

On clause 5, providing that a person obtaining a homestead entry shall be liable to the forfeiture thereof should he not become a *bona fide* occupant of the land so entered within two months of the date of entry.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The question with me is: how long a time should be fixed between the entry and the occupation? I do not think it should be longer than ten or twelve months.

Mr. MILLS. The hon. gentleman should make the time uniform. Two months is far too short. In many cases, persons go from Ontario and Quebec to the North-West only in the spring, as agents for their neighbors and other persons who contemplate taking up land; they afterwards remain on their old farms until their crops are taken off and they can dispose of their property; and, perhaps, late in the fall they move to the North-West. It is very desirable that we should have a Canadian immigration into that country. American emigration from the Eastern States is what has Americanized the foreigners who have settled in the Western States; and if we expect to have a united people, we must have a Canadian emigration to the North-West. What ver time is fixed for persons coming from abroad should be fixed for our own people; because it is sometimes easier for a person coming from the old country, who has little or no property to dispose of, than farmers from the older Provinces, to take up land in the North-West Territory. Usually, he goes in the spring and makes his selection, but does not move in until the fall, or if he makes his selection in the fall he does not move in until the winter is over. Two months is certainly not sufficient time.

Mr. CAMERON (Huron). The hon. gentleman should make that period at least four months. When up in the West, last fall, I heard of several cases of great hardship where parties had entered on their homesteads, and their claims were what is called "jumped."

Mr. BLAKE. The very best and most provident settlers are those who take the trouble to go over and look into the country before they part with their farms here. If they can suit themselves, they must have sufficient time to dispose of their farms and stocks here; otherwise you will deprive yourself of a most valuable class of settlers, as they will not be able to sell their farms and stock profitably and go up there with their families within a period of two months. I should say six months would be the proper time.

Mr. TROW. In corroboration of the statements made by the hon. member for Bothwell, I may add that in a little village near Stratford, called Shakespeare, I induced some fifteen families to move out to Manitoba. The heads of those families went out last spring and took homesteads, returned, and are now about to start out again with their families, after having been out of the country about six months. If only two months be allowed, they will lose their property.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Two months are too short, and connected with that infamous system of "jumping" claims there have been cases of hardship, some of which have come within my own cognizance. But I take it, if an immigrant goes up in May, he will not return in November, six months later. I think four months is quite enough.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. The hon. gentleman must pay some regard to the condition of the roads over an immense portion of that country. According to all the information we have, and the information I received when there last year, you really cannot travel so as to make a proper selection of land until July or August. The consequence is that going up in these months, the farmers

will rarely be prepared to settle with their families until the next spring.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I move that the word "six" be substituted for the word "two" and that the clause

"Provided that the Governor in Council may, in the case of immigrants, or of persons desiring to settle near each other, vary the above rule, as may be deemed expedient, but in no case shall a longer period than month be allowed between the date of entry and the due occupation of the land, and the occupant shall thenceforth continue to occupy and cultivate the same as hereinafter provided."

be altered by substituting for the words "in the case of immigrants or of persons desiring to settle," the words "in case of intending immigrants or of persons from abroad desiring to settle," and the period in blank made twelve months.

Agreed to.

Mr. MILLS. Does the hon. gentleman intend that those persons shall, as a guarantee of good faith, pay the entrance fee?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes. Representations were made to me in England that the fee should not be exacted, but I concluded that unless it were, persons would enter their names for speculative purposes only.

Mr. MERNER. A man going to the North-West cannot reach it in spring, but only in the fall, and by the time he gets there, looks at the land and returns, the winter is at hand; so he cannot leave to settle in the North-West before the following spring. Even for emigrants from the old country, twelve months is too short. There ought to be two years allowed.

Mr. CHARLTON. I desire to ask the First Minister whether he intends to provide that the residence upon a homestead should be continuous? Will an absence of four or six months in the year be allowed a homestead settler as in the United States?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. A homestead settler will be governed by the present law. There must be a continuous residence of three years—it is five years in the States.

Mr. CHARLTON. In the United States a homestead settler may be absent six months in the year. A young man without means to bring his farm under proper cultivation, may want to work somewhere else for six months to obtain the means, and he may do so by the Homestead Act, if he has complied with the settlement duties.

Mr. BLAKE. There is a provision in the Act of 1872, that if the settler is absent more than six months his right is liable to forfeiture.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Frequent applications are made for leave of absence in special circumstances, and the parties are always treated liberally. Persons who have gone on land and put up houses are not obliged to live on the land the year round; but the conditions to be obeyed within the three years are looked for.

Mr. CHARLTON. It would be better to have those conditions of settlement defined.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. They are in the Act.

Mr. WISER. I would like to know whether parties may secure land enough in the North-West, by purchase or lease, to embark upon cattle raising and grazing on a large scale with the certainty of retaining the land for a term of years? If cattle raisers and ranchmen can only obtain small sections, I do not see how we can establish great stock farms in our country like those in the United States. I am prepared to start for Kansas in about a week to purchase cattle, and if facilities are afforded me to secure land enough in our North-West on which to pasture or feed