

spirits, and the strife and bloodshed among themselves, or between themselves and the whites, which might follow if the administrative machinery which it is the interest of a trading company to establish were destroyed before any effective substitute could be found. These are the reasons which will weigh upon the government in considering the renewal of the license. They will certainly not renew the license over any part of the Indian territory which promises early settlement; but they reserve for further deliberation whether they will renew it for a limited period over the more remote and northern regions taking care that the government shall have always the power to withdraw from that license any land that may be required for the use of civilized life; that they shall retain all the imperial rights to fisheries and mines, and whatever may call forth human industry and enterprise in pursuits more congenial to our age than that gloomy trade in the skins of animals which seems to carry us back to a date before the annals of history. Now, although the renewal of the license may possibly form a part of any fresh negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company for arrangements respecting the Red River settlement; yet it ought in principle to be considered apart from such arrangements, and on its own merits—in lands held as yet only by the Indians does the exclusive license or does it not work well for the Indians? It is a question wholly distinct from that of the charter; the license gives none of the territorial rights which the charter assumes—it involves no principle of compensation in case of any lands which colonists may require, and it ought to be regarded simply as an instrument by which the government can effect that safeguard from broil and disorder which in so vast and profitless a wilderness the government is not able of itself to establish. But, whatever doubts may be entertained as to the second proposition of the right honorable gentleman the member for Oxford, that land incapable for colonization should be left to the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company, no one can dispute the soundness of the first proposition, that the country capable of colonization should be withdrawn from that jurisdiction; and turning our eyes from a trade which, unlike all other commerce, rests its profits, not on the redemption, but on the maintenance of the wilderness, it must cheer us to see already, in the great border lands of this hitherto inhospitable region, the opening prospect of civilized life. (Hear, hear.) Already by the Pacific, Vancouver's Island has been added to the social communities of mankind. Already, in the large territory which extends west of the Rocky Mountains, from the American frontier up to the skirts of the Russian domains—we are laying the foundations of what may become hereafter a magnificent abode for the human race; and now, eastward of the Rocky Mountains, we are invited to see, in the settlement of the Red River, the nucleus of a new colony, a rampart against any hostile inroads from the American frontier, and an essential arch, as it were, to that great viaduct by which we hope one day to connect the harbors of Vancouver with the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This is the district offered to Canada; and I think my honorable learned friend has good reason to presume that Canada will decline the task of forming it into a colony at her own responsibility and charge. If the answer from Canada be unfavorable, we have two options—either to leave the district, as now, under the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company, which nothing but absolute necessity should justify, or to take it into our own hands and form a colony, which will no