

and cultivating and improving it, he was dispossessed and the land was taken from him. Well, Sir, these statements may not be true, but I believe, to a large extent, they are true, and if so, they are fit subjects for parliamentary enquiry. Sir, up to this day, although the Mile Belt is open up to the fourth meridian, the reserve at Moose Jaw is still kept, so that settlers cannot get either homestead or preemption there. I drew the attention of the First Minister to the fact, that a large number from my own county went up there before the line was located. They had no idea the Government proposed to make Moose Jaw the town site. They went there in good faith, and some of them have been there two years and a half. They have made valuable improvements, but up to this hour they can not get any satisfaction from the Government, as to whether their claims will be recognized or not. When I went up there myself and heard them proposing to leave the country, I begged them to remain—men with more than 50 acres broken upon a quarter section, with valuable buildings and farm implements. They proposed leaving the country because they could not tell whether their claims would be recognized or not. I advised them to remain there, and I trust the Government will see their way to give satisfaction to these people before the spring opens, because hon. gentlemen must know that unless the claims of these people are recognized they will leave the country. The spring is now coming on, and the farmer requires to do his work, and the result will be that these people will become dissatisfied and disgusted, and leave the country. Now, Sir, to show the effect in Moose Jaw, I will read the proceedings that took place at a public meeting held there, largely attended by settlers:

"A largely attended meeting of the settlers located in Townships 16 and 17, in Ranges 26 and 27, west, was held at Mr. McLennan's, at Moose Jaw Creek, on Saturday, the 12th inst., to hear explanations from one Mr. Steers, who professed to have authority, as a Government Agent, to examine into the claims of settlers in this neighbourhood.

"Mr. Steers' statements did not prove satisfactory to the meeting, when a second meeting was immediately held, John McKay being appointed Chairman, and Mr. Parke, Secretary.

"The strongest expressions of indignation were manifested by all the speakers, at this unwarrantable interference with their rights as homesteaders, and resolutions were unanimously passed, condemning the policy of the Government in its dealings with the settlers, and warning all jumpers that they will be dealt with summarily, as the assembled judgment of the squatters may determine."

Another meeting was held of Conservatives, a meeting of friends of the Government, and at that meeting the following resolutions were passed:—

"A meeting of the Conservatives of Moose Jaw was held on Tuesday evening, the 11th ult., at which resolutions were passed condemning the action of the Dominion Government regarding the land policy. It was also resolved that the Government be memorialized by the Conservatives of that place, asking the Government to grant an immediate solution of land problem."

Now, it was thought by the settlers who complain that representations would have more influence with the Government if made at a meeting of Conservative settlers of Moose Jaw, for the purpose of protesting against the land policy of the Government. Now, Sir, I will read an extract from the *Winnipeg Times* as to the land policy of the Government. I think, when hon. gentlemen hear that, they will be satisfied there is something wrong with the administration of public affairs in the North-West. The *Winnipeg Times* is the organ of the Government, and is edited by a political friend of the Government, who went up from Ottawa for the purpose of editing that paper. On the 17th of May, 1883, the following article appeared in the editorial columns of the *Times*:—

"On the lands sold south of the railway belt there are scores of squatters who, at this moment, are planting their crops in blissful ignorance of this fact, that some speculator will soon own their farms and the labour spent on them. It is true the Department professed some time ago that compensation for disturbances would be given to those squatters who had made improvements, the compensation to be determined by a Government valuator, that as a matter of fact, the buyers at the sale buy not only the land but the improvements; and even within

within the Mile Belt, the Government will find it a difficult matter to inspect the farms sold and appraise the improvements. South of the Belt, this will be utterly impossible. Then all, looking at its pecuniary results, is a failure. To reserve a vast quantity of land in the market at a time when money is exceedingly tight and the richest speculators poor, was madness. It is reasonably safe to say that Commissioner Walsh did not advise the step. It was no doubt taken in pursuance of that incomprehensible policy which the Department has adopted at the suggestion of ignorant or interested friends. But the failure of the sale, in a pecuniary sense, is a small matter compared with the evils it is bringing to the country. A squatter who has gone in upon land, now being sold, and ploughed and sown it, will think himself justified in holding it against all comers, and his neighbours will think so too.

"Mr. Metcalf, of Kingston, has an easy task in selling the land, pocketing the commission, but the Department will find, when it comes to evict the squatter, that human nature in the North-West is much the same as in Ireland. If we cannot prevail against the Government and the speculator, the squatter can, at least, leave the country with a curse."

That is the evidence of the organs of hon. gentlemen opposite. If the policy of the Government is not changed on this subject, the squatter can do—what? He can at least leave the country and leave it with a curse. They complain that the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite is oppressive, is incomprehensible; that it is based on ignorance of the country's requirements, that it is bringing evil on the country, and that the squatters are liable to pursue the same course as they pursued in Ireland, and at least leave the country with a curse. With these facts, if they are facts, and they come from the organs of hon. gentlemen opposite, staring us in the face, we cannot close our eyes to the position taken by the North-West Council, that there are difficulties and dangers, and breakers ahead. It will not do for us, in view of all these facts, to say you have no ground of complaint—to adopt the line followed by the hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White), and tell these men they are children and must be nursed; that they are infants and want to be spoon-fed. We must deal with the people of the North-West fairly and honestly, and must not close our eyes to the facts staring us in the face, or turn a deaf ear to the warnings of the North-West Council and the entreaties of the people whom we have induced to settle there. The whole position is fraught with difficulty and danger. That is not the only thing they complain of. The North-West Council complain of the Tariff, in the tenth paragraph of this Bill of Rights. They, voicing the opinion of the settlers of the North-West, pronounce this Tariff an unreasonable one, especially the duties on agricultural implements, lumber and canned fruits. The people have advanced in calm, moderate and deliberate terms, their complaint and grievances. They deserve every consideration at the hands of the Government. Here in the North-West we have—what? The advanced guard of an army of settlers whom we expect to take possession of the country, men who have gone there and struggled against the initial difficulties of settlement in a new country. We intensify those difficulties by unreasonable and oppressive taxation on the prime necessities of life, and the necessities of settlement in a new country. I say, in the first place, it was unfair to impose that Tariff, and having done that unfair act, we should at least consider what the people have to say when they ask us to retrace our steps. Is it not better for us to pause and consider our position and see whether we cannot do something to alleviate the condition of the people of the North-West? If our object be to settle that vast territory, as I suppose it is, we should take care that our policy has not the effect of creating dissatisfaction among the people whom we send there. We know that one settler leaving the country under a sense of injury sustained and wrong committed, does more harm to the country in England, Scotland and Ireland and on the continent, than twenty immigration agents can counteract. I will read from the organ of the Government in Assiniboia, a letter written by a Mr. Sykes. I never saw that gentleman. I do not know whether his complaints are just or unjust; but the organ of the Government at Regina, which has a