty chain lots, they can have it on that principle, and that information has been given by the officer of the Government on the spot, so that they can get their lands in that way if they desire. Then there is the question of the lands themselves, of the patents. I venture to make this statement, and no one has hitherto at any rate, that I have heard, ventured to contradict it, that no single half-breed has ever been put off his land by any applicant, that no single half-breed has ever lost an acre of land by any action of the Government. They have, on the contrary, been pressed to make their entries, and, if, to-day, they have not their patents the fact is due, not to the system adopted, but entirely to the fact that they themselves had not taken reasonable steps to get their patents. Let me point out to the House what the Government have done in relation to patents for land; and after all I think it was of the greatest possible importance to them that they should procure the land on which they had settled, which they were tilling and on which they had made their homes. I have here a letter addressed to Mr. William Pearce, a member of the Land Board, by Mr. George Duck, who was agent at Prince Albert, and I will read that letter simply for the purpose of showing what pains the Government took in order that those people might be informed how they could get their patents, in order that they might be induced, if possible, to secure their patents, and in that way remove all possible