

steps to consider of the discontent that prevails in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, and that the Government would initiate such legislation as might be necessary for the purpose of allaying that discontent. I find that the attention of the Government has been directed to this important question in the other branch of the Legislature during the present Session, and from the reply that was made by the Minister of the Interior to the statement of an hon. Senator, I had reason to believe, and did believe, that the Government would during this Session ask the sanction of Parliament to such a scheme as they might consider necessary for the purpose of removing that discontent. Sir, on more than one occasion during this Session of Parliament I drew the attention of the Government to several causes of discontent in the North-West Territories myself, and from observations which were made by the hon. First Minister I think I had some reason to believe that some steps would be taken by the Government to remove any just cause of complaint by the Province of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. I waited until now, after the hon. First Minister had declared more than once that Parliament would prorogue before Easter—and I trust it will—in the hopes that the Government would submit some scheme to Parliament that would have the effect of removing any just cause of discontent in either Manitoba or the North-West Territories. But so far my hopes have been disappointed. Nothing has been done; the Government have not indicated so far as I am aware that they propose dealing with the question of discontent in either Manitoba or the North-West; and now when delays in my judgment are dangerous, I venture once more to direct the attention of the Government to this very important question. It is known to members of the House that for a number of years, notably for the last two years, the Province of Manitoba has been persistently protesting against the policy of the Government in respect of the public affairs of Manitoba and the North-West Territory. They complained at one time, and that very recently, of the unconstitutional and unreasonable interference with their local legislation. They complained of the vast monopolies that were created in both Manitoba and the North-West Territories. But relying to some extent, I suppose, on the statement of the Minister of Railways, that now the Government were in a position to reconsider their policy with respect to interference by them, with local legislation, those questions have in the Province of Manitoba, at all events to some extent, passed out of consideration. There are, however, other questions equally important, other questions of great importance, that have presented themselves, and the people in Manitoba through their Government and in other ways, have pressed on the attention of the Government here the fair consideration of what they call their just demands. The demands to which I have referred, made by Manitoba and the North-West Council, are of a not unimportant character. They involve very grave considerations. Hon. members acquainted with the country will admit that they affect the growth and prosperity of the whole of our western possessions. Their admission will to a large extent inspire hope and confidence in the minds of the settlers who have gone to make homes in the North-West, and the refusal of those demands—reasonable demands at any rate—will, in my judgment, imperil the very existence of the Province and of the Territory; and I claim also that the refusal will at least check the growth and prosperity of the Territory, and to some extent, I believe, will weaken the ties which bind Manitoba and the Territories to the Dominion of Canada. I do not say that all the demands made by the Province or by the Territories are fair and reasonable demands. I do not pretend to say that the claims made are all fair and reasonable; but I say, that every claim advanced by the Province of Manitoba, and every ground of complaint against the policy of the Dominion Govern-

ment made by the North-West Territories, deserve at the very least, at the hands of the Government, a fair consideration. If those claims are fair and reasonable they should be met promptly, they should be discussed promptly, they should be considered promptly, and if fair and honest claims, they should be considered by the Government promptly. We know that up to last year the claims made by Manitoba—and I speak now especially of the claims of that Province—were of the following character: First, they claimed that the Dominion Government should transfer to the Local Government the public and school lands in the Province. Second, they claimed a re-arrangement of the financial basis on which Manitoba was erected into one of the Provinces of the Dominion. Any person who has taken the trouble to enquire into the matter, and who has read the correspondence which has passed between the Manitoba and Dominion Governments, and the State papers sent by the Manitoba Government to the Government here, will know that the claims of Manitoba are advanced in very clear, distinct and forcible language—that is as regard the control of public lands and the financial re-arrangement. As to the control of the public lands, the Dominion Government two years ago refused to accede to what the people of Manitoba thought their true rights, that is, the control of the public and school lands of the Province; and I find on the 22nd March, 1882, the following communication passed between the two Governments. The Government at Ottawa writing to the Government of Manitoba said:

“With respect to the second item, public lands, I have to inform you that His Excellency in Council is not prepared to allow any change in respect to Dominion lands lying in Manitoba, the analogy which the delegates see between the public lands in other Provinces and those of Manitoba, does not seem to His Excellency in Council to be well drawn, inasmuch as the other Provinces owned their lands before Confederation, and brought them into the Union with them as their own property, whereas the whole of Manitoba was acquired by the Dominion, by purchase from the Hudson's Bay Co., and thus became the property of the Dominion, and stands really, as it seems to His Excellency in Council, as lands in the territories of the United States, which are not given to the New States as these new States are created, but remain the property of the United States.”

That was the answer made to the first proposition—the acquisition of the public and school lands. I do not propose discussing the merits of Manitoba's demand. I propose submitting to the House, and calling the attention of the Government to the fact that the demands have been made over and over again, and that the Government should but has not considered them in a generous and liberal spirit. As regards the claim for the lands, the Dominion Government have refused the request of the Province of Manitoba. As regards the re-arrangement of the financial basis, the Government did, to some extent, grudgingly and sparingly, yield to the claims made by Manitoba. What have we now? The same demands made? No; but we have extended demands. We have the Province of Manitoba sending here its Premier, who spent a month in interviewing, or attempting to interview, the Government, in order to have further demands conceded; and in the very able and admirable State paper which the Premier of Manitoba sent to the Dominion Government, the following demands are made:—

“EXTENSION OF BOUNDARIES.

“I.—That the boundaries of the Province of Manitoba be extended northward so as to include Por Churchill, on Hudson Bay, and westward to the one hundred and second meridian.

“PUBLIC LANDS.

“II.—The Province of Manitoba will agree to refund all expenses incurred by Canada in surveys of lands within the Province that remain vested in the Crown, in consideration of said surveyed lands and other lands yet unsurveyed being handed over to the Province, and the revenues arising from the sale or lease thereof accruing to the Province for provincial purposes; and further,—

“The Province will agree to refund to the Government of Canada its proportion of the three hundred thousand pounds sterling (£300,000) paid by Canada to the Hudson Bay Company for the Territory.