

39, the words "six months" be inserted, and in the next line, the word "years" be struck out, and in the next blank the words "\$100" be inserted, so that it will read "not exceeding six months, or to a penalty not exceeding \$100."

Mr. DAVIN. Will the hon. gentleman explain the object of this?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. The hon. gentleman knows the enormous amount of difficulty that has arisen by reason of the posts being stolen, and it is to be regretted that a more stringent law was not adopted to prevent such an offence.

Mr. DAVIN. I am glad to see this legislation at last introduced, because it was undoubtedly a great grievance to have the land marks removed; but how will the hon. gentleman deal with those who are the greatest sinners in this respect? Our experience is that the Indians, when they move about in the summer, take up these posts and use them as firewood.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I was not aware that the Indians are in the habit of doing that, but I do not think it would be a difficult matter to deal with, if the agents were given instructions to look carefully after it.

On section 10,

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I notice in reading the report that I did not state accurately what the effect of this section is. At present the Act permits a person to homestead a quarter section or any portion less than a quarter section, but the land homesteaded must be all in the same parcel. He could not take two legal subdivisions not connected with each other, and this section provides that he may do that.

On section 11,

Mr. DAVIN. What lands does the province propose to give back to the Dominion Government and what land is the Dominion Government going to give in exchange?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. There has been a system of exchange of lands going on between the Dominion and the province of Manitoba for many years. It has risen principally in this way. Ever since the province has been entitled to swamp lands, settlers have gone on these lands and then would apply for homestead entries. The settler would be told that the land belonged to the province, and he could not get a homestead entry for it. In many cases, the province agreed to give the lands back to the Dominion, and the Minister of the Interior gave the settlers homestead entries for it and gave the province other lands of equal value. There has been an exchange of that kind going on between the Minister of the Interior and Manitoba for many years past. In addition to that, there

Mr. SIFTON.

have been a couple of cases—one in particular—in which the late Government transferred lands to the province of Manitoba and the Canadian Pacific Railway had it down in their books as forming part of their land and had sold it to settlers. An exchange becomes necessary in such cases. Another case is that of the Spruce Bush, which lies south of the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the neighbourhood of Calgary and Melbourne. There, in order to preserve the timber, we are exchanging with the provincial government, giving them lands in other parts, so that all the Dominion lands would be in one place, and the provincial lands in the other. Otherwise, it is almost impossible for the officer to protect the timber.

On section 12,

Mr. DAVIN. This bears on a matter we have discussed to-day—the arid lands. I would like to understand how the hon. gentleman will carry out this policy. Suppose it should happen that some men have settled on lands actually arid, and have got out patents. I presume, in cases of that sort, there is clear justice in their demanding the right of entry a second time for a homestead. Does the hon. gentleman mean that in the case of any persons who have settled on lands which he thinks are arid, he would give them equivalent homesteads elsewhere? That might prove to be of a proper policy. I think that where lands are proved to be arid it is good policy and common justice to the incoming settler to withdraw them from settlement.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. The hon. gentleman is perfectly right in principle. I have had cases before me a number of times. I have had cases in which men have proven that they settled on lands on which nobody could possibly make a living, and in every case in which the certificate of recommendation had not been actually signed and delivered, I have permitted the settler to make another homestead. And I have been strongly pressed to amend the Act so that I might permit another homestead, even in cases where the patent had been issued, but I do not see how I could go so far as that. If a man who has been upon the land for three years and has actually received his patent may come to the Government and say: This land is no good; I cannot make a living on it, and so get another homestead. I cannot see how there would be anything in the nature of finality in the administration of Dominion lands. I think that if a man has had three years to make a trial of his land, and after that time, has decided to prove up and take out his patent, that must be considered as final.

Mr. DAVIN. I agree with the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton). It would not be wise to go so far as to allow a man who has