

tory cannot be turned into new provinces, does it not seem to my hon. friend that the best way to deal with it is to annex it to the existing provinces? We must come to that conclusion. We cannot desire that at one end of this Dominion we should have provinces and at the other end a large unorganized territory. Is not that the goal to which we should aspire, that every inch of Canadian territory should ultimately be under provincial organization? That has been the policy of the United States, until to-day I think all their territory has been turned into states.

Mr. FOWLER. The Prime Minister refers to the United States. Is it not a fact that no portion of their territory was cut up into states until it had a population sufficient to warrant its erection into a state? The territory was not added to states already existing, but when it had a sufficient population it was created into a state.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The conditions in the United States were such as permitted that policy to be adopted. If we had the same conditions we would create more provinces. Oklahoma was the last state which has been introduced into the union. I believe they have no more territory to be turned into states. If our conditions were the same we would follow the same policy.

Mr. FOWLER. They have Alaska yet.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes, and we have the Yukon, but I do not know that I would turn the Yukon into a province; I think I would rather annex it to the province of British Columbia. Moreover, I do not think that the climate and soil in the Yukon are such that we could make it into a province. At all events, that is my opinion. You cannot hope, with the territory you now have in your hands, to make it into new provinces; and if that is so, the policy should be to bring this territory under the supervision and jurisdiction of the provinces to which geographically it belongs. That is the view we take and the policy we are pursuing at the present time. Can anything be more reasonable than that the territory which to-day lies north of the province of Ontario should belong to Ontario? Is it not in the best interests of the country that Ontario should have the administration of that territory? And if that be so, the hon. gentleman will have no objection to this resolution going into effect. Now, with regard to representation—

Mr. FOWLER. Before the hon. gentleman leaves that part of his subject, I would like him to say a word as to compensation to the provinces.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I must say that, so far as I am concerned, I can see

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

no force in that plea. The fathers of confederation, and those who sat here in 1870, when Manitoba was organized, saw no force in it. I do not believe, moreover, that this territory was added to our domain in order that it should be parcelled out among the other provinces which, at that time, formed the Canadian confederation. We must deal with the conditions as they exist. At the time of the federation of the older provinces, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick retained their own provincial domain and control of their own public lands. That has been the policy ever since. When we came to form the prairie provinces the question of immigration became very important, and from 1870 to 1895 we followed the policy that this parliament should retain in its own hands the public lands in those provinces in order the better to pursue the policy of immigration. In respect to the older provinces, we had turned over to them control of the public lands which were added to their territory. The territory which is now wild and unsettled was annexed to the provinces from time to time; we annexed certain portions to Quebec, certain portions to Ontario and certain portions to Manitoba. But if that same policy were to prevail, and the northern portions of that country were to be annexed to Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, then I would unhesitatingly give them all that land, because the policy of immigration which we have in hand would not be prejudiced by such a course. Therefore, I cannot see the force of the objection of my hon. friend. But a more important question, a more practical question, is that of representation. However, I do not see any immediate danger in it. My hon. friend stated a moment ago that the maritime provinces had lost some of their representation in this House. But if that is so, and we all deplore it, it is not in consequence of anything that has been done by this parliament, it is not in consequence of any accretions to the territory of Quebec. If the maritime provinces have lost a portion of their representation it is in consequence of the development of the Northwest. If the Northwest had not been developed, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick would probably have the same representation here to-day that they had years ago. But although the maritime province men have good reason to deplore the changing conditions, their objection should not lie to this resolution, but they should consider the broader question whether, in view of the great development which is taking place in the Northwest, it would not be advisable to revise the basis upon which representation is established.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Allow me to ask the right hon. gentleman a question? Does he contend that the development of the Northwest reduces the actual representation of the maritime provinces?