

hay enjoyed by settlers was proposed to be taken into consideration, and allowed for in land. He believed that this Government intended to go very much further than the late Government would have gone into the matter or was ever asked to go. [An ironical cheer from Hon. Mr. Letellier.] Here Mr. Aikins further explained the right of settlers on the Red River and the Assiniboine to collect hay on the two miles—in rear of their holding on the river—at a certain time in July, and said that owing to a change in the bed of the river, this privilege which was very valuable a few years ago was in many cases useless at present. The right of common consisted in the settlers using this land for pasturage. These were the two interests that had to be considered under the provisions of the Manitoba act. He learned that it was the intention of this Government to give the settlers whose holdings fronted on those rivers, the two mile in rear of those holdings in fee simple. (Hear, hear, from Hon. Mr. Letellier.) In other words to give them a strip two miles broad and 40 long, or 160 square miles, or 102,400 acres to the 451,200 granted under the bill in addition, and in addition to the 1,400,000, and quite independent of the amount of their present holdings. He denied that this was a legacy left to the present by the late Government. These half-breeds were to get in the aggregate about 2,000,000 acres. No proposition of this kind was made to the late Government to concede the land in rear of their present holdings for the easement they enjoyed. Nor was it ever proposed to give the heads of families 160 acres each. He thought he would not be discharging his duty did he not call the attention of the House to these facts. So far as he was concerned, he would not sanction the principle of such large donations to these people as, up to the 1st July, 1873, they were perfectly satisfied and never asked such gifts, and more than that, he believed they were not entitled to the benefits now proposed.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER said he was sorry the hon. gentleman had taken a course hostile to the bill, which he ought to have supported. He complained of the proposal to give 800,000 acres more to this half-breed population, but what did that amount to in comparison with the peace and contentment which would thereby be secured. After all, moreover, we were merely granting to those North West people their own lands, there was an abundance left for all parties besides. [Hear, hear.] Why should there be any com-

plaining in this matter, when strangers were not only allowed but invited and encouraged to take free grants of those North West lands for the purposes of settlement. We were giving one large block of 400,000 acres to a colony of strangers, the Mennonites of Russia, and large quantities to persons from Ontario and Quebec. The hon. gentleman went on to argue the justice of recognizing the Indian and half-breed rights in the land, which was their own originally, and to show the inconsistency and cruelty of an opposite course. A company, which had to bring settlers from the States at its own expense, was receiving grants for them. All this liberality to these strangers was proper, was good policy, but in the face of it, with what reason or fairness could they refuse their own people, long in the North West, and who had helped to settle and civilize it, the land they believed was justly due them? If there were not millions of acres of land unoccupied, Parliament might haggle with these half-breeds, but it was absurd to do so under the present circumstances. The Secretary of State had explained the difference in the results of the grants to the old white and the half-breed settlers respectively. The numbers of the former were under estimated, and hence the land did not go as far as expected. The Manitoba Act had not provided for, and, consequently, not done justice to the heads of the half-breed families; on the other hand we were paying strangers to settle in the North West, and giving them free farms. Now, he could see no reason for refusing the other class their indisputable rights. If justice to the half-breeds had marked the policy of the late Government, it is very probable that some very bad incidents in the history of Manitoba would not have transpired; a little generosity might have preserved Canada from serious difficulties and the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of dollars. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Letellier indicted the idea of calling these grants to the half-breeds donations, and contended there was, at least, no generosity in giving the one party of half-breeds 160 acres and the other none at all. He was sure the House would approve of the bill, and shew a disposition to do not so much an act of generosity as an act of justice.

Hon. M. GIRARD expressed his approval of the principle of the bill, which was intended to meet objects designed by the late Government, in the interests of the half-breeds whose claims had not received the treatment they deserved. That Gov-