

of having the force there is to maintain British law in that distant part of the country.

I can conceive that we shall be obliged, as soon as the new provinces are organized, to revise the present arrangement for the maintenance of order and the administration of justice. The committee is aware that the administration of justice in that country has been chiefly in the hands of the Northwest Mounted Police. They not only have to take care of the country as regards the offences against the laws of Canada but they are called upon also to perform all sorts of duties, not only those which properly appertain to the police force, such as it was when first organized, that is to say to check the Indians and protect life and property, but they are also called upon to discharge many different duties which add to the comfort and security of the settler. For instance, one of the chief duties of the police has been to protect the country against prairie fires. The men are stationed all the way from the boundary line to the Mackenzie river in about ninety different posts, each post comprising a number of men varying from six, ten or twelve at the principal posts such as Regina, Fort Macleod, and so on to intervening posts at which there will be perhaps only one, two or three men. These men are really the friends of the settlers and are looked upon for a multitude of duties chiefly where settlement is going on. The settlers come chiefly from Europe and are not accustomed to our ways and they look at once to the police for every possible thing they may require.

Well, we have to maintain a force of that kind. As soon as the new provincial governments are organized we shall ask them to make arrangements with us for the pay of the police in connection with the administration of justice, which will be taken over by the provincial governments. Therefore they will have to pay for it. We are prepared to maintain the police if they pay a reasonable share of its maintenance, and if they are not disposed to pay a portion of the maintenance of the force, then we shall have to consider what course to take. I will give to the committee a communication that has been placed in my hands by the Comptroller of the Mounted Police, relating to this subject:

More than 1,500 prisoners passed through the police guard rooms last year—those sentenced to two years and upwards are sent to the Manitoba penitentiary, others are sent to the Regina and Prince Albert jails, but there are never less than 100 in the custody of the police.

The Department of Justice repays our vote a per diem rate for prisoners after committal, and travelling charges of prisoners, and escort to place of confinement; also, in serious and costly cases, a portion of the costs incurred—in all between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per annum, which is steadily increasing. We also recover for lunatics.

Then there is a great deal of work done by

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

the police which in older provinces would be paid for from provincial or municipal funds.

Last year there were nearly 1,000 cases of offences against the person or property, over 1,300 under the heading 'religion and morals,' and between 700 and 800 against ordinances of the Northwest Territories, in all there were 4,329 cases entered, and 3,465 convictions. In 1900 there were less than 1,000 cases all told.

Section 31 of the Mounted Police Act, Revised Statutes, chapter 45, provides as follows:

The Governor in Council may, from time to time, enter into arrangements with the government of any province of Canada, for the use or employment of the said police force, or any portion thereof, in aiding the administration of justice in such province, and in carrying into effect the laws of the legislature thereof; and may, in any such arrangement, agree upon and determine the amount of money which shall be paid by the province using the same in respect of such services of the force.

Well, we intend to negotiate with the new provincial governments on the basis of this section, and to arrange with them that they shall pay a portion of the maintenance of the police.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Is any portion of the police maintained in Manitoba?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Only on the boundary line.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Have you any arrangement of that character with the government of Manitoba?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Now that these Territories are being organized into provinces, is it the minister's intention to maintain the mounted police in those Territories?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. We must certainly maintain the mounted police on the frontiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Why not on the frontier of British Columbia also?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Because there is not the same reason as there is in Alberta and Saskatchewan, where the frontier is exclusively prairie. If we were to withdraw the police from that frontier there would be an amount of lawlessness such as this country has never seen, and I hope will not see. I think we shall have to maintain a portion of the police also in Athabaska for some time and in Mackenzie; and in the other portions of the country where railway construction is going on, it will perhaps be necessary to maintain the police for some time.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Are there any on Hudson Bay?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes, we have had an expedition on the Hudson Bay this winter, and for the last two years; one superintendent, Major Moodie, one inspector, Mr. Pelletier, one physician, one sergeant, and nine men. We have not yet received the report of last winter.